

LCO Community Plan Template

Name of Local Coordinating Organization:	Adams County Connections - ACC (Westminster Public School on Behalf of a county collaborative - WPSOBOACC operating as ACC)
County included in the Catchment Area:	Adams

Primary Contact

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Adams County Connections Overview

The Colorado Universal Preschool Program (UPK), established under HB 22-1295, provides a minimum of 10 hours per week of high-quality, voluntary preschool for every Colorado child in the year before kindergarten. Additional state-funded hours are available based on family needs. The LCOs facilitate equitable access to early childhood and family support programs within their communities. At a high level, LCOs are legislatively tasked with:

- Developing a unified community plan for UPK implementation and long-term early childhood services.
- Coordinating enrollment for universal preschool and other early childhood programs.
- Acting as a local resource for family access to quality early education from birth to five years old.
- Engaging with community partners and stakeholders to strengthen early childhood systems.
- Supporting providers in implementing quality standards, professional development, and educator retention.

LCOs work collaboratively to ensure a seamless, mixed-delivery preschool system by engaging public and private providers. They implement the state's vision while adapting to

local needs.

Adam County Connections operates as a county collaborative and has operated as the Adams LCO since the inception of UPK in 2022. Adams County, with an estimated population of 520,149, includes approximately **6,450 four-year-olds eligible** to participate in UPK. In the 2024-25 school year, approximately 3,700 students were seated in UPK across the county. Universal Preschool operates in a mixed-delivery model with a potential 280 licensed programs serving four year olds (4YO) that include school-based, community-based, and family child care providers. Adams catchment area includes **five school districts**: Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Adams 14, Mapleton Public Schools, Brighton 27J, and Westminster Public Schools. While seating approximately **57% of eligible 4YO** marks a significant step forward, our focus is on increasing access by taking a deeper look at neighborhood-level enrollment data to identify areas with the greatest need and opportunities for growth.

The demographic composition of this group is as follows:

- White (Non-Hispanic): ~3,064 children
- White (Hispanic): ~1,180 children
- Two or More Races (Hispanic): ~826 children
- Other (Hispanic): ~575 children
- Asian (Non-Hispanic): ~248 children
- Black or African American (Non-Hispanic): ~206 children
- Native American (Non-Hispanic): ~26 children

Income disparity across Adams County is significant, with median household incomes varying widely between communities. While some areas report household incomes well above the state median, others struggle with high levels of economic hardship, impacting access to early childhood education. Low-income families in under-resourced neighborhoods often face barriers such as limited transportation, lack of bilingual services, and fewer available UPK seats. Addressing these disparities is a critical component of the LCO's outreach and enrollment strategies, ensuring equitable access for all families, regardless of economic background.

With Hispanic or Latino individuals comprising 41.4% of the total population, Adams County's early childhood landscape is diverse, **requiring targeted strategies to ensure equitable**

access to UPK services. Understanding this demographic landscape allows for more tailored outreach and enrollment strategies, ensuring that all families receive the support they need.

Adams County has **over 280 licensed programs that serve 4 year olds** that ACC could support , for the 23-24 school year Adams had 154 providers participating in UPK's first year and increased to 168 in 24-25 according to the UPK dashboard or approximately **60% of the available providers**. Adams currently has a balanced ratio as compared to the state in the breakdown of providers by setting, including 69 community based programs, 29 home-based and 70 school based programs.

In addition, as of September 2022, Adams County had approximately 11,000 licensed early care and education (ECE) slots available for nearly 29,000 children aged from birth to five with all parents in the labor force. This indicates a significant gap between the demand for and availability of licensed ECE programs in the county as reported by ECPAC after conducting a affordability and accessibility project.

The Adams County Collaborative model was adopted in 2022 after a robust stakeholder and third party process; details on the recommendations can be found in the research and recommendations paper dated June 9, 2022. Partnerships are established within our county collaborative model with continuing support from our local early childhood council, private providers, public school districts, and Human Services. In our first years we have worked to set up our oversight committee, organizational structure, strategic plan, and have developed our guiding mission and vision:

Mission:

Adams County Connections aligns organizations and resources to ensure high quality early childhood service delivery is seamless for families, providers, and, most importantly, children.

