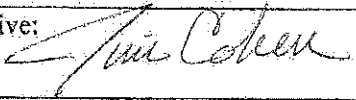
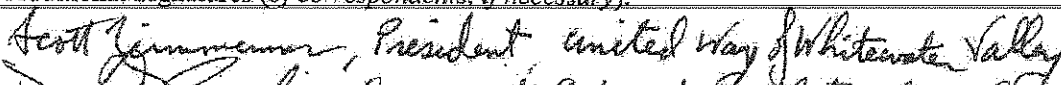
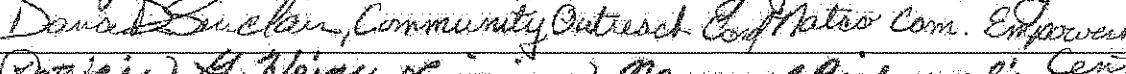
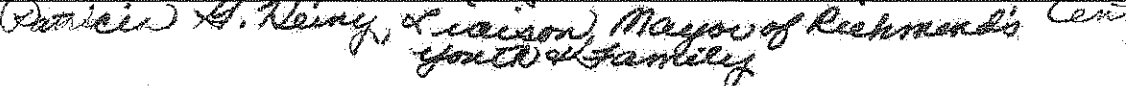


WRITTEN STATEMENT OF COUNTY READINESS

Instructions: Your written statement may not exceed **eight (8)** single spaced pages. Additional pages will not be reviewed or considered. A copy of the language of HEA 1004 may be found on the website of the Indiana General Assembly. An authorized representative for the respondent *and any co-respondents* must sign this cover page.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION	
County: Wayne County, IN	
Legal Name: Birth-to-Five, Inc.	Mailing Address: PO Box 1815 Richmond, IN 47375
Contact Name: Jim Cohen Contact Title: Executive Director (Single point of contact for communication)	Contact Phone: 765.966.6080 Contact Email Address: jim@mybirthtofive.org
COUNTY INFORMATION	
Co-Respondents (please list): United Way of Whitewater Valley NATCO Empowerment Center City of Richmond Mayor's Council on Economic Vitality	Estimated Number of Children to be Served (county-wide): 200
	Estimated Number of Eligible Providers (county-wide): 16-18
AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
I HEREBY CERTIFY that, to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this statement is correct.	
Designated Representative (Printed Name): Jim Cohen	Title: Executive Director
Signature of Designated Representative: 	Date: June 28, 14
Additional Signatures (of co-respondents, if necessary):	
  	

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2011, Wayne County was experiencing one of the highest unemployment rates in the state of Indiana. Operating on the assumption that unemployment was high because of a scarcity of open positions, the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation of Wayne County, Work One, and Ivy Tech surveyed industrial employers in the county to request information on open positions in an attempt to identify potential employment opportunities for our residents. Much to everyone's surprise, the survey indicated that there were several hundred available unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled positions in the county. The biggest revelation, however, was the reason employers provided for the unfilled positions: a lack of qualified labor. It was determined that applicants, not only lacked postsecondary training, but more importantly lacked high school diplomas and basic soft skills.

The results of this simple survey forced the community to reassess its perception that our economic vitality would grow as a function of attracting new businesses to the area, to one that focused on developing a qualified workforce to help our existing businesses grow and prosper.

The community has developed new connections and supportive relationships between government, schools, non-profits, and business based on the common goal of economic growth through an educated and qualified work force.

In short, Wayne County discovered, or rather rediscovered, the tremendous impact that education has on the economic success of the region. Over the past three years, organizations as varied as the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce, Ivy Tech, IUE, the county's school corporations, the Economic Development Corporation of Wayne County, Communities In Schools, government agencies, area manufacturers, and local businesses have worked together to increase and improve educational opportunities in the county. An example of these collaborations is a new program at Ivy Tech, Manufacturing Matters that leads to a nationally recognized Certificate in Manufacturing Technology. Additionally, partnerships have formed between schools and businesses to strengthen initiatives that keep children in school and improve graduation rates. All areas of education have been a part of this discussion. From early childhood learning, through k-12, into technical and college post-secondary work, the concepts of a high quality and rigorous education have been taking front and center throughout this dialogue. There has been interest in the Paths to QUALITY program, as indicated by the growing number of child-care providers that are a part of the program, as well as the support of agencies such as United Way of Whitewater Valley. We have an Early Head Start program, and all of the Wayne County school corporations are either operating or planning to operate, pre-kindergarten programs in their schools.

It is important to note, that the resources to develop and fund these programs and initiatives are a demonstration of the willingness of the Wayne County community to collaborate in support of economic development through expanded high quality educational opportunities.

