



THE ARTHUR M. BLANK  
FAMILY FOUNDATION



WESTSIDE  
ON THE RISE



# Westside Education Collaborative: STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

Why we are here: it's all about the kids

*The vision of the Westside Education Collaborative is to **transform the life opportunities of children** residing on the Westside of Atlanta by ensuring they receive a high-quality education*



# Now is an important moment for the Westside to come together to address kids' needs in a holistic way

***“This is a unique window of opportunity in time.***

*Residents, the political community, and funders are seeking alignment on an issue.”*

- Westside Education Collaborative Member

***“This an opportunity to learn what our community needs.”***

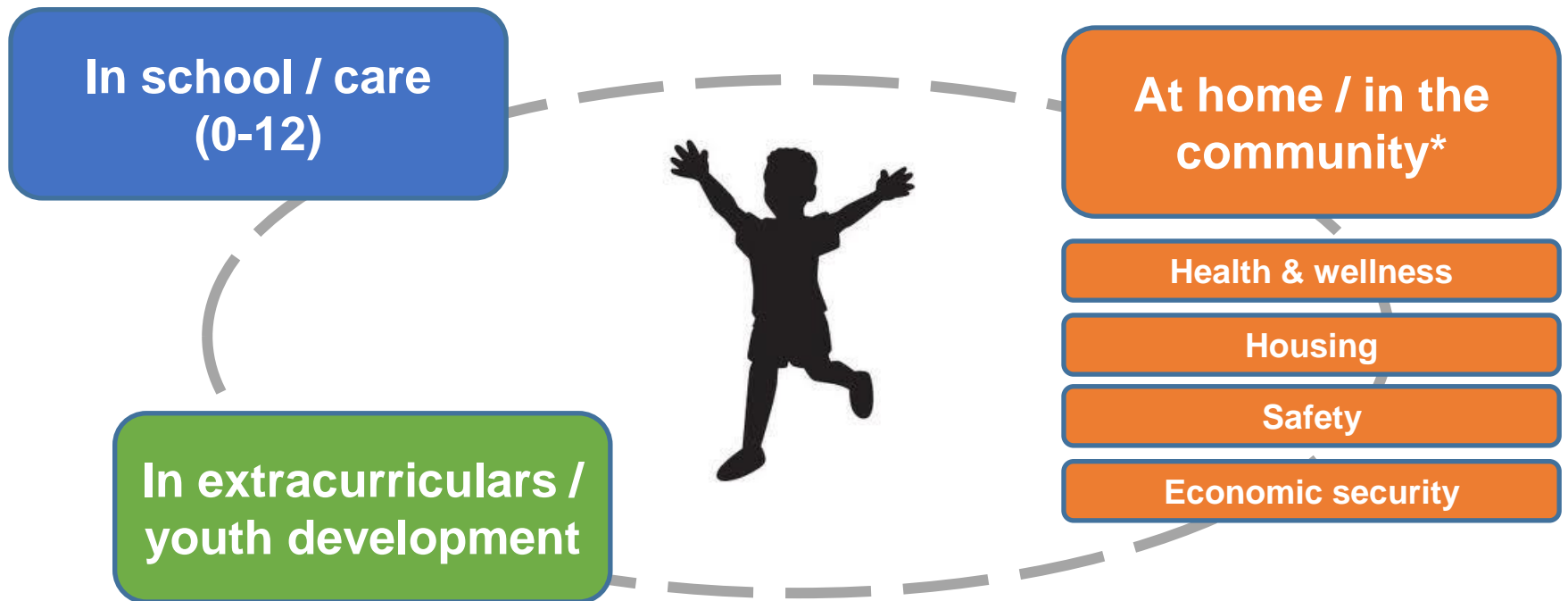
- Westside Resident

***“We owe it to the community to do collective impact; acting as independent operators isn’t enough...”***

- Westside Education Collaborative Member

# We know that many environments have a deep impact on a child's learning

## Where are the kids?



# We acknowledge all of these environments, but through the lens of *education*

1

**Family Engagement:** Provide families, schools, and organizations with structures and resources to effectively partner in pursuit of excellent educational opportunities for every child

2

**K-12 School System:** Ensure that every child receives an excellent K-12 education and graduates prepared for college and careers