Vision: Every young child in Adams County has equitable access to high quality early childhood education and care that sets them on a path to success.

- We Partner: We recognize all members of the Adams County community as valued allies in supporting our youngest residents, welcoming their ideas, contributions and collaborations with open arms.

- We communicate: We value human connection and will always personally respond to questions, requests, emails and calls.
- We support quality childhood experiences: We work to have all Adams county youngest learners in a high quality preschool experience.
- We value those who dedicate their lives to serving children: We recognize the hard work that goes into caring for our youngest residents and find ways, big and small, to acknowledge, validate, and celebrate their impact.
- We empower: We continue to support partners, families, and communities until they are confident and equipped with the capacity to thrive on their own.
- Continuous improvement: We see challenges as learning opportunities, and continually evolve to better serve children, families, communities, and partners.
- Empathy: We strive to recognize and understand the perspectives, feelings and lived experiences of others, including and especially those most different from ourselves, and give one another grace.
- Justice and Equity: We affirm the dignity and worth of each member of our community, while recognizing and working to combat the structural forces (such as racism) that have harmed some groups while benefiting others.

Our Greatest Strength: The County Collaborative Model

Adams County's greatest strength lies in our county collaborative model, which has been instrumental in building a unified, community-driven approach to early childhood education. Our public-private partnership structure allows us to leverage existing relationships, avoid duplication, and ensure coordinated service delivery across Adams County.

The Adams County Collaborative model was adopted in 2022 after a robust stakeholder and third party process; details on the recommendations can be found in the research and recommendations paper dated June 9 2022 attached in our community plan. Partnerships are established within our county collaborative model with continuing support from our local early childhood council, public school districts, and Human Services. Our organizational chart and additional information (including detailed job descriptions) can be found in the supplemental section.

This model fosters deep engagement with school districts, private providers, family child care

homes, and local government agencies, ensuring that Universal Preschool implementation is responsive to the diverse needs of our community. With Westminster Public Schools acting as the fiscal agent, Adams County Connections (ACC) provides the leadership necessary to bring together stakeholders from multiple sectors, ensuring seamless coordination and equitable service delivery. By aligning efforts across county agencies, school districts, and community-based organizations, we have built a collaborative infrastructure that maximizes resources and streamlines service delivery. This approach ensures that every child, regardless of background, has equitable access to high-quality early learning experiences.

Strategic Focus Areas for 2025-26

The Adams County Connections Community Plan prioritizes:

- Sustaining Provider Participation – Maintaining provider engagement in the UPK program to ensure continued access and stability.
- Expanding Outreach to Underserved Families – Addressing barriers such as language, transportation, and economic hardship to improve equitable UPK access.
- Enhancing Data Tracking for Quality & Availability – Monitoring provider quality and seat availability to align with community needs.
- Maximizing Enrollment with Existing Capacity – Increasing UPK participation in low-income areas through targeted strategies.
- Strengthening Cross-Sector Partnerships – Collaborating with local agencies to support family well-being and ensure a holistic approach to early childhood success.
- Supporting UPK Standards Implementation – Providing ongoing assistance to providers in meeting quality standards and accessing resources.

A copy of our 25-26 RFA application can be found at this link.

Conclusion

The Adams County Collaborative Model fosters deep partnerships across public and private sectors, ensuring a coordinated, family-centered early childhood system. Our approach maximizes resources, streamlines services, and ensures equitable access to high-quality preschool experiences for all children in Adams County.

By implementing data-driven strategies, cross-sector partnerships, and community engagement efforts, ACC is committed to expanding UPK access, supporting providers, and strengthening early childhood education for years to come.