II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ORGANIZATIONS – the organizations listed here share the common thread of having a direct impact on ECE and, are all linked, to the Wayne County support system that includes major segments of the public, private and non-profit community

- A. United Way of Whitewater Valley (UWWV)– the Community Impact Model created by UWWV identified ECE as a county wide community goal
 - 1. Education Vision Council and subgroup Vision Council on Kindergarten Readiness, composed of educators and service providers – currently working to coordinate the development of county wide kindergarten readiness standards
 - 2. Provides funding to organizations that offer services to children 0-5 yo and their families, i.e. Birth-to-Five - local Parents As Teachers affiliate, EXCEL – conducts developmental screenings for children 0-5 yo
- B. Birth-to-Five – is a local umbrella organization that administers two evidenced based ECE Programs for children 0-5 yo and their families, actively participates in many community and development organizations i.e. Economic Development Corp of Wayne County, United Way Vision Council on Education and Subgroup Kindergarten Readiness, Mayor’s Council on Economic Vitality, Communities In Schools, Complete College Indiana, ELAC Work Group on Family Engagement
 - 1. Parents As Teachers
 - 2. Healthy Families
 - 3. Supporting Care Providers –skills development for local ECE providers
- C. Achieva/EXCEL – is a local organization that serves disabled citizens, is a member of the UWWV Educations Vision Council and the Vision Council on Kindergarten Readiness, and has an extensive network of referral partners
 - 1. Performs developmental evaluations for children 0-5 yo and makes appropriate referrals when appropriate
 - 2. Provides literacy materials and developmentally focused toys to all of the families that it serves
- D. IU East, Ivy Tech, Purdue, and Earlham – colleges and universities that extend their engagement networks throughout all areas of the community
 - 1. Provide in kind services and training to local organizations engaged in education at all levels
 - 2. IUE - Trained Birth-to-Five staff in the techniques of dialogic reading
 - 3. IUE – Partnering with Birth-to-Five to gather and analyze data relating to program Effectiveness
 - 4. All offer ECE curricula
- E. K-Ready – a local organization that promotes literacy through reading, has extensive partnerships with both not for profit and for profits
 - 1. Promotes reading by engaging and encouraging families of children 0-8 yo to read to/with their children daily for 20 minutes
 - 2. Distributes books to 0-8 yo children and their families
 - 3. Coordinates participation in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Wayne County

- F. Morrison Reeves Library, Cambridge City Public Library, Centerville Public Library, Hagerstown Public Library, all extensively partner with the community
1. Provide literacy programs targeting 0-5 yo children and their families
 2. Provide facilities and space and promote local organizations involved in 0-5 yo literacy, i.e. support Birth-to-Five Book Buddies and Paly Group Programs, hosts K-Ready Events
- G. Complete College Indiana (an Ivy Tech initiative) – develops and implements strategies to remove barriers to postsecondary education for adults in the region, extensive ties to the education, business, non-profit communities, as well as governmental agencies
1. Working on an initiative that provides quality ECE for the children of parents seeking educational and employment opportunities
 2. Working on an initiative to deal with the transportation challenges faced by families identified by #1
- H. Mayor's Office and Common Council of the City of Richmond – local government
1. Support and promote educational initiatives
 2. Provide city EDIT funding for various educational initiatives, i.e. Birth-to-Five's Parents As Teachers, Communities In Schools
- I. Wayne County Commissioners – local government
1. Support educational initiatives, i.e. Manufacturing Matters
 2. Participate in organizations that support quality ECE, i.e. Complete College
- J. Wayne County Partnership For Youth (CPY) –composed of 30 different youth serving organizations in Wayne County
1. Supports the work of partners who bolster positive youth development
 2. Publicizes and supports all ECE initiatives and programs
 3. Participates in grant writing for ECE
- K. Wayne County Chamber of Commerce – promotes, educates, and lobbies for local businesses
1. Hosts events promoting all levels of education
 2. Promotes the value ECE to its membership
- L. Huffer Memorial Child Care Resource & Referral – ECE resource for families and ECE providers
1. Helps families to identify high quality ECE
 2. Provides training, onsite technical assistance, mentoring and resources for ECE Providers
 3. Mentors ECE providers to support their progression through Paths to QUALITY
 4. Promotes and supports the development of new ECE facilities

FUNDING ORGANIZATION

The following is a list of organizations in Wayne County who have provided major funding (\$3000+) to ECE agencies directly, or funded agencies that provide services to ECE agencies:

Wayne County Foundation
Old National Bank Foundation

Reid Hospital and Health Services
West End Bank

First Bank Richmond
Dot Foods
Belden Wire and Cable
Wallace Crippled Children's Fund
Stamm Koechlein Family Foundation
Richmond Mayor and Common Council
Meridian Health Services
Richmond Common Council

Wayne Bank
Richmond Baking
Ahaus Tool and Engineering
United Way of Whitewater Valley
Natco Credit Union
Lingle Real Estate
Centerstone Health Service
Wayne County Council

While exact figures were not available on such short notice, a conservative estimate of the contributions to ECE in Wayne County by the preceding organizations is easily in excess of \$275,000. It must also be noted that there is a vast array of additional ECE related funders, in the county, whose contributions are below \$3000 but account for donations and support in an amount significantly greater than the figure stated above.