3

**Early Childhood:** Provide every child with the foundational academic & socioemotional skills to arrive in Kindergarten ready to learn

4

**Youth Development:** Provide every child with the supplemental supports and enrichment opportunities that will allow them to thrive academically, socioemotionally, physically, and personally

# To understand opportunities, we listened to the community – *and* defined “what’s possible” through additional research

## Our perspective is grounded in a comprehensive data review, including...

### Qualitative lens on Westside education

Focus on community engagement:

- 149 survey responses
- 68 “on the street” or 1:1 interviews
- 34 Roundtable participants
- 27 WEC member conversations
- 15 community meetings

### Quantitative lens on Westside education

- K-12: Milestones and CCRPI data
- Early childhood: Ed Counsel / GEEARS and APS data on early childcare and pre-k
- Youth development: Provider database and profiles

### National lens on best practices

- Over 30 conversations with local and national experts in early childhood, youth development, family engagement, and STEM
- Over 10 organizations profiled
- National, state, and local data reviewed

# What we heard: the challenges... and the opportunities

## Westside Context: Home & Community

### Assets – existing programs include:

- APS: Parents as Partners Academic Center (PAPAC)
- Westside READY: proven best practices for family engagement; trust with families
- Parent Leaders United for Students (PLUS)
- Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM): Smart & Secure Leadership Program
- National Cares Mentoring Movement: University for Parents

### Challenges / needs

- **Accessibility:** difficulty accessing existing resources (e.g., meeting locations far away, no childcare)
- **Trust / collaboration:** distrust rooted in decades of ineffective systems & policies<sup>1</sup>
- **Capacity:** some stakeholders lack time or need training to build strong community relationships; schools are well positioned but lack time / staffing<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>In every listening session and Roundtable, the community raised concerns about feeling fully “heard,” and whether the ideas they share truly inform strategic planning processes such as this one.

<sup>2</sup>Parent survey findings suggest that many parents need more clear information about major local and state-level education developments (e.g., turnaround plan); it is important to position stakeholders to effectively share this info.

# What we heard: the challenges... and the opportunities

## Westside Context: School (K-12)

### Assets

- Strong vision and plan for Washington Cluster schools includes program design and curriculum, talent management, and family/ community engagement
- Schools and organizations that support schools have rich legacies
- Strong school leadership
- Engaged community

### Challenges / needs

- **Program and curriculum:** Need to deliver program excellence in the context of very heavy change load for Washington Cluster schools and families (school closure / consolidation, brand new school model, competing priorities, etc.)
- **Talent management:** Need to meet demands for talent, professional learning, and collaborative time created by STEM / Expeditionary Learning focus
- **Family and community engagement:** Need to build authentic relationships with families and clearly articulate the “ask” of community and business partners





# What we heard: the challenges... and the opportunities

## Westside Context: School (ECE)

### Assets

- Fourteen early childcare centers in Tier 1 and Tier 2 neighborhoods
- Pre-k options through local elementary schools: Connally, Jones, Bethune (move to Hollis Innovation Academy)
- ECE Center slated to open Jan 2017 at Venetian Hills

### Challenges / needs

- **Insufficient slots:** Need for more funded ECE slots affordable and accessible to Westside children
- **Quality / capacity:** Need for greater provider buy-in to quality improvement systems; increased teacher pay and PD supports
- **Coordination:** Need for information hub; seamless transition support between ECE and K-12; aligned wraparound supports
- **Information:** Need for greater access to resources on importance of ECE and how to navigate opportunities / transitions



