



## A CHECKLIST FOR DEVELOPING A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT OR CONTRACT

Early education partners can use this checklist to assist them in developing a comprehensive agreement that clearly addresses each partner's roles and responsibilities and many of the elements needed for the partnership to run smoothly. While agreements can and should be reviewed and revised over time, a strong agreement forged early in the partnership lays the foundation for a strong and sustainable collaboration.

A partnership agreement between early education providers contains critical information and clarifying details. Agreements include some standard legal sections, but the language used often sets the tone for a "partnership spirit." On the following pages, partners will find a list of specific items that may be included in a written agreement or contract or Addendum. This document provides a list of specifics that partners might include in a written agreement, although not every item needs to be addressed. Agreements vary, reflecting the uniqueness of the partnership. Early education providers can use this document as they develop or review their partnership agreements.

The checklist consists of the following five sections:

- I. General Information
- II. Partnership Services
- III. Fiscal Resources
- IV. Systems
  - a. Planning and Decisionmaking
  - b. Communications
  - c. Oversight
  - d. Recordkeeping and Documentation
- V. General Administrative Elements

|                                                                                                  | Not Yet<br>Addressed | Under<br>Discussion | Finalized | Action Steps |
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| <b>I. General Information (often introductory)</b>                                               |                      |                     |           |              |
| General statement of the agreement's purpose                                                     |                      |                     |           |              |
| Partners' affiliation and legal status                                                           |                      |                     |           |              |
| Contractual period                                                                               |                      |                     |           |              |
| Contract amendments, renewal, and termination procedures                                         |                      |                     |           |              |
| Role of each partner's decisionmaking bodies in the contractual development and approval process |                      |                     |           |              |
| Compliance with local, state, and federal regulations and policies                               |                      |                     |           |              |
| Conflict of interest statements and prohibited activities                                        |                      |                     |           |              |

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| <b>II. Partnership Services</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                      |                     |           |              |
| Number of children served; hours, days, weeks of operation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                      |                     |           |              |
| Location of services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                      |                     |           |              |
| Each partner's role in service delivery: child education, child and family health, mental health, disabilities, nutrition, family services and parent involvement, home visits or conferences, meetings, recordkeeping, transportation, supervision, oversight (aka: Head Start Performance Standards) |                      |                     |           |              |
| Staff assigned to support the partnership; which entity or partner employs and supervises which staff                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                      |                     |           |              |
| Responsibilities of each partner's staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                      |                     |           |              |

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| Staff schedules                                                                   |                      |                     |           |              |
| Supervision procedures                                                            |                      |                     |           |              |
| Staff qualification requirements                                                  |                      |                     |           |              |
| Professional development responsibilities (in-service, training, college courses) |                      |                     |           |              |
| Personnel employment strategies                                                   |                      |                     |           |              |
| Annual performance appraisal procedures                                           |                      |                     |           |              |
| Provisions for qualified substitutes                                              |                      |                     |           |              |

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| <b>III. Fiscal Resources</b>                                                                                                                                                                |                      |                     |           |              |
| Funding or resources are accessed and a commitment is made by each partner                                                                                                                  |                      |                     |           |              |
| Payment per child, per year by partners and payment procedures                                                                                                                              |                      |                     |           |              |
| Alternative plans are made for circumstances beyond partners' control                                                                                                                       |                      |                     |           |              |
| Funds targeted or designated for specific improvements (renovations, salary enhancements, quality issues)                                                                                   |                      |                     |           |              |
| Designated responsibilities for: facilities or space, maintenance, repairs, food service, and supplies and equipment (who will retain ownership of equipment when or if the agreement ends) |                      |                     |           |              |
| Non-federal share or in-kind services                                                                                                                                                       |                      |                     |           |              |
| Provisions for collection and non-payment of parent fees                                                                                                                                    |                      |                     |           |              |
| Provision for the loss of child care subsidies and parent fees                                                                                                                              |                      |                     |           |              |

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| <b>IV. Systems</b>                                                                          |                      |                     |           |              |
| <b>A. Planning and Decisionmaking</b>                                                       |                      |                     |           |              |
| Role of each entity's decisionmaking bodies in planning and decisionmaking                  |                      |                     |           |              |
| Policy Council representation and elections                                                 |                      |                     |           |              |
| Community assessment process                                                                |                      |                     |           |              |
| Collaborative, inclusive strategies involving partners' staff and parents and the community |                      |                     |           |              |
| Items needing prior approval (items a partner reserves the right to approve)                |                      |                     |           |              |
| <b>B. Communications</b>                                                                    |                      |                     |           |              |
| Type, frequency of meetings; meeting participants                                           |                      |                     |           |              |

|                                                                                                                                           | Not Yet<br>Addressed | Under<br>Discussion | Finalized | Action Steps |
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| Type and frequency of reports                                                                                                             |                      |                     |           |              |
| Information exchange (training calendars, personnel policies, position openings, etc.; state and local licensing reports and QRIS status) |                      |                     |           |              |
| Work with agencies on appropriate referrals as needed.                                                                                    |                      |                     |           |              |
| Use of technology (such as: shared databases for tracking, email communication, etc.)                                                     |                      |                     |           |              |
| Protocols for information sharing                                                                                                         |                      |                     |           |              |
| Parent communications                                                                                                                     |                      |                     |           |              |
| Dispute resolution process                                                                                                                |                      |                     |           |              |

|                                                                                                                     | Not Yet<br>Addressed | Under<br>Discussion | Finalized | Action Steps |
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| <b>C. Oversight</b>                                                                                                 |                      |                     |           |              |
| Notification procedures or follow-up on local, state, and federal monitoring and assessments and audits.            |                      |                     |           |              |
| Ongoing observation of partnership operations, review of records, written feedback, follow-up                       |                      |                     |           |              |
| Annual program self-assessments and other reviews                                                                   |                      |                     |           |              |
| Improvement initiatives (partners' obligations to each other when the partnership is not progressing as envisioned) |                      |                     |           |              |
| <b>D. Recordkeeping and Documentation</b>                                                                           |                      |                     |           |              |
| Recruitment, enrollment applications, and intake                                                                    |                      |                     |           |              |
| Parent permission procedures                                                                                        |                      |                     |           |              |

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| Child screening, assessment, outcomes                                                        |                      |                     |           |              |
| Curriculum planning and individualized child plans                                           |                      |                     |           |              |
| Parent contacts, home visits, parent-teacher conferences                                     |                      |                     |           |              |
| Disabilities, medical, dental services, nutrition, mental health, and family social services |                      |                     |           |              |
| Storage of records and access                                                                |                      |                     |           |              |
| Parent partnership plans                                                                     |                      |                     |           |              |
| Procedures for recording and tracking of services and follow-up                              |                      |                     |           |              |
| Transfer of information, confidentiality                                                     |                      |                     |           |              |

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| <b>V. General Administrative Elements</b>                                                      |                      |                     |           |              |
| Designated contact person for each organization involved                                       |                      |                     |           |              |
| Travel policies                                                                                |                      |                     |           |              |
| Liability and insurance                                                                        |                      |                     |           |              |
| Use of partners' names (how partners will publicize the services sponsored by the partnership) |                      |                     |           |              |

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