

The Mission and History of the Children's Museum

- ✓ The Museum transforms communities through innovative, child-centered learning, achieving this goal by 1) fostering the development of the region's significant child population; 2) increasing and supporting parents' engagement in their children's learning; 3) providing learning experiences that reinforce and supplement school classroom instruction; 4) reducing the effects of poverty on learning; 5) serving a multicultural, multilingual population; and 6) promoting workforce preparedness through the development of 21st century learning skills.
- ✓ CMH was founded in 1980 by parents responding to a community-wide need for interdisciplinary and participatory educational exhibits and programs for children from birth through twelve. The first exhibit was presented in 1984, with operations initiated at a leased facility in 1985. A \$10 million capital campaign raised the funds needed to open the Museum's permanent home in Houston's Museum District in 1992. A second capital/endowment campaign raised \$35 million to enlarge the Museum's facilities and expand programming regionally and nationally, with expansion completed in 2009 featuring thirteen new exhibits, an enhanced Parent Resource Library that serves as a Houston Public Library branch, and the outreach resources of the Institute for Family Learning. A third capital campaign raised \$4 million for a sister museum opened in Fort Bend in 2016. An additional \$3 million has been raised since 20145 to grow the endowment's corpus.

The Museum at 1500 Binz

- ✓ The Museum hosts thirteen exhibits, a branch of the Houston Public Library, a performing arts series, and bilingual programming that changes with every WonderWeek theme.
- ✓ Attendance totaled to 800,000 in FY17.
- ✓ Free admission was provided to 30% of visitors in FY17 via weekly Free Family Nights and Open Doors admission passes distributed to low-income families by 949 community-based organizations.
- ✓ Demographics reflect the community, with people of Hispanic descent accounting for 47% of visitors, followed by African Americans (23%), Anglos (21%), and Asian Americans (8%).

In the Community

- ✓ The Museum provides five out-of-school-time programs that operate throughout the school year and summer months, two literacy programs, and three types of parent engagement programming. In FY17, programming was facilitated at 430+ locations across the Greater Houston area, with attendance of 445,600 parents and children.
- ✓ Low-income Hispanic families account for 84% of outreach participants.
- ✓ Every family within the 500+ square miles inside of Beltway 8 lives within two miles of an organization that hosts the Museum's outreach programming and/or distributes the Museum's Open Doors passes.

The Museum's Educational Approach

- ✓ External and internal assessments guide program development and are overseen by a PdD level curriculum specialist on staff under the leadership of the Board's Evaluation Committee, chaired by Dr. Catherine Horn, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Houston.
- ✓ All exhibits and programming facilitate learning related to building literacy skills, executive skills, and STEAM skills (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/design, and Mathematics) in alignment with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards that structure learning in the public school system.
- ✓ Work with parents enables them to provide crucial interactions during children's early years and then partner with teachers to keep children engaged in activities that give them confidence in their ability to learn and explore emerging interests.
- ✓ Work with children equips them to take the lead in project-based activities that build knowledge and skills, including the important "soft skills" of creativity, communication, collaboration, computation thinking and problem solving.

Children's Museum of Houston - Strategic Plan

Transforming communities through innovative, child-centered learning.

The Museum's Strategic Plan is a three-year blueprint updated annually with Board approval, which considers several key factors impacting our audience and industry. These factors include educational and economic changes ranging from the local level to a global one, our history of serving as a catalyst to produce social and educational impacts, the unique needs of families living in the Houston area as defined by them, and current best practices being implemented by leaders in the field of education. The plan's focus is on the action plans needed to address six key community needs.

These six key needs of the Houston community, identified through a periodic community needs assessment scan, drive the allocation of our resources and involve: 1) fostering the development of the 1.5 million children in the 5-county Houston area; 2) increasing and supporting parental engagement in children's learning; 3) providing learning experiences that reinforce and supplement school classroom instruction; 4) addressing the negative effects that poverty has on educational attainment; 5) serving a multicultural, multilingual population; and 6) promoting workforce preparedness.

With a guiding framework of 74 criteria focusing on best practices as established by IMLS, the Museum has prioritized its efforts to address six priority needs through the action objectives of Human Capital, Physical Infrastructure and Information Technology, Exhibits and Program Impact, Partnerships, Vision and Planning, Resource Allocation and Sustainability, and Outcomes Measurement. These objectives are supported with specific timing, output, outcome, and cost targets that form the basis for each department's annual action plan, each of which is monitored and reported monthly by staff and Board.

Community Need #1: Foster the development of Houston's significant child population by a) providing experiential learning through hands-on exhibits; b) partnering with other organizations for collective impact including Early Matters initiative (a coalition of non-profits, school districts, and businesses working to have the region's children read at grade level by the end of third grade) and My Brother's Keeper initiative (a coalition of city government agencies, NGOs, schools, and neighborhood associations to improve social well-being factors affecting health outcomes); c) involving expert advisors for information and guidance; d) seeking opportunities for funding that afford both incremental and broad scale improvements; e) employing best practices with regards to all support systems operations. Four of the eighteen action criteria include a) advance and customize people-to-people engagement with exhibit and program content; b) engage researchers and other experts, teachers, and children in the development of offerings across six domains of work involving literacy, math, special learning needs, technology, making/tinkering and evaluation; c) host Sensory Friendly and Explore Abilities days, modifying exhibits as recommended by local experts and parents of children with autism; d) assess needs for new cultural programming that welcomes new immigrants and audiences; e) develop and launch new evaluation metrics ("Unit of Good") that enable cross program comparison and aggregated Museum-wide reporting; and f) refine the development of measurement scales aligned with the Museum's six educational domain goals.

