



This is the PowerPoint presentation from the June 29, 2016 webinar. Additional information was added in the notes section in response to questions that were posed during the live webinar.

# Agenda for Webinar

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- Introduction
- Why have a Promise Community?
- What makes a Promise Community?
- What is the *opportunity* all about?
- What are the *expectations* of the Community?
- What is the *process* to apply?
- Important Dates
- Questions?

## Why have a Promise Community?

- Promise communities will leverage the state resources, initiatives and partnerships into targeted high-intensity supports to build local infrastructure and coalesce local resources in order to improve outcomes for young children in our highest need, rural communities.



This initiative is about the communities we live in. We know that children are struggling and families are not getting supports they need. Across the state there are families in poverty. For example some families in crisis are leading parents to use drugs as a way to cope with the hardships they face. Our hope is that we can build communities that will listen to those families and all families to support one another and raise each other up. We want children to be ready for the world ahead. We can make Vermont an amazing state to live in beyond the beauty of where we are. We want children who can be successful in their communities and eventually give back to those communities as adults. Research supports children having a strong start with high quality early care experiences are ready for kindergarten and are reading by grade 3 do better off in the long term.

We will support communities to look at the assets they already have and build around those to focus on getting children ready for kindergarten.

## What Makes a Promise Community?

- Coalition of people supporting young children birth to age six
- Community will include at least one local elementary school
- Will reach at least 40 children



The community is defined by you, it is not a region and not a service catchment area. It is about the places where people live and gather. The school is the service area that children will enter and data can be collected from that is why the school is an important component of the Promise Community, but not the only piece. The Early Learning Challenge grant is a collaboration of human services, health care and education. We want a group of people committed to children and families working together from all walks of life , not just the service providers of the community.

A question was raised if Children’s Integrated Services, CIS, could apply for the families they serve. No because CIS is a regional program and larger area with many communities that feed into a particular program.

Within one supervisory Union there can be more than one Promise Community, because there can be several elementary schools in one SU. If there are two distinct communities of people served by one school, then if you can rationalize that it would not be a stronger community as one, then two different applications could be submitted. The idea is that the application is for people to wrap around the people who live together, not service providers who serve them.

Examples of other Promise Communities in the state include: the town of Winooski, the towns of Sheldon, Swanton and St. Albans ( this is a tad large and they are figuring this out, started even bigger), the neighborhood of Brattleboro from Green Street to Canal St.

## Promise Community Data Selection Priorities



- Impact of poverty in your community
- How prepared are the children for Kindergarten?
- How are the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders achieving in your school?
- Does your community have access to high quality care and education?

Poverty, Kindergarten readiness, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade achievement and high quality (defined by 4 & 5 STARS) early care and education opportunities are the key data points that we will evaluate for your community. We will use VT insights or other data sources to pull data to give us the numbers. For those who participated last year, we gave you the data prior to applying, this is harder now with the consolidation of schools to do for the entire state. Once we know the communities we can look at those specific areas. Then we will use a non biased scoring spreadsheet of the numbers to determine the points for each community in that area.

Higher the poverty the higher the points. No 4 and 5 STAR early care centers, the higher the points. Lower scores in K readiness and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade achievement, the higher the points. This is to help us make sure we are reaching those communities with the greatest need.

# Opportunity

- Each Promise Community receives:

- extensive training
- a collaboration toolkit
- continual technical assistance support
- connections to state wide opportunities for the local community
- up to \$120,000 to implement their identified strategies



So what does this mean for your community to be a Promise Community?

This is an opportunity to really focus on early childhood with support from the state. We want to give the community tools and resources to make change.

Technical support from the Promise Community staff will be providing support at the community level on Results Based Accountability and Community engagement. As well as the intensive training days and regular check ins.

## Extensive Training

- Session 1: What does it mean to be a Promise Community? Learn about place based initiatives, Collective Impact (CI), Results Based Accountability (RBA) and Strengthening Families (SF)
- Session 2: Identifying the narrative of your community and making plans to “turn the curve” for kindergarten readiness by creating strategies for making change by developing a community roadmap.
- Session 3: How are you changing that narrative to improve the lives of children? What is working well for families and young children in your community? What do you need to make a change for the young children in your community to succeed in schools?

Our team will work together with the Promise Communities to provide training days these days will taught with a lens of the adult learner and incorporate practicing the skills shared. It is important that teams plan to attend all the trainings as a group and yes we want everyone to spend the night on Session 1.

We are creating a Toolkit of the information to be shared as resource to the Promise community.

After session 2 once communities have developed working relationships and collaborate on the strategies they plan to implement the money aspect will come in. This is not a typical grant process of having a plan and asking for money to support it, this is about community development and supporting a community plan.

The money that is for the communities is seed money for supporting the ideas of the community to support change. Funding needs to be expended by Dec 2017.

One big shift from Cohort 1 is a focus away from a needs assessment. Data will be used in the RBA process and support the plans of the community.

## TRUST

Change happens at the *speed* of  
trust





## Coalition Building

- Each Promise Community must establish a Promise Community coalition; this can build off an existing coalition or be a new group. The coalition should include broad representation across sectors.