Note:

Additionally, WPSOBACC has worked closely with the local council and other key collaborative partners to begin to develop a broader, coordinated larger community plan. This effort ensures alignment across initiatives, prevents duplication of work, and leverages collective resources to maximize impact for families and providers. This work is on-going and a current version of the framework is attached to the community plan in the supplemental section. The community plan is a living document with updates happening in partnership throughout the year.

ACC has worked to align our SOW, community plan, and strategic plan to develop the following:

Outcome 1: Develop & Maintain a Unified Community Plan

- **Strategic Planning & Data-Driven Decision Making**
 - Maintain a data-informed strategic plan and update it regularly.
 - Distribute the plan and gather feedback from stakeholders.
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Collaborate with stakeholders to inform community plan
 - Conduct annual survey
 - Communication strategy to inform stakeholders and gather feedback

Outcome 2: Coordinate Enrollment for Universal Preschool

- **Support Family Enrollment**
 - Utilize Outreach Specialists for direct family support.
 - Implement a tiered recruitment strategy based on neighborhood family and community events:
 - Tier 1 (Below 42% Enrollment): Intensive recruitment, outreach

events, and partnerships.

- Tier 2 (42%-68% Enrollment): Sustained communication and moderate recruitment efforts.
- Tier 3 (Above 68% Enrollment): Ongoing monitoring and support.
 - Attend bilingual in-person enrollment events/site visits community hubs such as at libraries, community centers, events and food banks.
 - Provide technology assistance (e.g., Chromebooks and WiFi access for families with limited broadband or digital literacy).
 - Actively reply to Help Desk tickets and assist all incoming Tier 2 requests
- **Enhance Data Tracking & Transparency**
 - Track enrollment, provider participation, and help desk support requests.
 - Increase enrollment by 5% in Tier 1 neighborhoods (low-enrollment areas).
 - Track provider site visits
 - Track community based events and site visits

Outcome 3: Expand Access & Choice for Families

- **Support a Mixed Delivery System**
 - Onboard school-based, community-based, and family child care providers with a personalized approach to meet the individual needs of each provider with a goal to maintain the current number or more UPK providers.
 - Maintain up-to-date provider availability information.
 - Actively monitor Tier 2 Help Desk tickets and assist all incoming requests
 - Provider tiered personalized on-going support to all providers including in person site visits, zoom calls, events, monthly information sessions, newsletters and help desk responses
 - Communicate and provide updates on social media, newsletters, websites and other marketing materials.
 - Conduct annual surveys to monitor needs from the field and be responsive

- In order to ensure efficiency with two outreach specialist covering over 168 schools a tiered approach will be implemented for providers site visits and recruitment:
 - Tier 1 (Below 42% Enrollment): Intensive recruitment, outreach events, and partnerships.
 - Tier 2 (42%-68% Enrollment): Sustained communication and moderate recruitment efforts.
 - Tier 3 (Above 68% Enrollment): Ongoing monitoring and support.

- **Workforce Support & Professional Development**

- Partner with ECPAC, which takes the lead in workforce development efforts.
- Offer site visits and data to support providers in program decisions (such as correct program and seat options for UPK).
- Train ACC Outreach Specialists in CLASS observation.
- Support monitoring of UPK quality standards and provider observations.
- Support providers in understanding professional development opportunities.
- Identify provider retention barriers through annual surveys.
- Participate in targeted ECE specific community events such as ECPAC resource Fair

Outcome 4: Strengthen Cross-Sector Partnerships

- **Engage with Stakeholders**

- Convene monthly provider meetings and annual stakeholder surveys.
- Strengthen partnerships with Head Start, CCCAP, ECPAC, Human Services, and school districts.
- Launch a Provider Work Group to grow capacity to support providers across the county
- Increase connections with LCO's from across the state

- **Integrated Family Services Model**

- Utilize warm hand-off referrals to connect families to healthcare, nutrition, and financial assistance.