Community Need #2: Increase and support parents' engagement in their children's learning by a) designing exhibits that help parents engage with their children and facilitate their children's learning; b) providing outreach programs that advance parents' abilities to serve as key teachers for their children; c) developing and sustaining strategic partnerships with experts, coalitions and organizations that increase the Museum's impact; d) integrating language development opportunities and prompts into all exhibits and programs; and e) maximizing digital connections for adults to the Museum's physical experiences in ways that highlight, extend, and deepen learning. Four of the fifteen action criteria include a) revise exhibit prototyping and evaluation protocols to measure family engagement and parent facilitation outcomes in addition to standard learning and engagement measures; b) investigate best practices that could be used to augment Museum approaches and increase linkages between on-site and off-site programming; c) increase collective impact through the delivery of services in partnership with Houston's Early Matters Coalition, My Brothers' Keeper,

the Ready Rosie initiative of area school districts, the United Way Education Collaborative, and Out 2 Learn Initiative; and d) deploy a year-long execution plan for increasing the language development content of exhibits and programs.

Community Need #3: Provide learning experiences that reinforce and supplement school classroom instruction by a) refining and documenting high-quality curriculum and instructional strategies; b) aligning pedagogies and specific activities with Texas standards, data on achievement issues and needs for learning experiences that are difficult to deliver during the school day; c) providing professional development experiences for teachers and para-professionals that focus on project-based learning techniques; d) delivering out-of-school programs and curriculum that advance the impact or fill gaps in classroom instruction; and e) building strategic partnerships with school faculty and administrators that are mutually beneficial. Three of fourteen action criteria include a) qualify instructional strategies for replication while identifying a curriculum management system that enables efficient cataloging and tracking of iterations; b) develop an ad hoc committee tasked with identifying learning engagement that is impractical if deployed within classroom settings but ideally suited for Museum offerings; and c) align professional development offerings with the Museum's Online Curriculum and provide any unique materials required for classroom implementation.

Community Need #4: Reduce the effects of poverty on learning by a) ensuring that families can engage freely and at their convenience in Museum exhibits and outreach programming regardless of ability to pay admission; b) aligning museum efforts with successful community-based initiatives working in low income neighborhoods; c) working to close the 30-million-word gap through consistent co-messaging with partners such as Houston Basics; and d) collaborating with social service partners to connect families with services. Four of eight action criteria include a) maintain the network of Open Doors partners so that every family living within the 500+ square miles of Houston's Beltway 8 is located within two miles of a partner(s) that distributes the Museum's Open Doors admission passes and/or hosts the Museum's community-based programming; b) determine geographic and goal alignments with leading community initiatives; and c) continue conducting needs assessments within focus communities including 5 Opportunity Communities.

Community Need #5: Serve a multicultural/multilingual population by a) institution-wide commitment to English and Spanish languages; b) ensuring that families can engage in Museum exhibits and outreach programming regardless of primary language; c) providing adapted programming for special populations that are not able to make use of the Museum exhibits otherwise; d) designing programming that welcomes and encourages use by all, regardless of cultural background; e) delivering culturally authentic programming that honors cultural backgrounds of those in the Houston area at the same time that it introduces others to cultural traditions other than their own; f) providing staff, volunteers, and performers who are themselves members of diverse ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. Four of seven action criteria include a) maintain bilingual (English/ Spanish) commitments in signage and staff serving in all public positions.

Community Need #6: Promote workforce preparedness through the development of 21st century skills by a) advancing skills that promote workplace success; b) designing self-directed learning experiences that encourage deep engagement, problem solving, and related social interactions; and c) maintain a volunteer program that enables visitors to engage with professionals in the STEM disciplines. Seven action criteria include a) increase the engagement of children and their families served on-site and off-site in computational thinking, coding, and coding applications such as robotics; b) use an evaluation system that employs multiple methodologies to enable the triangulation of data; c) develop additional alignments between Museum programming and Executive Function skills; d) advance technologies related to app use at the Museum and in related activities at home in ways that are relevant to visitors' needs and evolve toward providing feedback on learning; and e) provide programming that enables users to see themselves as aspirational learners and/or in various career roles.

1. Statement of Need

What we propose to do: The Children's Museum of Houston (CMH), City of Houston Health Department (HHD) and additional partners including Houston Public Library will advance the vision of two cross-sector collective impact initiatives, My Brother's Keeper Houston (MBK) and Early Matters (see attached letters of collaboration), by establishing community demonstration projects supporting parents in two neighborhoods of concentrated disadvantage with early learning strategies related to literacy development they can use with their child during the first three years of life. Residents in the two neighborhoods – Gulfton and Near Northside – have recently self-identified through convenings hosted by Mayor Sylvester Turner's office as having desires to increase their children's learning achievement. The *Houston Basics Complete Communities (Basics²)* project is designed to address these communities' desires by helping families build solid foundations and trajectories for kindergarten readiness and 3rd grade reading proficiency. Across the 2-year project period (10-1-2018 to 9-30-2020), the demonstration projects will be fully active using a responsive design for 1 year, with 6 months of advance planning and 6 months reporting and sharing at the end.

Basics² Guiding Vision - All children in Greater Houston will enter school ready to learn and will read at or above grade level by the end of 3rd grade. (drawn from the visions common to both MBK and Early Matters)

Basics² Project Goal – Basics² will help fulfill low income parents' desires to support their children's learning success by providing a collective impact-supported integrated suite of common messages and evidence-based early learning programs related to literacy development that are conveyed through "persons of trust" using a responsive design, neighborhood-based approach.