# What we heard: the challenges... and the opportunities

## Westside Context: Youth Development

### Assets

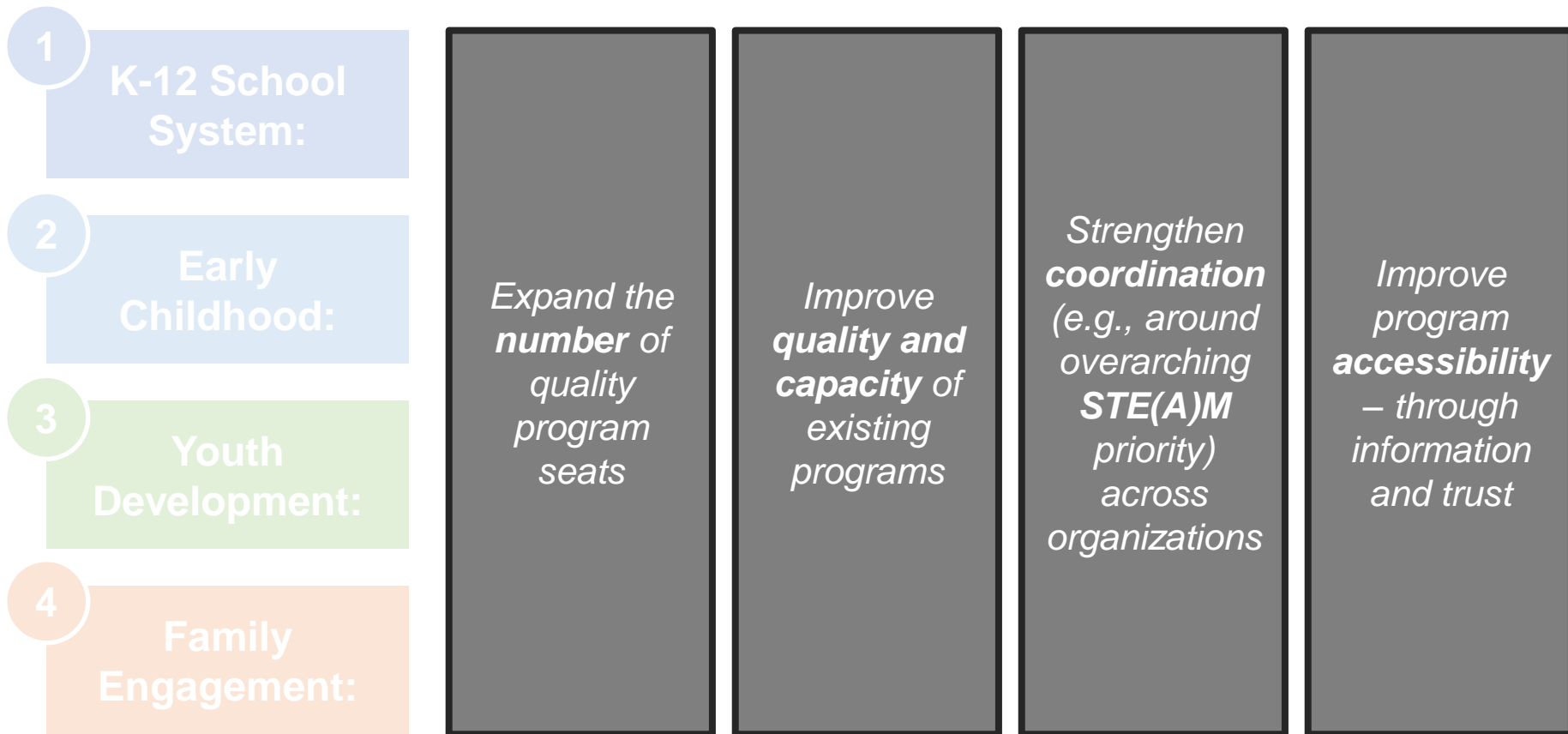
- Breadth of youth development providers; many high-quality programs
- Unique, rich higher education environment, willing to support through resources and best practice research
- Engaged corporate sponsors, some particularly supportive of STEM