- Provider & System Strengthening: Equip early childhood providers with tools to identify and refer families to essential services, expanding access to CCCAP, Universal Preschool, and Head Start.
- Streamline services using ECPAC's referral platform (childcare-adamsco.org).

Outcome 5: Improve Resource Allocation & Transparency

- **Equitable Seat Distribution**

- Work to support a continued balanced seat allocation between school- and community-based providers.
- Provide real-time reporting on seat availability and demand trends.
- Outreach focus on a tiered approach, dedicated

- **Funding Transparency**

- Report funding utilization **monthly**, ensuring compliance
- Support providers in **accessing multiple funding sources** to sustain quality programming.
- Offer **one-on-one coaching** to providers struggling with financial complexities, helping them navigate eligibility, paperwork, and compliance requirements to ensure they are working with the appropriate expert
- Refer providers to the appropriate source as needed such as CCCAP navigators or head start administrators

This plan is a living document and subject to updates routinely

Assisting Families

Outline outreach strategies and the manner in which the LCO will assist families in applying for UPK, through to the point of enrollment with a suitable provider. This should include equity considerations and plans to prioritize low-income families and those with qualifying factors in the event that demand exceeds supply. While LCOs are only required to implement UPK for the 2025-26 academic year, planning for the integration of other early childhood education and family support programs is encouraged.

Strategic Plan & Key Activities

Outcome 1: Develop & Maintain a Unified Community Plan

- **Strategic Planning & Data-Driven Decision Making**
 - Maintain a data-informed strategic plan and update it regularly.
 - Distribute the plan and gather feedback from stakeholders.
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Collaborate with stakeholders to inform community plan
 - Conduct annual survey
 - Communication strategy to inform stakeholders and gather feedback

Outcome 2: Coordinate Enrollment for Universal Preschool

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- **Enhance Data Tracking & Transparency**
 - Track enrollment, provider participation, and help desk support requests.
 - Increase enrollment by 5% in Tier 1 neighborhoods (low-enrollment areas).
 - Track provider site visits
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Describe plans for coordination with county departments and (where applicable) tribal agencies to promote holistic service provision (including nutrition, cash and healthcare assistance) and facilitate access to family support programs in support of child welfare (including implementation of the Federal “Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018).

Family-Centered, Warm Hand-Off Model: Adams County Connections

Using the Adams County Connections collaborative model, families receive seamless, personalized support through direct referrals, personal introductions, and follow-ups. By strengthening partnerships with Home Providers, Private providers, Human Services, CCCAP, Head Start, ECPAC, and School Districts / Administrative Units (AUs), we are building connect to provide families a warm hand off to child care, financial assistance, healthcare, and wraparound services with guided application assistance rather than passive referrals. Teams across all agencies work in partnership to learn details and connect families to appropriate contacts and programs.

This integrated, family-centered approach will improve early childhood access while ensuring families receive the comprehensive support needed for long-term success.

Outcome 4: Strengthen Cross-Sector Partnerships

- **Engage with Stakeholders**
 - Convene monthly provider meetings and annual stakeholder surveys.
 - Strengthen partnerships with Head Start, CCCAP, ECPAC, Human Services, and school districts.
 - Launch a Provider Work Group to grow capacity to support providers across the county
 - Increase connections with LCO’s from across the state
- **Integrated Family Services Model**
 - Utilize warm hand-off referrals to connect families to healthcare, nutrition, and financial assistance.
 - Provider & System Strengthening: Equip early childhood providers with tools to identify and refer families to essential services, expanding access to CCCAP,

Universal Preschool, and Head Start.

- Streamline services using ECPAC's referral platform (childcare-adamsco.org).

Supporting a Mixed Delivery Model

Detail strategies to recruit and support a variety of school- and community- based providers to ensure a mixed delivery system that provides choice for families. This should include work to support caregivers who are exempted from licensing.