Project Objectives/Deliverables

1. Develop, implement and document community demonstration projects in 2 historically under-resourced neighborhoods through existing collective impact and community development partnerships.
2. For the demonstration projects, use two (English and Spanish) birth-3 programs – Welcome Baby and Houston Basics – that will build on partnership and program assets that already exist in the neighborhoods.
 - a. Distribute 1,000 Welcome Baby infant literacy bags through a "person or trust" to at least 90% of parents of neighborhood infants born between February 2019 and February 2020 (through matching funds).
 - b. Engage at least 1,000 parents of children birth-3 in Houston Basics family learning workshops at neighborhood libraries, places of faith, schools or community centers April 2019 to March 2020.
 - c. Map the linkages to other birth to 3-year-old program assets within the demonstration neighborhoods.
3. Use responsive design to modify the demonstration project approaches for each neighborhood through daily management and 6 quarterly check-points with parent advisors, evaluators and partners.
4. Measure progress and efficacy of the demonstration projects (see performance goals chart on page 7).
5. Build a flexible expansion model to be applied in other under-resourced Houston neighborhoods.
6. Share the Basics² "play book" with other cities through museums and libraries that are connected to collective impact initiatives or could better connect with those initiatives with the Basics² resources in hand.

Houston facts and related early learning needs: With a 2016 U.S. Census estimated population of 2.3 million, Houston is the largest city in the southern U.S. and fourth largest in the nation (houston.tx.gov, 2018). More than 145 languages are spoken, and the city is currently the most diverse in the U.S., having recently surpassed LA and NYC. Racial makeup of Houston is 24% African American, 26% White, 6% Asian, and 44% Hispanic. Rice University social scientist Stephen Klineberg reported in his 36th annual 2018 Houston Area Survey,

The nation as a whole is in the midst of an epic transition, as an earlier generation, predominantly Anglo and now aging, is being replaced by a new generation of Americans, largely composed of immigrants and their children, who are a mix of all the world's ethnicities and religions. [...] No

metropolitan area in America has been transformed as fully, as completely, as suddenly, and as irreversibly as Houston, Texas. (p. 14)

Children 5 and under comprise 7.96% of the Houston population, the largest percentage compared to the 3 other largest U.S. cities (NYC, LA, and Chicago) and also all major cities in Texas. More than 25% of these children live in poverty, with 74% considered economically disadvantaged. Within the specific demonstration project communities, Gulfton has 3,700 children at or below 5 years old and Near Northside has 2,200. In Gulfton 48% of these children are living with household incomes of less than \$25,000, 40% in Near Northside. These children living in under-resourced and often over-stressed homes are those most likely not receiving the learning opportunities needed for school readiness and success. "Only 4% of Harris County childcare centers are nationally accredited" and ~75% are totally unregulated (Early Matters, 2018). The hardest to reach child-population in Houston is birth-3 due to this lack of organized and regulated childcare before the age of 4 when economically disadvantaged children can register for limited prekindergarten slots in Houston ISD.

Sixty percent of Houston children entering kindergarten each year lack the requisite reading skills. These shortfalls are compounded as children progress in school, with 1 in 4 third graders failing the State's reading assessment across the past 4 years (Texas Education Agency, 2018). "Children who do not read on level by the end of Grade 3 have only a 1 in 8 chance of ever catching up and are 4 times more likely to drop out of school" (Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, 2018). Houston has an early learning problem!

These school readiness and achievement issues are disproportionately impactful for Hispanic and African-American children, who comprise roughly 70% of the child population in Houston (Texas Demographic Center, 2014). In 2016, Hispanic and African-American children were 2 times more likely to fail the State 3rd grade reading assessment (Texas Education Agency, 2018). **Dr. Stephen Klineberg confirmed through his 2018 Houston Area Survey that these achievement gaps are "demonstrably not because they do not value ... education or recognize its importance." It relates to poverty. (p. 13)**

Hurricane Harvey exacerbates these issues, with a 10-year or greater horizon for full recovery. In the 2 demonstration neighborhoods alone, an estimated 5,098 housing units were affected. Parents and children served by Basics² will still be dealing with the related trauma and aftereffects when Basics² launches.

How the project addresses the funding initiative: Houston has two collective impact "backbone" organizations focused on early learning. The My Brother's Keeper Houston (MBK) backbone is the Houston Health Department (HHD) by assignment of the Mayor in 2014 (immediately after President Obama initiated the program). The Early Matters collective impact backbone is the newly established Good Reason Houston organization that arose from a need for better structure and decision-making systems for the expanding Early Matters initiative. The Stanford Social Innovation Review (July 2012) refers to collective impact backbone organizations as most commonly seeking "to improve social outcomes by organizing cross-sector groups of partners to transform an often inefficient, fragmented system," exactly what those in Houston have been seeking to do for the past 4 years. Early Matters has been developing strategies and defining common goal metrics and the MBK initiative has been steadily implementing programs according to the Whitehouse-established 6 milestones as funding and partners have been secured. The birth-3 objectives of both organizations have been in the process of planned alignment for the past 6 months (Dec. 2017 through May 2018), with Houston Basics soon to be considered as the common messaging. The Children's Museum of Houston has been one of four partners helping to advance this alignment process, with the other three including Houston Health Department, Early Matters and Quianta Moore, MD (Rice University Baker Institute Fellow of Child Health Policy and the Museum's early brain development curriculum development partner).