### Challenges / needs

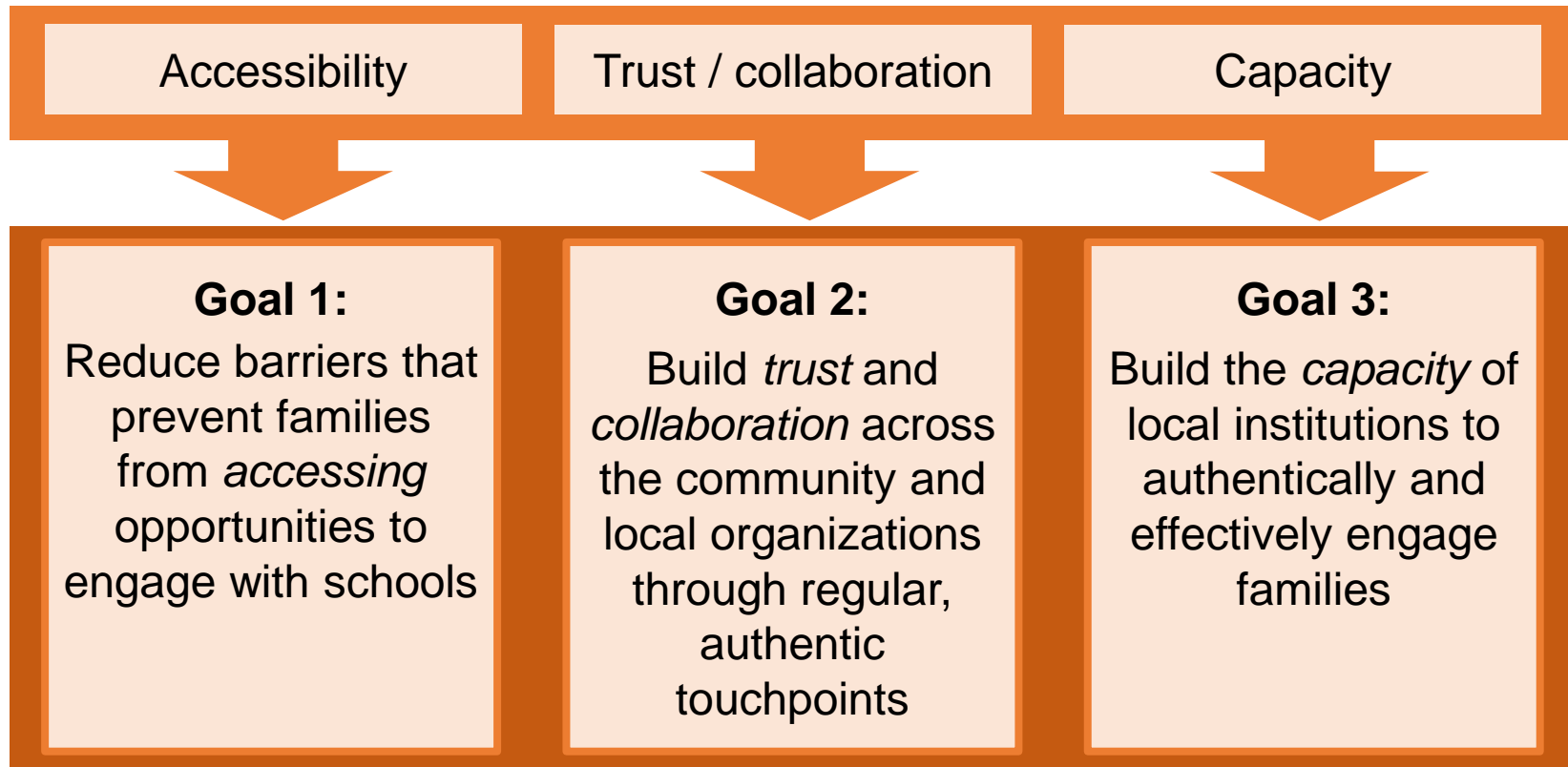
- **Coordination:** lack of shared vision or consistent coordination, shared goals or metrics, linkages between school day and out-of-school
- **Quality / capacity:** inconsistent program quality and consistency, and no clear way to assess “high quality”
- **Participation:** barriers to student and family participation, especially around transportation and access to information