Outcome 3: Expand Access & Choice for Families

- Support a Mixed Delivery System
 - Onboard school-based, community-based, and family child care providers with a personalized approach to meet the individual needs of each provider with a goal to maintain the current number or more UPK providers.
 - Maintain up-to-date provider availability information.
 - Actively monitor Tier 2 Help Desk tickets and assist all incoming requests
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Increasing Capacity in the Early Childhood Sector

Provide an overview of the current landscape of providers in the catchment area as well as the LCO's goals for increasing the mixed delivery capacity available for families. Describe strategies to meet the stated goals for building greater mixed delivery capacity.

Outcome 5: Improve Resource Allocation & Transparency

- **Equitable Seat Distribution**
 - Work to support a continued balanced seat allocation between school- and community-based providers.
 - Provide real-time reporting on seat availability and demand trends.
 - Outreach focus on a tiered approach, dedicated
- **Funding Transparency**
 - Report funding utilization monthly, ensuring compliance
 - Support providers in accessing multiple funding sources to sustain quality programming.

Outline workforce development strategies, including plans to improve recruitment and retention in the early childhood education workforce, achieve living wage compensation and provide professional development.

Outcome 3: Expand Access & Choice for Families

- **Workforce Support & Professional Development**
 - Partner with ECPAC, which takes the lead in workforce development efforts.

- Offer site visits and data to support providers in program decisions.
- Train ACC Outreach Specialists in CLASS observation.
- Support monitoring of UPK quality standards and provider observations.
- Support providers in understanding professional development opportunities.
- Identify provider retention barriers through annual surveys.
- Participate in targeted ECE specific community events such as ECPAC resource Fair

Working in Partnership

Describe plans for the continued engagement of providers, families and community partners in decision making around the implementation of Universal Preschool. This may include outreach activities to ensure that marginalized groups within the community are represented.

Outcome 4: Strengthen Cross-Sector Partnerships

- **Engage with Stakeholders**
 - Convene monthly provider meetings and annual stakeholder surveys.
 - Strengthen partnerships with Head Start, CCCAP, ECPAC, Human Services, and school districts.
 - Launch a Provider Work Group to grow capacity to support providers across the county
 - Increase connections with LCO's from across the state

Specify relevant coordination arrangements with other LCOs to provide access to programs delivered by providers in other communities. For example, connecting families in border regions with providers in another catchment area.

Metro LCOs have met regularly since the implementation of UPK, with two all-state meetings hosted by ACC to ensure alignment. A warm hand-off approach has been established across

groups, supported by the help desk software, allowing for reassignment and documentation of referrals. These agreements ensure seamless enrollment, and referral processes to maximize program accessibility for families who may have limited options within their immediate geographic area. Regular cross-catchment meetings will continue to address emerging challenges, improve service alignment, and maintain compliance with state and local UPK regulations. In addition, Adams partners with El Paso and Buell to host a LCO Retreat. See the supplemental section for the report link.

Managing and Allocating Resources

Explain how the LCO will ensure the equitable allocation of UPK seats among school- and community- based providers, with the goal of maximizing the use of funding to meet community needs (including the need for full day care).

Outcome 5: Improve Resource Allocation & Transparency

- **Equitable Seat Distribution**
 - Work to support a continued balanced seat allocation between school- and community-based providers.
 - Provide real-time reporting on seat availability and demand trends.
 - Outreach focus on a tiered approach, dedicated

Describe how the LCO will meet the department requirement to maintain transparency within the community concerning the amount of funding available and used to support early childhood education and family support programs, including all funding sources.

- **Funding Transparency**
 - Report funding utilization **monthly**, ensuring compliance
 - Support providers in **accessing multiple funding sources** to sustain quality programming.

Explain how the LCO will work with local and tribal agencies to ensure that the public funding available to families is combined and coordinated to seamlessly provide early childhood and family support programs and services.

- Offer **one-on-one coaching** to providers struggling with financial complexities, helping them navigate eligibility, paperwork, and compliance requirements to ensure they are working with the appropriate expert
- Refer providers to the appropriate source as needed such as CCCAP navigators or head start administrators.

