



**ANNOUNCEMENT: S-11 #03**  
**OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT & EARLY LEARNING**  
**BUREAU OF SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE SERVICES**

**ISSUE DATE:** April 28, 2011  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2011

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Local Education and Resource Networks (LEARN)
<b>TO:</b>	Child Care Information Services Grantees
<b>FROM:</b>	Todd Klunk Acting Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development and Early Learning 

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this Announcement is to advise Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies of changes to the name and the focus of the Community Engagement Groups (CEG). Effective July 1, 2011, the new name for the CEG will be Local Education and Resource Networks (LEARN). LEARN will focus on three main objectives designed to increase public knowledge and access to quality early learning programs. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) believes the CCIS's resource and referral duties and the LEARN objectives will provide opportunities for enhanced partnerships among the involved agencies.

**BACKGROUND:**

Recently, OCDEL released the 2011-2012 Request for Applications for the LEARN grants. As part of the new grant, OCDEL changed the name of the CEG to LEARN and identified new objectives for the groups. The partnerships among the CCIS, PA Key, Regional Keys and LEARN are essential in helping to identify and address gaps in early learning services and improve program quality to better meet the needs of Pennsylvania families. LEARN will continue to support the resource and referral work of the CCIS and assist with outreach to all families, whether or not they receive a subsidy.

**DISCUSSION:**

The new LEARN objectives will compliment the current CCIS resource and referral activities as described below:

**Objective #1: Family Engagement and Support**

Family engagement and support will focus on effectively engaging and communicating with families regarding:

- Families acting as their child's first educator. LEARN will provide families with information about child development and appropriate early learning activities, aligned with the early learning standards;

- Families making good early learning choices for their children and building family demand for quality early education; and
- Families taking action on behalf of their children.

This objective will be met by LEARN establishing additional community partners that can assist in reaching families of young children such as libraries, faith-based organizations, family centers, local businesses, etc. These partners will help to facilitate county-wide distribution of family education materials regarding the importance of quality learning and OCDEL programs.

Objective #2: Transitions into an Early Learning or School Setting

Transitioning children and families into an early learning and school setting includes:

- Providing support to those families transitioning into an early learning setting;
- Increasing the number of families who register their children for kindergarten in the spring; and
- Providing resources and supports to families for an overall smoother transition.

To meet this objective, LEARN will develop relationships with organizations serving children that can distribute transition materials and provide support to families entering early learning programs. LEARN will participate in kindergarten awareness registration campaigns and work with community partners to promote early kindergarten registration and other transitions to early learning programs.

Objective #3: Act as Local Resource on Quality Early Learning Opportunities

Acting as a local resource for early childhood education focuses on:

- Educating community leaders on the state of early learning in their local communities; and
- Promoting OCDEL programs, such as Keystone STARS, early learning events, early learning activities and/or other programs within a community that focus on quality early education programs and access to early education opportunities.

LEARN will achieve this goal by publishing regular testimonials and stories to the PA's Promise for Children website and participating in PA's Promise for Children activities. They will publish a Community Report Card relaying what is being done in the community regarding quality early learning. They will also publish information about the Reach and Risk report, including press releases and fact sheets. LEARN will establish a team that will meet on a regular basis to support and assist with meeting the LEARN objectives. The team will consist of families, early childhood professionals, school district representatives and community partners.

We encourage all CCIS agencies to cooperate and participate in LEARN activities to the extent possible. Participation may include the CCIS agency sharing resources with the LEARN, distributing LEARN materials, or attending local LEARN meetings or events.

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. Distribute this announcement to appropriate staff.
2. Direct questions to your Regional Key or local LEARN.