



WHAT WE'VE LEARNED FROM PAST POLICY

EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY & ACCESS

Insights were gathered from two focus group sessions involving program administrators and stakeholders from the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation (MELF) and Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) pilots, along with evaluation reports from SRI International. Key lessons apply to both geographic pilots and statewide expansion focused on family income.

1

ESTABLISHED INFRASTRUCTURE

Fifteen years after the MELF scholarship pilot, infrastructure for Early Learning Scholarships (ELS) is in place; therefore, a future pilot won't need the same level of start-up help from partners.

2

PROGRAM INTERACTION

In designing a pilot, consider how it interacts with current program types, such as those that receive a mix of private and public funding (child care) and public-funded programs (Head Start and Voluntary Pre-K in public schools).

3

INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES

A pilot can be an opportunity to try out innovations or address system-level elements, such as a coordinated enrollment system or data tracking system. A pilot can also be an opportunity to put resources in place to help boost provider quality.

4

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Work with regional ELS administrators and cultural community leaders to make community connections and conduct outreach.

5

FEEDBACK FROM PROVIDERS

Connect with leaders within formal and informal networks of early care and education providers to solicit feedback on pilot design and regularly communicate about pilot elements and timing.

6

CLARITY IN ELIGIBILITY

Use simple and clear family eligibility requirements and income verification processes.