Supplemental Information

Please use this space to add any additional information, as required.

Supplemental Section Includes:

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- Neighborhood Enrollment Data...Page 18
- Organized Mind Map...Page 21
- Organizational Chart...Page 22
- Job Descriptions..Page 23

Innovation and Strategic Investments

Beyond supporting provider enrollment, we have proactively pursued philanthropic funding to enhance family choice and equitable access to early childhood education. These initiatives include:

- Enrollment Mapping Work – A data-driven approach to identifying service gaps and ensuring that all families—particularly those with the highest need—have access to UPK opportunities.
- Unified Application Pilot – A streamlined application process that simplifies enrollment for families and providers, reducing barriers to access and improving efficiency.
- Targeted Social Media Campaigns – a targeted marketing partnership to improve UPK social presence
- LCO Retreat – We believe that strengthening the LCO network will yield a stronger system to serve all families. In November we hosted a second LCO retreat funded by Buell Foundations in partnership with El Paso County. Our solutions-oriented approach formalized an advisory local lead system to strengthen LCO and CDEC partnerships.

By leveraging these innovations and maintaining strong collaboration with our diverse network of providers, Adams County Connections continues to strengthen the mixed delivery model and uphold our commitment to family choice, accessibility, and equitable early childhood education opportunities.

Neighborhood Enrollment Data:

In partnership and funded by Gary Community Ventures, ACC sought to create baseline data in an enrollment mapping project to help drive the strategic plan. Additional Details on this project can be found on a public website @ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6ef5482dbca94d69a0bc76773ce920fc>. Based on the provided data, the following table outlines the Universal Preschool (UPK) enrollment percentages for various neighborhoods in Adams County for the 2023-2024 school year:

Neighborhood	UPK Students Enrolled	Births in 2020	Estimated Enrollment Percentage
East Brighton	140	136	100%
Barr Lake State Park	317	365	87%
Wyco Park, Northeast Northglenn	46	62	74%
Todd Creek and East Thornton	359	510	70%
South Commerce City	202	296	68%
Central Commerce City	216	320	68%
Benedict Park, Central Brighton	103	161	64%
West Brighton	92	148	62%
North Thornton	273	470	58%
Derby, Southeast Thornton, and Southwest Commerce City	76	134	57%
Quail Crossing Park	48	86	56%
Federal Heights and Sherrelwood	234	448	52%
Riverdale Park and South Thornton	240	492	49%

South Westminster	160	336	48%
Southwest Thornton	194	404	48%
Welby and East North Washington	83	180	46%
North Central Westminster	69	154	45%
Central Northglenn	121	269	45%
West Northglenn	22	53	42%
Federal Heights North	22	58	38%
Twin Lakes, Berkely, and West North Washington	117	374	31%
Westminster Center Park	31	100	31%
Big Dry Creek	28	103	27%
Northeast Adams	17	119	14%
North Aurora	44	371	12%
Montview Park	31	36	9%