CMH has developed two programs that meet the vision and needs of both backbone organizations - Welcome Baby bags and Houston Basics workshops (see pg. 3). In the case of Welcome Baby, the Museum pursued a pilot aligned with the Early Matters vision, outside of any initial backing by Early Matters. Through pilot success, Welcome Baby has gained Early Matters' support. For Houston Basics, the Museum was invited by HHD to develop a family learning workshop series supporting the Houston Basics concepts. Development of these two programs (afforded by local funding secured by CMH) has increased the Museum's leadership in Houston collective impact initiatives. With IMLS funding, this leadership by the Museum would be advanced further, evaluated, and documented as a model for local expansion and sharing with other LAMs.

Other community efforts such as LISC's Go Neighborhoods and the Houston Mayor's Complete Communities have been working with residents in underserved Houston communities to better understand their needs and wants for their families and neighborhoods. Findings from these community conversations have been used to plan Basics² and identify the 2 communities that are most prepared for and interested in family early learning resources. Both have a strong Houston Public Library presence (Southwest Express Library in Gulfton and Carnegie Library in Near Northside) that is well-connected with the community development work and Houston collective impact efforts (see Houston Public Library letter of collaboration).

Key facts and events that are the basis/impetus of the project: When CMH staff members brought activities to the shelters after Hurricane Harvey in August 2017, it was common to hear, "The Children's Museum is here! The Children's Museum is here!" CMH staff members were even recognized by name because the families already knew us through our outreach efforts. This brand recognition, which is associated with highly-desirable and elective family learning is a 2-decade-strong foundation for the programs and strategies of Basics².

Welcome Baby program

In 2013, Early Matters (earlymattershouston.org) was launched as the first successful cross-sector, community-wide collective impact initiative in Houston focused on early learning. CMH was a founding member of the Steering Committee and the Family Engagement and Support Working Group, as was our lead partner in this proposal, the Houston Health Department. The vision of Early Matters is, "By 2025, all Greater Houston area students will be reading at or above grade level by the end of 3rd grade." Those 2025 3rd graders were born in 2016, and at that time there was no community-wide, collective effort to reach each of the parents of these infants with resources to support literacy development in the first year of life. This gap in service prompted the inception of Welcome Baby, a project planned in 2016 and piloted in 2017 by CMH.

Designed for parents with infants ages 2-9 months with retail quality in mind, the Welcome Baby bag of English or Spanish resources is gifted to participating families by a "person of trust" with whom they have an existing relationship, such as WIC Navigators, home visit specialists, CMH educators, or healthcare professionals. Distribution begins at 2 months so parents have those first months to become comfortable with the basic care routines of their infant. These bags, developed through input from multiple parent advisory groups, contain (see photos in supplemental documents):

- an interactive mirror, soft-play wrist rattle, and board book with Vroom cards attached to each that suggest engagement strategies and also describe the related brain development;
- print resources including an infant developmental milestones chart, a brochure of 100 Great Books for Infants, a flyer introducing Houston Basics and inviting parents to watch the 6-video series, and a card from Houston's Collaborative for Children that helps parents find quality childcare; and
- coupons and samples for baby and mother products along with a Free Family Pass to CMH.

For the initial pilot, the Museum recruited and trained five distribution partners including AVANCE, Collaborative for Children, Houston Health Department WIC, Legacy Health, and Texas Children's Hospital upWORDS. Each partner gifted the bags through a "person of trust" to their parent clients with infants in the 2-9 month age range, using a Museum-developed script and prompts to discuss the reason behind each resource and how they could be used. The largest distributors for the pilot roll-out were CMH and the 13 WIC centers of HHD, further solidifying our partnership and the blend between Welcome Baby and Houston Basics in the effort to use a common set of messages in our work with families.

Key Welcome Baby Pilot Findings – Based on analysis of 219 pre and post surveys matched by respondent, beliefs and practices reported in the post-survey changed as follows compared to the pre-survey:

- 45% lowered the age at which they believe children begin gaining literacy skills (sometimes by years).
- 28% increased their reading frequency with their infant (in some cases from never or rarely to often).
- 76% said the Welcome Baby resources gave them ideas for how to engage with their baby.

The Welcome Baby pilot distribution of 1,000 bags was funded by Herman H. Fleishman Foundation and Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, which are both also supporting 2018 distribution of another 1,000 bags with the same original partners. Additionally, The Powell Foundation has awarded the Museum a grant to increase the annual distribution of Welcome Baby by 10-fold to 10,000 bags a year for the next two years. The Powell funding would serve as a partial match to the IMLS award if received.

Houston Basics program

In 2014, Houston Health Department amassed a cross-sector group of organizations to form the strategies for each of the 6 My Brother's Keeper Houston milestones focused on cradle to career development. HHD Public Health Education Chief Kristi Rangel explains the MBK social well-being focus, "The reason we are housed in the Houston Health Department is because our work is designed to address the social determinants of health, which is education, health, wellness etc. ... We have a wholistic approach to addressing problems because we can entertain all aspects of an issue." The first two milestones are focused on early learning. MBK's primary focus is to support the Mayor's Complete Communities initiative through which 5 of the most historically under-resourced communities in Houston are in the process of becoming "complete" (with the necessary and desired resources) under the leadership of coalitions including residents.