This is about building a community. Who are the people you interact with each day where you live? Who are the church or faith leaders in the community? Is there a place where moms go to connect, how do you reach those parents? Is there a favorite coffee shop or general store? Is there that one person who knows everyone in the town, engage that person? Include the town representatives, select board members or other town officials. Communities now have to have an early care and education plan in each town plan, ask town planners to join the dialogue.

Each participating community must gather a team of at least 8 people from within the broader coalition to commit to full participation in training sessions and will serve as the steering committee members.

# Steering Committee

- **Steering Committee Team *must* include:**
  - 2-3 People who live in the community (preferable parents with children)
- **Steering Committee Teams *can* include:**
  - Representatives from local human services
  - Early Care and Education representatives
  - Representative from local schools
  - Representative from health services
  - Local Librarian
  - Arts organizations
  - Faith community
  - Business Community
  - Local government (like: legislator, select board member, town clerk)
  - People in the community familiar with the Promise Community frameworks (Collective Impact, Strengthening Families and Results Based Accountability)

In the application identify as many people of the 8 people and if you need help in identifying of others once the communities have been named we can do that with you.

## Community Expectations

- Commit to doing “Whatever it takes” to turn the curve to serve young children and families of the community- this means thinking differently about how communities support young children and families to get to the heart of what works.
- Engage in regular community conversations to ensure family voice, leadership, and collaboration.
- Use Collective Impact and RBA as guiding frameworks in your work and process.
- Convene regular local meetings of the Promise Community coalition to develop the Promise Community roadmap (weekly to monthly).



What are we asking you to do? “ Whatever it takes to turn the curve” comes from the Results Based Accountability work. Turn the curve refers to making changes in the data on a data chart of turning your data. We are hoping that creative thinking will come into play so the whatever it takes is an open invitation to be creative, as well as thinking about evidence based interventions.

Community engagement is a key piece of the work this year and as soon as communities are identified we will work with you to host Community Cafés or forums.

We will give in-depth information about what Collective Impact looks like and how to use that framework for your community work . As well as how to use RBA to inform the process and help identify who is better off, not just count numbers but get to impact.

Meeting regularly is part of the process. As you meet you develop relationships with each other and build the collation and trust.

## Community Expectations

- Commit to biweekly check-ins with Promise Community technical assistance.
- Support the implementation of your Promise Community Roadmap.
- Collaborate with the Promise Community evaluation team to develop and collect short term data; and develop a longitudinal data plan to track the progress of the work, beyond the time of the Early Learning Challenge grant participation.
- Collaborate with the various partners to allow for sustainability of the Promise Community plan.



Our team will check in with a community member on a regular basis of two times a month, this can be an email, phone call or face to face meeting. What this looks like depends on the needs of the community and where you are in the process.

We are looking for a commitment to fulfill the work plan developed by your team and to work along side the evaluators from Flint Springs Associates to see how you are making progress. The funding needs to be spent by the time the Early Learning Challenge grant is over, currently that is Dec of 2017 or could change to Dec of 2018 we hope to know that in Oct.

Our hope is that we are just the beginning of a longtime commitment of the community to support young children and families. We know that this is such a crucial time in a child's life and so we are doing this to plant the seeds for your growth as a community.



## Process

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- Building Bright Futures regional coordinators are assisting communities to write the community application.
- Contact your local coordinator, if you have questions or concerns about this please contact Julianne Nickerson Promise Community Director

The application process is to work with the regional Building Bright Futures Coordinator to help you complete the one page application. Groups of community members from many different organizations, remember the section about the steering committee talk to people from a variety of places to create a community story that will be the application.

The list of Building Bright Futures coordinators is included in the application. The role of the coordinators is to support the community in the application and submission, they are not necessarily part of the steering committee.

## Promise Community Application Questions

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- What is the essence of your community that makes it unique and strong?
- What is the story of the high needs population of children in your community?
- What are three wishes for the children and families of your community?
- Whose voices in your community are often missing from the conversation, and how would you engage them?



These are the questions we are asking communities. This is to get at the heart of who is the community and those that live there.



## Important Dates

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- Application Deadline Aug 15, 2016
- Cohort Two Selection announced by September 2016
- Training Session 1 Oct 17 & 18, 2016 (overnight retreat)
- Training Session 2 March 15, 2017
- Training Session 3 June 6, 2017

People have asked about the involvement of schools and summer schedules, most school superintendents and principals work over the summer months. Therefore we do not see a reason why community folks can not do this by Aug 15.

## Promise Community Team

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- Julianne Nickerson, MSW- Director
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- Emilie Kornheiser- Technical Assistant Consultant
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Please contact Julianne if you have any questions about the application process.



Questions were posed during the live webinar and have been incorporated into this presentation or clarified again here.

We are looking for diversity around the state and we are permitting more than one application per region; because we are focusing in communities of high need.

The money needs to be spent by Dec 2017, if we were to receive the no cost extension, spending could go out to Dec 2018. We should know this by the time of the first meeting of the Cohort.

We are focusing on the whole population, with an acknowledgement of the high needs populations as part of the selection process.

Thank you and I look forward to your community application as we work to realize the PROMISE of every Vermont child!