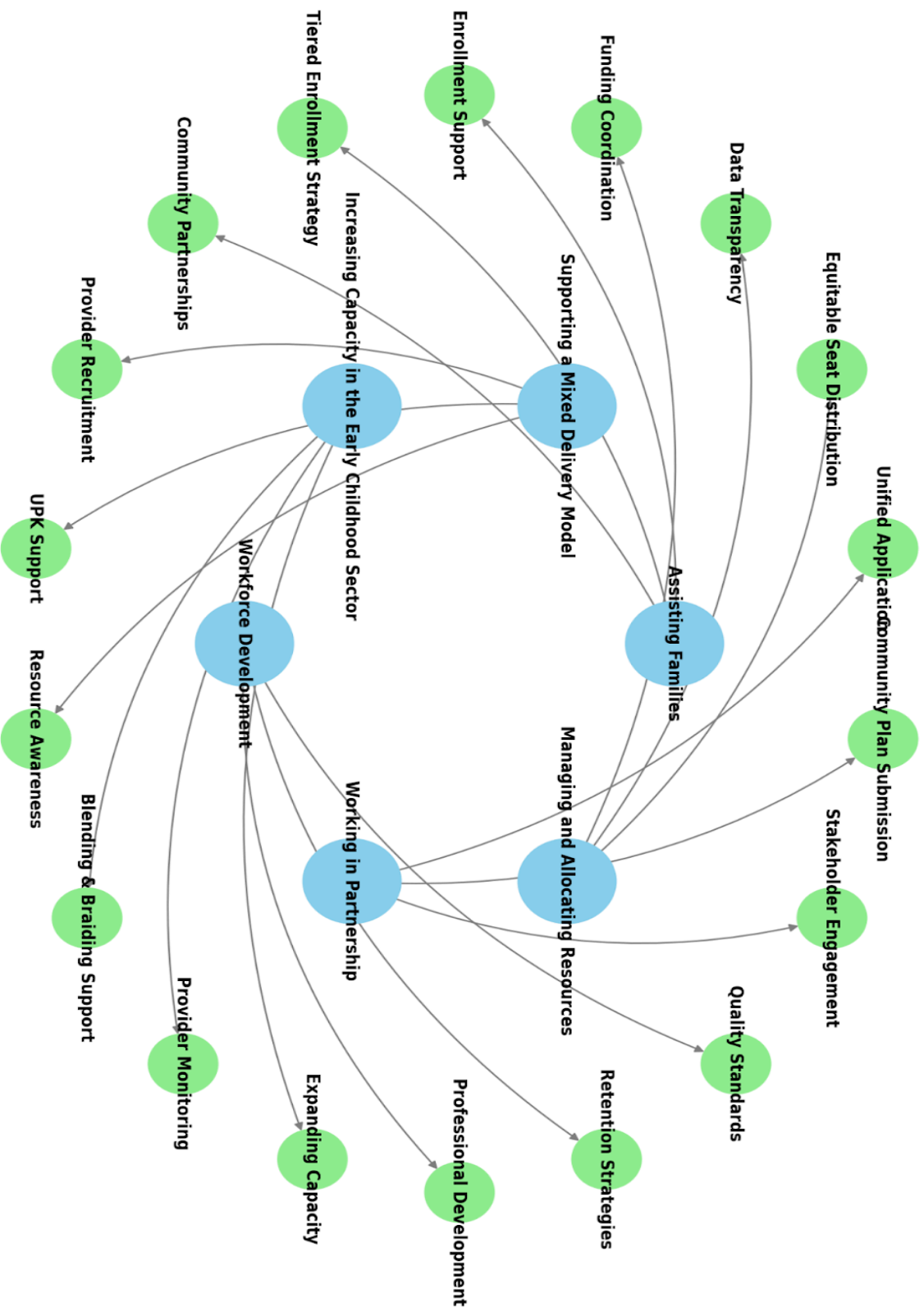
For the 2025-2026 school year, the executive committee has identified eight neighborhoods with enrollment percentages at 42% or below as focal points for increasing UPK participation. The goal is to boost enrollment in these areas by 5%. The targeted neighborhoods are:

- **West Northglenn:** 42% enrollment
- **Federal Heights North:** 38% enrollment
- **Twin Lakes, Berkely, and West North Washington:** 31% enrollment
- **Westminster Center Park:** 31% enrollment
- **Big Dry Creek:** 27% enrollment
- **Northeast Adams:** 14% enrollment
- **North Aurora:** 12% enrollment

- **Montview Park:** 9% enrollment

By implementing targeted outreach and support strategies in these communities, Adams County Connections aims to enhance access to early childhood education and improve overall enrollment rates.