To fulfill the objectives in MBK Milestone 1, Houston joined the Basics Learning Network, an effort originally launched by Ronald Ferguson, PhD, at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, to address needs for common and clear messaging in Boston with a well-crafted, parent-focused set of universal reasons and strategies for advancing early learning. Houston Basics (created from Boston Basics with Dr. Ferguson's permission) is a philosophy and series of 6 videos in English and Spanish (<http://bit.ly/HoustonBasics>). Houston Basics encourages families with children birth-3 to employ strategies that support development related to each of five themes: Talk, Sing, and Point; Read and Discuss Stories; Explore through Movement and Play; Count, Group and Compare; and Maximize Love, Manage Stress. The Houston Basics videos launched in Fall 2016.

In Spring 2017, HHD invited CMH to be their curriculum development partner for Houston Basics. Dr. Ferguson was at the time focused on measurement and network growth and had yet to develop any related curriculum by which parents could, in groups, further explore The Basics. In February 2018, CMH completed the development of 3 Houston Basics workshops aligned with Count, Group and Compare; Maximize Love, Manage Stress; and Read and Discuss Stories. (As additional funding is received, the other two workshops will be developed.) These Houston Basics 1-hour workshops are facilitated by a CMH bilingual educator and other CMH trainees at community centers and libraries, with a shortened 30-minute version used by the Navigators (teaching staff) at 13 WIC Centers managed by HHD. The workshops begin with the relevant Houston Basics

video followed by sing-alongs and story readings interspersed with dialogue among the leader and parents about the strategies and why they are useful. During the second half of each session, parents engage in six activities (fewer in the half-hour version) with their child(ren) that reinforce the Houston Basics theme of focus.

Key Houston Basics Workshop Pilot Findings – Based on 59 pilot participant surveys:

- 91% learned how to include counting, grouping, or comparing in everyday activities with their infant.
- 89% gained new ideas on how to incorporate singing to their baby.
- 83% learned how to discuss stories by using illustrations while reading to their child.

How the project complements and builds upon previous work: Since the mid-1990's, CMH has been dedicated to reducing access barriers related to ability to pay admission or travel to the Museum. Through this work the Museum's brand is well-known and trusted among Houston families, as evidenced by a study conducted by a former Ford Foundation researcher stating that the Museum had "mastered the art of outreach" with CMH community-based programming proving "equally as effective as the experiences created for visitors to the Museum" and that communities of color and immigrants trusted and valued CMH (City of Houston Cultural Arts Plan, 2015). Of the 800,000 attendees to the Museum each year, 27% receive free admission, and an additional 450,000 children and their families participate in CMH outreach at 430+ locations throughout Greater Houston. The Museum has over 949 Open Doors partners including NGOs, social service agencies, health care, and faith-based organizations. These partners are the reason for CMH's broad reach, as they distribute Free Family Passes, share Museum program information with the families they serve, and invite CMH to host family and afterschool programming at their sites in the community. Within Houston's Beltway 8, all families live within a 2-mile radius of one or more of the Museum's partners.

Welcome Baby is based on CMH's 15 years of successful family learning kit development and distribution. The most recently developed precursor is the Family Literacy Involvement Program (FLIP, FlipKits.org) that CMH launched in 2010 in partnership with Houston Public Library (HPL) through an IMLS National Leadership Grant (IMLS LG-30-07-0179). FLIP is a collection of 243 (replicated into 2,430) activity kits families check out from any of 39 (currently 31 because of Hurricane Harvey closures) HPL locations. Each kit contains a book, activity instructions, and related materials. They are available in 5 age groupings, infant to 3rd grade, and in 6 languages – English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Urdu and Arabic. FLIP has since been adapted into 52 Houston ISD elementary schools for use between adult mentors and emerging readers. In 2017, a new FLIP Keep It Kit model was developed, one kit version available in each of the 5 age groupings. The free bilingual Keep It Kits were used after Hurricane Harvey to replace lost books in destroyed homes and to encourage subsequent check-out of FLIP kits at HPL.

The CMH-developed Houston Basics family workshops are based on the Museum's Para los Niños workshop format originally developed in 2003 [IMLS LG-30-03-0244, cmhouston.org/para-los-ninos] in collaboration with HPL with evaluation by Dr. Cecilia Garibay. CMH, in the mid-1990s, was one of the few Museums in the U.S. that was fully bilingual in English and Spanish. At the time, HPL was challenged to serve the needs of parents who were monolingual in Spanish through their family programming and collections. Para los Niños was born out of a need by HPL and an expertise by CMH and has operated annually since inception serving more than 7,000 parents and children each year with strategies they can use at home to support their children's early learning. After hosting a Para los Niños showcase for the HHD Houston Basics team in Spring 2017, the Museum was asked to develop similar curriculum aligned with Houston Basics videos.

Projects' fit within CMH's strategic plan: CMH operates with a mission to "transform communities through innovative child-centered learning." As detailed in the attached Strategic Plan synopsis, this mission is accomplished through programs and partnerships designed to meet 6 Houston community needs: 1) fostering

the development of the 1.5 million children in Greater Houston; 2) increasing and supporting parental engagement in children's learning; 3) providing learning experiences that reinforce and supplement school classroom instruction; 4) protecting against the negative effects that poverty has on educational attainment; 5) serving a multicultural, multilingual population; and 6) promoting workforce preparedness. Basics² has the potential to directly address needs 1, 2, 4 and 5 in the short term during the grant period and needs 3 and 6 in the longer term as strong early foundations relate to later success.