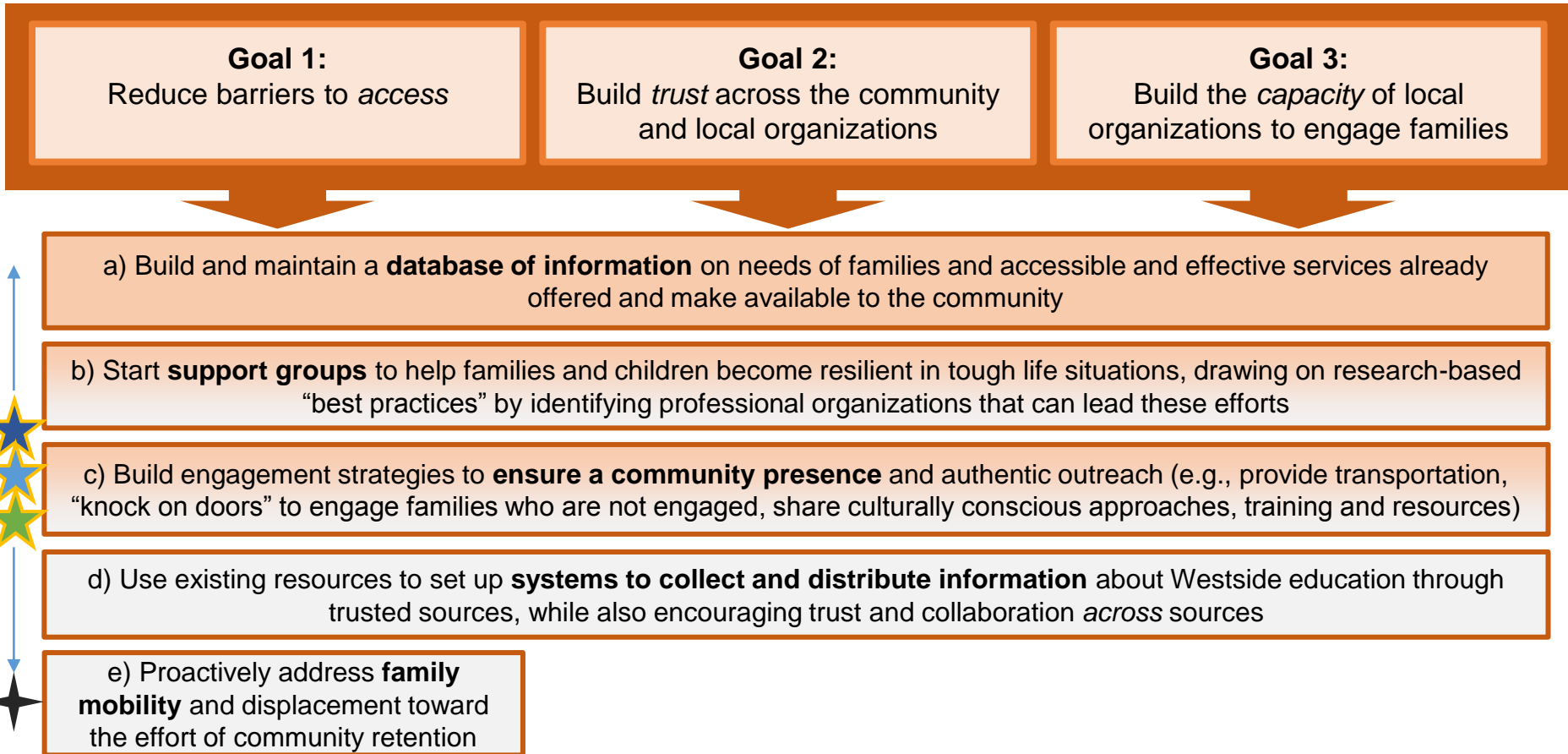
# Our commitment: 10 goals and 28 strategies across these four areas, focused on four major themes