Currently, school corporations in Wayne County are not using Title I funds for ECE.

III. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

A.

One of the benefits of a small county (under 400 square miles, a population around 67,000, and approximately 4200 children 4 yo or younger) is that the service organizations are composed of a small group that communicates well to coordinate assistance and support for our citizens. The segment of the community that focuses on children 0-5 yo and their families is especially close since there tends to be less overlap of services than one finds in larger communities. Consequently, while we have organizations like Birth-to-Five's Healthy Families and Parents As Teachers, Achieva's EXCEL, and Head Start, who are typically perceived as community ECE family engagement organizations, the extended partnerships and referral system that exists here in Wayne County forms a network that engages our families and wraps a wide range of services around them. To one extent or another, practically everyone encourages families to participation in educational, developmental and literacy programs for their children.

In addition to the afore mentioned agencies some of the additional organizations that form our engagement network are: Community Partners, WIC, Meridian Health Services, Centerstone, Birthright, Wayne County Health Clinic, Reid Hospital & Health Care Services, Genesis, United Way, Huffer Child Care Resource & Referral, Boys and Girls Club of Wayne County, Girls, Inc., YMCA, local food pantries, area trustees, Communities in Schools, the Salvation Army's *Charity Tracker* (provides a data base of families who are participating in local social services safety net programs), Amigos Richmond Latin Center, NATCO Community Empowerment Center, and area public libraries, to name a few.

B.

At this point, we have no formal, county wide, program that engages parents and directs

them into ECE opportunities. With acceptance into the Pilot Program, we will create a plan to partner with eligible providers to help them reach out to qualifying families.

C.

Upon acceptance into the Pilot Program, in order to recruit at least 200 new families, Wayne County will convene an *engagement group* comprised of eligible providers, organizations currently working with potential families, and organizations who work directly with families in poverty who may have not been a part of the ECE discussion up to this point, and those organizations who currently have direct contact with families who potentially qualify for the Pilot Program. The group will be responsible for creating a plan specifically designed to recruit qualified families into the Pilot Program and support them in the fact finding and decision making process of selecting the most suitable provider.

IV. PROVIDER CAPACITY

A. Currently Eligible Providers, current capacities, and potentially available openings

1. Level 4 providers

a. 2 family child care homes – capacity	24	potential additional	2
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2. Level 3 providers

a. 3 family child care homes - capacity	44	potential available	8
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b. 2 licensed centers - capacity	68	potential available	11
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c. 4 Head Starts/licensed - capacity	138	potential available	23
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3. Private schools accredited by the State Board of Education

a. Seton Hall - capacity	55	<u>potentially available</u>	<u>22</u>
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*Total potential available from existing providers 66**

*the potential availability of openings for 7/1/15 derives from the report of providers that their enrollment typically runs 83% of capacity.

These providers do not currently have plans to expand their capacities. Their decisions are a function of a lack of resources on multiple levels and the commensurate concern of a lack of potential students who can afford tuition. While Wayne County's participation in the Pilot Program will not provide economic support for expansion, per se, it will certainly expand the pool of financially eligible students, potentially improving the cash flow for some providers.

B. Efforts to Increase Provider Capacity

Based on the survey of our currently qualified ECE providers and an estimate of their potentially available openings, Wayne County must provide \pm 150 additional new openings in qualified provider facilities for Pilot Program children.

Our plan to expand our capacity centers around three loci:

1. Identifying Level 1 and 2 providers who have the greatest potential for fast tracking to

Level 3

2. Supporting the expansion of current Level 3 and 4 providers
3. Bring community partners together who will invest resources in Wayne County ECE providers to support of the expansion of the ECE classroom capacity in Wayne County

At this time, Wayne County has 13 ECE providers that rate either Level 1 or 2 on Paths to QUALITY. The first step to increasing capacity is to identify those providers who have the greatest potential to either advance or fast track to Level 3 and to offer them the support necessary for their advancement. We would create a workgroup to identify and establish criteria to use in evaluating the readiness of our current Level 1 and 2 providers, as well as to identify the resources that each would require to qualify for level 3 by 7/1/15. Using the parameters established, we would select those providers who have the greatest potential for success and support them in the certification process.