Audiences the project seeks to involve: With an eventual goal of reaching all under-resourced families in Houston, Basics² will initially be established in 2 demonstration neighborhoods, in close partnership with local organizations and residents. Both are LISC Go Neighborhoods and Mayor's Complete Communities. **In Near Northside**, 81% of residents are Hispanic and 68% speak Spanish at home. Forty-four percent of adults lack a high school diploma and 10% hold a Bachelor's degree. CMH has 16 CBO partners, with 70,149 residents in the associated Houston Councilmember's District having participated in CMH programming in 2017. **In Gulfton**, 73% of residents are Hispanic and 70% speak Spanish at home. Thirty-nine percent of adults lack a high school diploma and 15% hold a Bachelor's degree. CMH has 18 CBO partners, with 72,034 residents in the associated Councilmember's District having participated in CMH programming in 2017.

How audiences' voices will be heard and enable new related coalitions to form: Using a responsive design strategy, project partners have agreed to continue providing Basics² leadership with the community resident feedback they receive about the project as well as with broader community needs gained through forums they hold. Additionally, they will help the Museum organize quarterly convenings with participants. These partners include Mayor's Office of Education Director Juliet Stipeche, Gulfton Super Neighborhood President Sandra Rodriguez, Avenue CDC Deputy Director Jenifer Wagley, LISC Executive Director Amanda Timm (see letters of support). The project is designed to be immediately responsive to this feedback.

2. Impact

Alignment of Basics² with the IMLS areas of interest for this NLG Special Initiative: Of the 5 IMLS interest areas, *Houston Basics Complete Communities (Basics²)* aligns directly with 4 listed below.

- Adaptable model for joint efforts to engage and serve a local community – Basics² community demonstration projects will be implemented in two substantially different low-income communities to develop and test an adaptable model that could then be implemented in other Houston neighborhoods through the Basics² coalition as well as others that form as the work in Houston expands.
- Broadening reach into new communities with existing and potential partners – Although CMH has substantial reach in both of the demonstration communities, the Museum has not led a neighborhood-wide effort in either. The potential for new partners or types of partnerships across a variety of sectors is substantial because of the number of organizations, including faith-based, already working with families in the two demonstration areas (see Rev. Mackey and Larry Payne support letters).
- Community buy-in and asset mapping – Asset mapping has already been done by LISC's Go Neighborhoods and Mayor's Complete Communities. Basics² will be layering onto these existing mapping efforts by isolating the specific assets that directly influence or have the potential to influence birth-3 learning and development.
- Sharing findings and project evaluation – Basics² documentation will be organized as a "play book" for Houston that can also be used by LAMs in other cities engaged in early learning collective impact.

"We are not interested in being considered for EPA Building Blocks technical assistance." Hurricane Harvey redevelopment efforts have unified a comprehensive review of current and future needs in key areas: walkability/bike-ability, complete communities, equitable development, smart growth, and flood mitigation/resilience.

Performance goals and related results: Based on publicly available data as well as needs assessments with neighborhood residents, the following project performance is expected along with the related results.

Performance goal	Related results
Further engage community and associated stakeholders in developing the Basics ² project plan - Meet with residents, partners, potential partners, collective impact leadership, and evaluators to determine details about project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive plan that ensures effective reach to all interested demonstration neighborhood families (speaking either English or Spanish) with children birth-3, including a wide variety of opportunities for families to engage with the concepts, with each other around them and with project leadership as changes in approach are needed.
Provide strategies to parents that will help them engage their children birth-3 in early learning related to literacy skill building - Implement demonstration projects with partners that is informed by quarterly participant feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents gain new ideas about how to engage their 0-3 children in family learning activities. • Parents adjust their beliefs about children's development in ways that better enable them to support the development. • Parents read to their children more and do other activities that build literacy such as singing, playing, and talking.
Build community around common child development concepts (The 5 Basics) - Include methods of helping families develop, discuss and share ideas about Houston Basics and related child development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and other adults within households talk about the Houston Basics and child development and as a result encourage or help one another to use the concepts • Adults in one household talk with those in other households to share their Houston Basics experiences, ideas and successes.
Share model and results – Share results with local partners, discuss expansion with local partners (including residents), share model and results with museums and libraries outside of Houston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houston collective impact backbones support the expansion of Basics² into additional neighborhoods. • Other museums share the model with collective impact organizations in their communities

Measurement: Using the related results above, CMH will work with HHD and Early Matters (which uses Boston Consulting Group) to determine and design measures for the project. Additional advisors will include Dr. Catherine Horn (University of Houston Acting Chair, Dept of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and Chair of CMH Evaluation Committee), Dr. Venita Holmes (Houston ISD Program Evaluation Manager and Member of CMH Evaluation Committee), Dr. Judith McFarlane (Texas Women's University Professor of Health Promotion) and Dr. Cecilia Garibay. These measures will be developed within the first 3 project months and will include adjustments and alignments needed for the existing pre/post participant surveys for Welcome Baby, post surveys for Houston Basics workshops and focus group methodologies already in place. CMH Director of Education Dr. Cheryl McCallum and Manager of Curriculum and Evaluation D'Andrea Edwards will lead the project evaluation and documentation process. Time is dedicated within the budget for D'Andrea Edwards to work directly with IMLS 3rd party Special Initiative evaluators. Additionally, project evaluation will include the IMLS performance measure statements.