## 3 family & community engagement **goals**

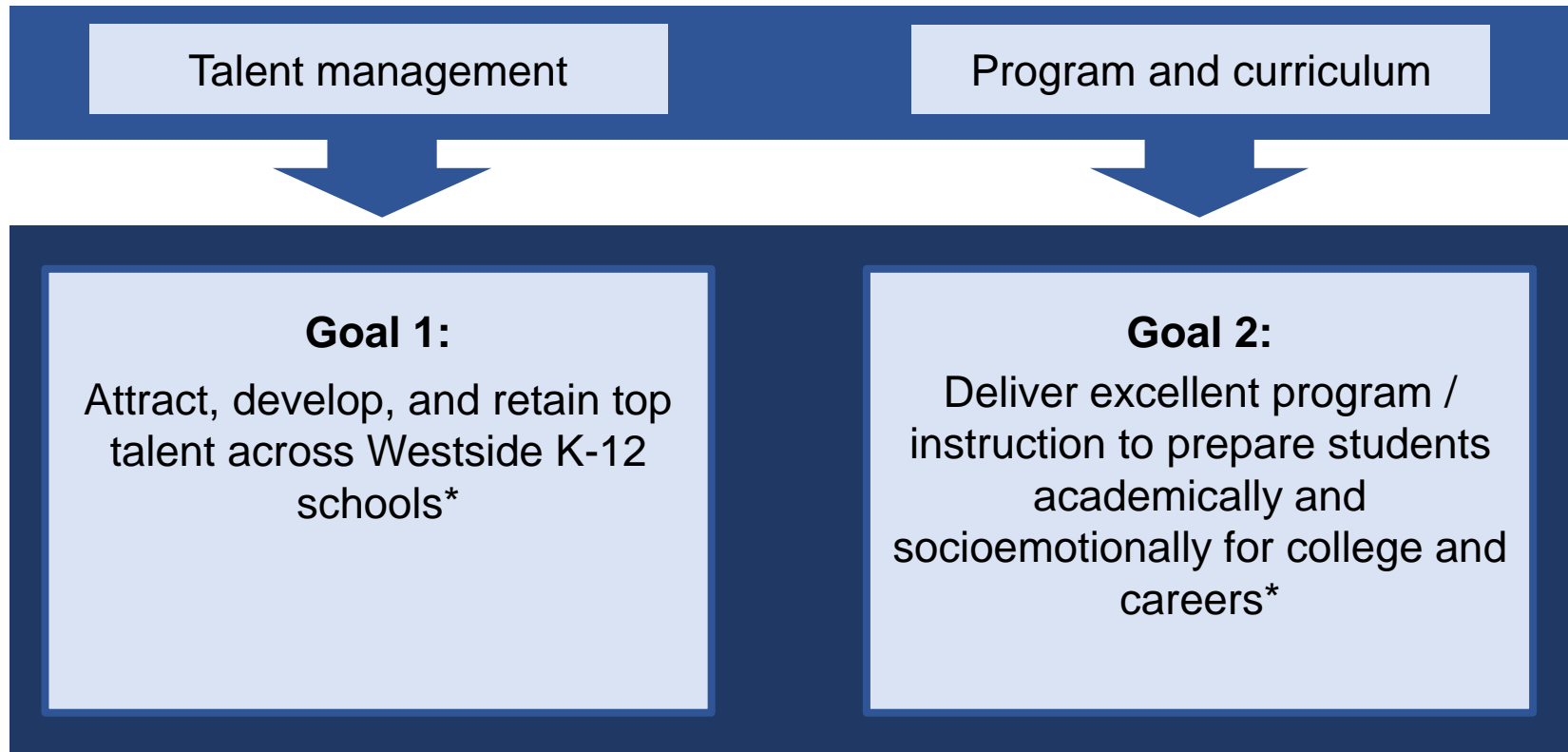


# 5 family & community engagement strategies, with 4 year one priorities



	= Short term (6-12 months)		= Strong ties to K-12
	= Longer term (1-3 years)		= Strong ties to ECE
	= Strong ties to Housing Collab.		= Strong ties to youth development

## 2 K-12 goals



\*Especially, but not exclusively, in STE(A)M fields


# Proposed: 6 K-12 strategies, with 4 year one priorities\*

## Goal 1:

Attract, develop, and retain top talent in schools

## Goal 2:

Deliver excellent program, curriculum, and instruction

 a) Support **Hollis Innovation Academy** to achieve STEM certification and develop a robust collaboration and partnership strategy across all cluster schools that reinforces STE(A)M best practices


b) Leverage multiple partners (e.g., local universities, STE(A)M orgs) to build **teacher capacity**

c) Create teacher **professional development** “Innovation Days”

d) Provide consistent training in the areas of **cultural competence** and implicit bias

e) Create a program focused on **pipeline development**, to recruit and retain teachers in Washington cluster schools (scholarships, incentives, career pathways, etc.)



b) Build a **dedicated Maker Space / STEM Lab** with supporting supplies in every Washington cluster school




 c) Collaborate to define a **strategic approach to partner selection**, tied to goals and commitments, and aligned to STEM Signature Program<sup>1</sup>

d) Provide consistent professional development and support in **implementation of STE(A)M and Expeditionary Learning**