Adams County LCO Community Plan - Organized Mind Map





ORGANIZATION CHART



ACC Mission

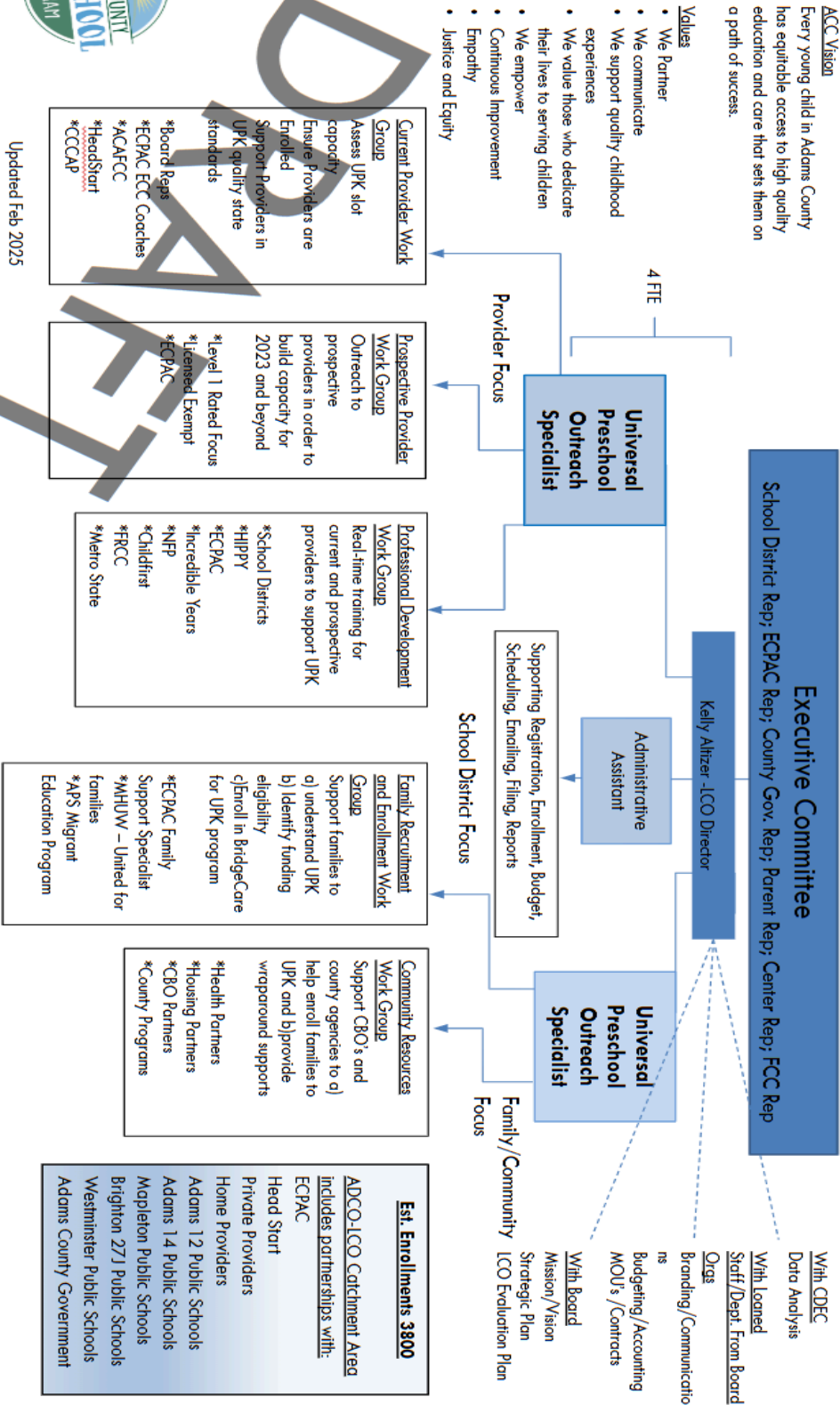
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ACC Vision

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Values

- We Partner
- We communicate
- We support quality childhood experiences
- We value those who dedicate their lives to serving children
- We empower
- Continuous Improvement
- Empathy
- Justice and Equity



Updated Feb 2025