3. Project Design

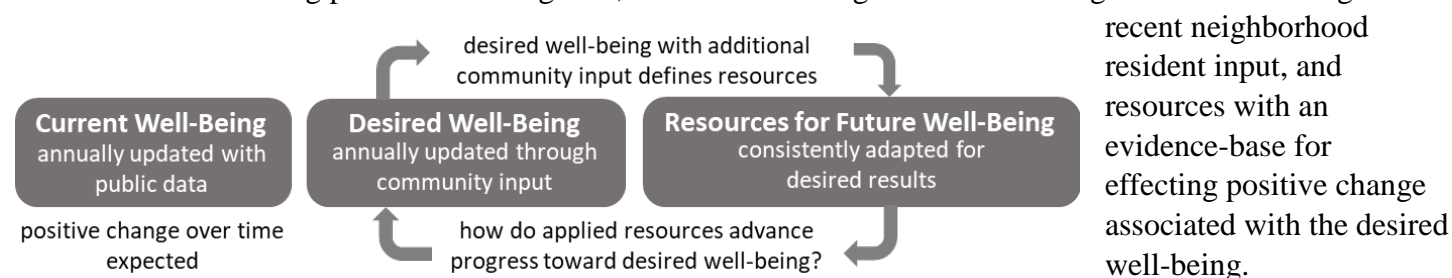
Community readiness for *Houston Basics Complete Communities (Basics²)* is the foundation on which the project plan is built. A four-fold "Houston-is-ready" asset model drives the design and resulting work:

1. Houston parents in the identified neighborhoods want more resources that support the early learning and academic success of their children.
2. Houston parents, leaders (elected, business, neighborhood) and early learning organizations have banded together in multiple ways to enable and provide these resources, yet there has been no community-wide

common message system like Houston Basics aligned with an expanding set of associated resources that can be strategically implemented in ways that a majority of parents can and want to make use of them.

3. Two collective impact initiatives (MBK and Early Matters) along with the Mayor's Office and LISC have been working across the past four years to understand the problems, identify or develop successful community-wide strategies for solving the problems, and develop metrics for a baseline and associated growth measurement.
4. Recent efforts toward common messaging and strategies (Houston Basics and Welcome Baby) have proven successful and gained traction with families, the collective impact backbones, the Mayor's Office and local foundations, making ready the way to join these efforts into two intensive community demonstration projects that would inform their expansion across Houston.

Conceptual framework: The conceptual framework for Basics² is adapted from the OECD Framework for Measuring Well-being and Progress and will serve as the bones for the Basic² model and play book. The framework uses existing public well-being data, desired well-being information and goals derived through



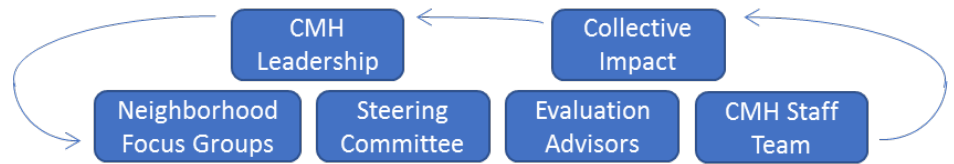
Project activities and their sequence: Basics² will operate in three main phases of work. As charted below, the first 6 months will comprise activities that prepare for full launch of both demonstration projects in April 2019, including Welcome Baby bag distribution through a variety of partners and hosting of Houston Basics workshops through libraries, community centers and places of faith. The last 6 months will be dedicated to reporting and planning toward expansion into additional neighborhoods as guided by community leadership and evidence of impacts in addition to sharing of the model with other museums and libraries.

First 6 months – Planning (Oct 2018 – Mar 2019)	Next 12 months – Implementation (Apr 2019 – Mar 2020)	Last 6 months - Reporting (Apr 2020 – Sept 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award announcements • Kick-off discussions and planning • Identify remaining partners & resources • Identify & train “persons of trust” • Finalize resource preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute 1,000 Welcome Baby bags • Showcase Houston Basics videos • Host 24 Houston Basics workshops & other resources • Host quarterly participant advisory groups • Produce quarterly project brief • Revise project approaches as needed • Collect evaluation data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close-out discussions and planning • Evaluation analysis & reporting • Finalize Basics² play book • Sharing with other LAMs

Project planning, implementation and management team: Basics² will be led by a coordinated team of staff, partners and advisors who meet at regular frequencies to review progress, resolve issues and plan iterative changes that ensure the project is reflective of community needs and desires. The CMH project team will meet weekly, steering group partners will meet in person or by phone monthly and other partners and advisors will meet in responsive design groups specific to their roles by quarter. The briefs to be developed each quarter based on findings, dialogue and decisions in each of the meetings will also contain next immediate and future steps along with related timeline. CMH Executive Director Tammie Kahn serves on the Early Matters Alignment Council which creates a bridge between the backbone organization's strategic goals and the field

work. CMH Director of Gallery Education Dr. Lisa Williams serves on the Houston Basics Advisory Council for MBK Milestone 1 which helps ensure that Houston Basics is reflective of the needs and cultures of Houston. Early Matters Consulting Director Leslie Wang and HHD Public Health Education Chief Kristi Rangel have partnered with CMH Director of Education Dr. Cheryl McCallum to develop the project and related proposal and will continue this leadership for Basics² if the proposal is awarded.

These connections along with the structure depicted below will inform, lead and manage the work.



In addition to the key staff detail attached, a half time assistant will be hired with IMLS funds to support CMH Project Manager Vandolyn Esparza whose time will be part of the project match.