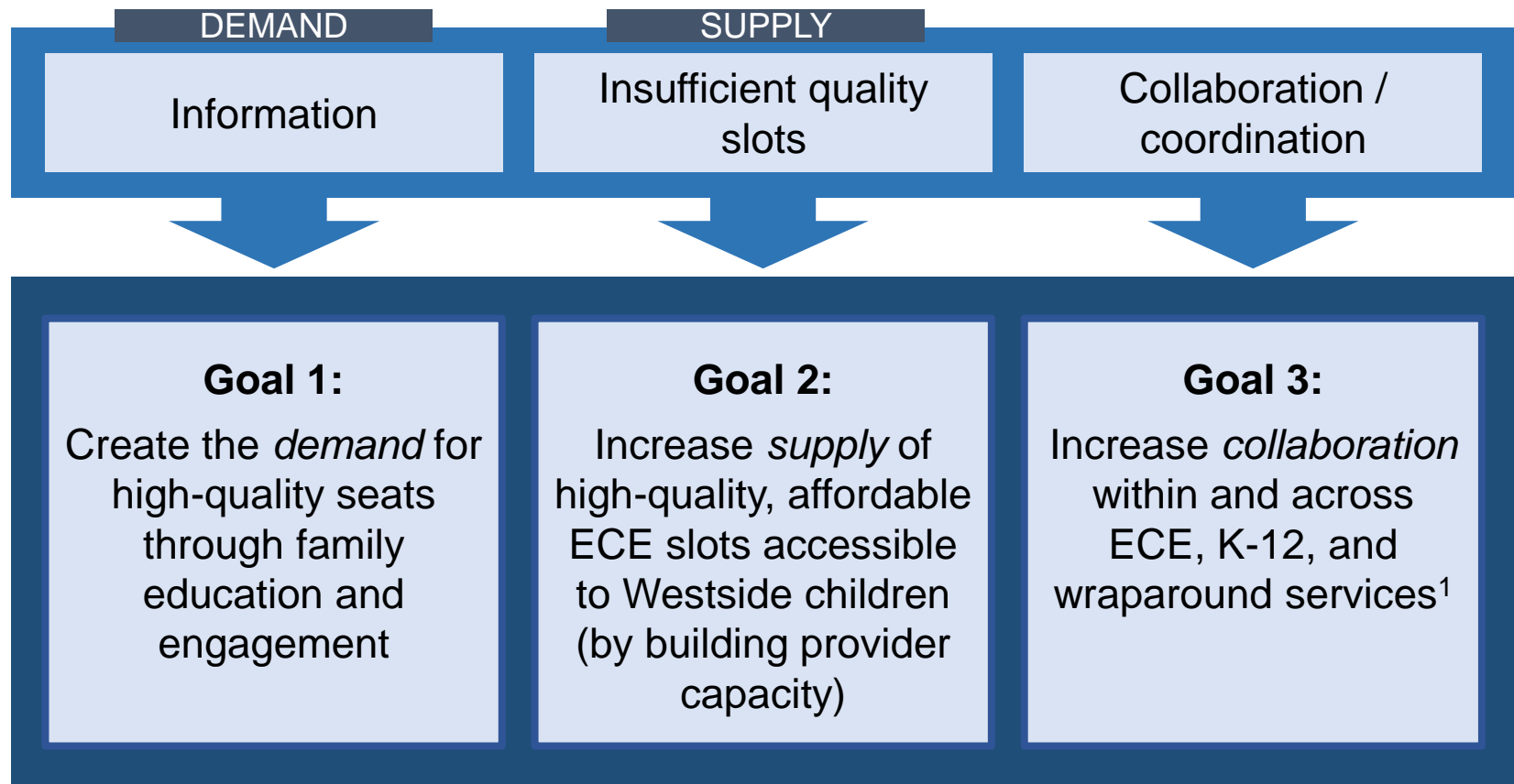
1. Approach to APS partner selection can begin in the next 6-12 months but will extend into the longer term.
2. \* See FCE strategies that support K-12 goals.