The second potential source of providing new openings is to expand the capacity of our existing Level 3 and 4 ECE providers. In a process similar to the one identified above, we would target those currently qualified providers most eligible for physical expansion.

Common sense and preliminary conversations with ECE providers in Wayne County make it clear that the lack of resources is what keeps providers from either expanding physical capacity or improving their certification on Paths to QUALITY. Along with funding, the lack of business acumen and the challenge of navigating the “system” serve to make growth on any level a daunting task for these small business entrepreneurs.

Wayne County has an expansive pool of expertise in the areas that ECE providers need to mature and grow both professionally and physically. Along with the Economic Development Corporation, the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce, the IUE Schools of Business and Education, and Ivy Tech School of Education, there are several other organizations dedicated to entrepreneurship and business development that operate in Wayne County available to support the process. In addition to Wayne County resources, partnerships with Huffer Child Care Resource and Referral and the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children, will help fill out a well-rounded group of mentors to support and develop a stronger network of ECE providers.

What could be the most intimidating piece of the expanded capacity puzzle for Wayne County ECE providers is the financial cost of professional development and physical expansion.

Wayne County is clearly motivated to fund educational projects that support economic growth and development. With our county’s recent history of funding innovation in, and expansion of, educational initiatives we are confident that the financial resources are available for the professional development and upgrading of facilities to help level 1 and 2 providers move to level 3.

Finally, there are currently three formidable Wayne County businesses that have expressed very strong positions on the value and need for ECE in the county. Aside from a strong history of investing in existing education programs that provide ECE services, all three are in the strategic planning stages of developing ECE capacities of their own. They are, Reid Hospital and Health Services, Dot Foods, and Sugar Creek Packing Company. Their participation in and support of the Pilot Program would be a natural fit for their missions and considering their current involvement in creating their own EDC facilities, it would be just plain “good business” for them on many levels, to support the Pilot Program.

V. FINANCIAL MATCH AND ONGOING FUNDING

At this point, Wayne County does not have any funds committed for the Pilot Program. However, based on the past and recent experience of both local governmental and business organizations to support educational initiatives we believe that the community would, ultimately provide the necessary matching funds and ongoing support for ECE in Wayne County.

Over the near term, a great deal of the community’s resources, have been expended on programs to remediate the issues that have contributed to a dearth of qualified labor in Wayne County. As we experience positive changes from these interventions, we are beginning to recognize that ultimately, the most cost effective solutions lie not in remediation but rather, in prevention. Exposure to longitudinal data like the Chicago Study; “State Efforts to Evaluate the Effects of Pre-Kindergarten,” the Carolina Abecedarian Project; “The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey,” along with Robert Dugger’s work on the economic benefits of early ECE, have served to encourage community leaders to begin thinking about preventative alternatives.

Local governments in Wayne County have already expended Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT) funds in support of educational initiatives, and the business community is looking for a more permanent long-range solution to the costs associated with an unqualified labor force. Concurrently, the organizations who provide funding for educational initiatives and ECE programs are seeking to invest their resources in programs that will provide the best long-term benefits and returns.

We are confident that when presented with a plan to implement ECE in Wayne County, governmental, business, and funding organizations will step up to provide financial support for ECE in our county.

VI. COUNTY READINESS

A. Based on the budgeting cycles used by governmental, business, funding organizations, and the time necessary to ramp up our provider capacity, Wayne County would opt to implement the Preschool Pilot Program on July 1, 2015.

B. As mentioned in section III-C, the county would convene an *Engagement Group* to recruit qualified children for the Pilot Program. The group would be comprised, in part, of organizations that serve the target demographic. These organizations, would review their caseloads for potential participants. Based on a unified prepared engagement plan, the *Group* would contract qualified families to enroll them to participate. The *Engagement Group* would also work with eligible providers to help them reach out to qualified families.

We recognize that one of the challenges that families have in engaging their children in ECE programs is transportation. Since the Complete College Indiana group is working on public transportation issues related to adult education and child ECE and daycare, we will work closely with them to help to resolve this issue for families participating in the Pilot Program.

C. Provider capacity – Please refer to IV-B on Wayne County’s plan to increase provider capacity.

Four reasons Wayne County is ready to participate in the Early Learning Pilot Grant Program:

1. Wayne County has a community culture that values education.
 2. Wayne County has a history of successful collaboration among the varied groups, constituencies, and segments of the community.
 3. Wayne County recognizes that early learning and kindergarten readiness are the linchpins for success in education, life, and economic development.
 4. Wayne County has set a prescient for funding educational programs and initiatives.
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