Marshalling the community's resources to build upon existing momentum: Financial needs for the project will be met through funding from IMLS; matching funds provided by the Powell, Fleishman and Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundations; and additional local funding anticipated in Fall 2018. Project partners will use their own funding to facilitate their work in Basics², so the IMLS funding would be dedicated to project management, work with IMLS 3rd party evaluator, IMLS travel and additional resources needed, including Association of Children's Museums dissemination of the model, incentives for project participants and evaluation, materials for building a Houston Basics video kiosk for families using the WIC center waiting areas in both neighborhoods, and printed flyers to recruit participants to Houston Basics family workshops.

Sharing of project work and results: The Association of Children's Museums (ACM) will serve as primary national disseminator for the Basics² results. This process will flow through the life of the grant, starting with an ACM webinar (live and recorded) about Basics² along with other children's museum collective impact cases, a networking session at the 2019 annual conference intended to surface additional collective impact connections and build interest in the Basics² project and preliminary findings, and finally a full day pre-conference workshop at InterActivity conference 2020 where the Basics² resources would be showcased along with several other museum-supported collective impact initiatives (see ACM letter). The final Basics² "play book" resource guide will be hosted on the ACM and CMH websites for other museums to freely access and use. Houston Public Library will use their regional and national networks as well to share the resources.

Project risks and mitigation plan: The five risks and mitigations below are currently those with the most potential to affect Basics².

Lasting Impacts of Hurricane Harvey – Risk: Projections indicate Houston will feel the effects of Harvey for 10 years, as recovery continues. In Gulfton and the Near North Side, over 5,000 homes, as well as schools, child care centers, clinics, and businesses as well as municipal infrastructure were impacted. **Mitigation:** CMH was among the first responders to families in these neighborhoods following Harvey. We continue to be active in advocating to Houston resource managers for priority interventions addressing personal, commercial and civic damage. CMH has also increased efforts to provide our services to residents, and plan on continuing to provide this stepped-up level of services through post-Harvey, City-wide, collective-impact rebuilding efforts. Basics² will benefit from our existing plans to have increased visibility and service provision to these residents in the coming years-not just by CMH, but by our established collaborative partners as well.

Status of Collective Impact efforts in Houston – Risk: From 2013 until 2017 a tremendous amount of Houston's civic energy was devoted to establishing collective impact backbone organizations to respectively address homelessness, lack of quality early childhood education, maternal morbidity, mental health deficits in public schools, and inadequate out of school learning opportunities. FSG, Boston Consulting Group and other 3rd party

consultants were engaged by some of the largest funders in Houston to provide consulting services to evaluate community needs, establish the backbones, and ensure broad engagement by those who would benefit from new services and systems as well as by those groups which would help provide such services and be a part of new systems. In Texas, the private not for profit sector is the only or a primary source for many of the resources necessary to address these needs. Difficulty and confusion emerged as the lay leaders of both the major funders, lay leadership of the backbones, and NFP groups attempted to endorse common goals and measurements. **Mitigation:** During this period of disruption, MBK and CMH have been able to work effectively together and with measurable results that are valued by our two backbone partners-HHD and Good Reason Houston. We know that our neighborhood by neighborhood, person on the ground relationship building is key to ensuring our programming is well received and valued by the parents we want to serve.

Immigration policy – **Risk:** Houston health care providers, its police department, schools and other systems of education, including CMH, can see the impact of current anti-immigrant policies. People are reluctant to be identified by seeking services, making our collective ability to serve more difficult. As a non-government entity, with a bilingual culture, CMH is a bridge to immigrant populations and more trusted by some immigrants than those entities perceived to be government related. **Mitigation:** CMH's brand will be used prominently in the Basics² materials. Our team is attuned to these issues and will be ready to recommend specific changes as needed. Our staff is fluent in English and Spanish, and we will access representatives who are conversational in other languages as needed.

Group forming and norming – **Risk:** Despite our efforts to recognize, reward and retain staff, normal employee turnover rates can impact the Museum's ability and that of our partners to create consistent expectations and culture. When organizations cross-develop, cross-train and cross-evaluate for programs requiring person to person service delivery, consistent expectations and shared culture are of critical importance for efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, our need to have "real time" iterative changes through constituent and staff feedback will require a true working team dynamic. **Mitigation:** Building on the team dynamic begun through our current efforts, CMH will establish an on-boarding initiative for new staff and partners, and provide periodic check-ins on all levels of structure. Senior staff will work as one team and be responsible for program management execution of Basics². All but 3 of the 7-member management team have school principal or large-team management expertise and advanced degrees in education. One will be designated to "own" the team dynamic, and to be responsible for monitoring and providing status/progress updates.

Ability to have responsive design – **Risk:** Cross-sector work of this type, requiring "just in time" responsiveness, becomes even more difficult in complex, highly-varied social settings such as those we are anticipating. **Mitigation:** The Basics² project team will be treated as an isolated reservation, protected from intervention by non-essential influencers-as much as possible. While they will be veiled and supported by CMH, they will be removed as much as possible from hierarchy and demands extraneous to Basics². We believe by remaining focused on incoming data, responding, and developing solutions to less-than progress indicators, the creativity and problem solving needed for this level of effectiveness will be encouraged.

Project sustainability: Momentum is in Basics²'s favor. The Mayor just finished the Complete Communities town halls in mid-Spring and there is more knowledge than ever about what families living in the most under-resourced neighborhoods need and want. Should Basics² be the success that the Museum, HHD, Early Matters, HPL and all other related partners believe it will, then continuation and expansion will be inevitable. This energy for Basics² is what the Museum will continue to help fuel with our brand, passion for the communities we serve, leadership within Houston's early learning-focused collective impact initiatives and outreach efforts that impact all of Greater Houston.