 = Short term (6-12 months)  
 = Longer term (1-3 years)

 = Strong ties to early childhood  
 = Strong ties to youth development  
 = Strong ties to engagement

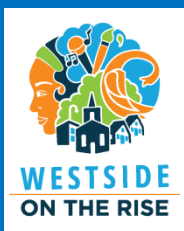
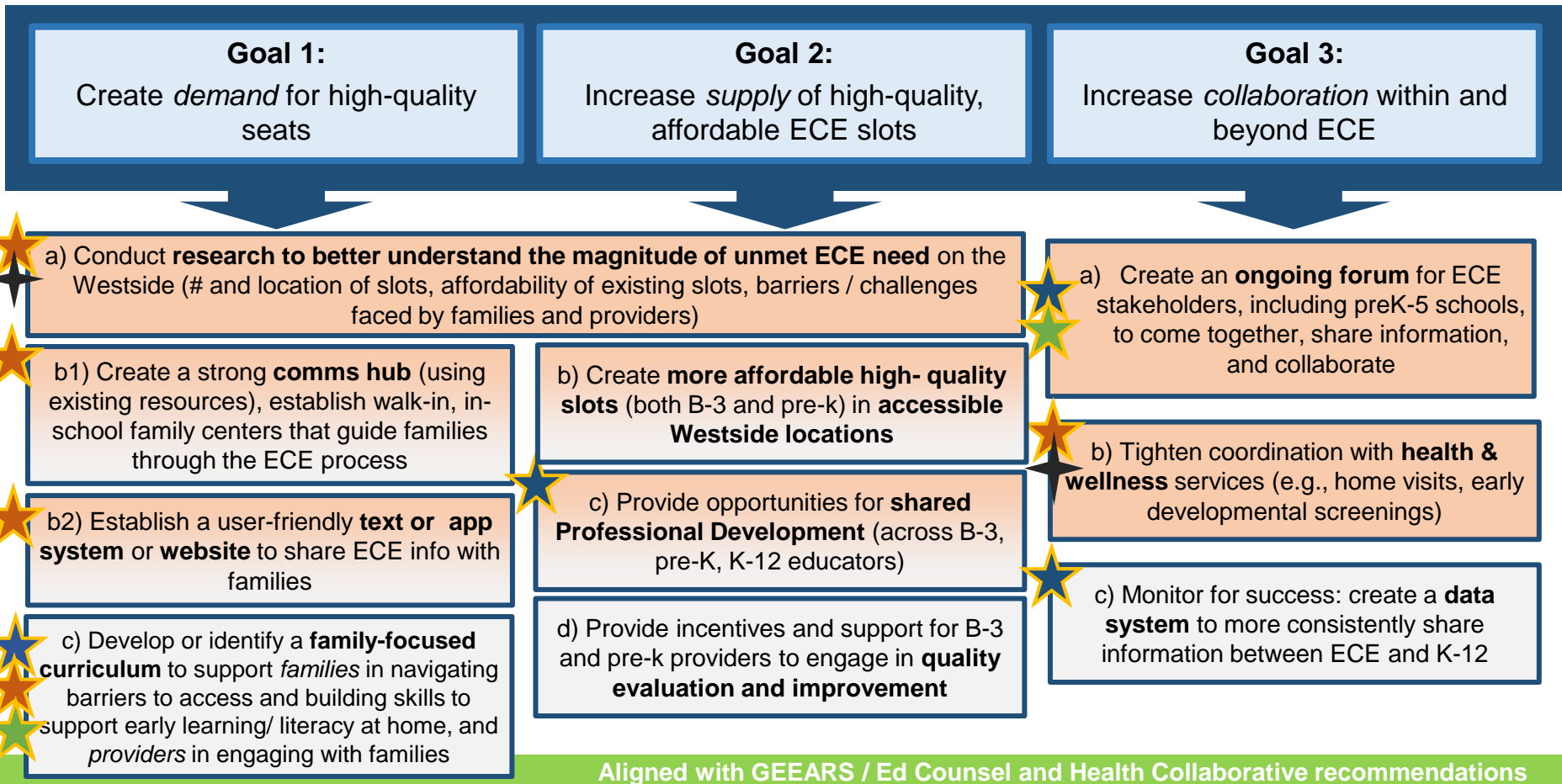
## 3 ECE goals



<sup>1</sup>Ties closely to Health Collaborative goals and strategies

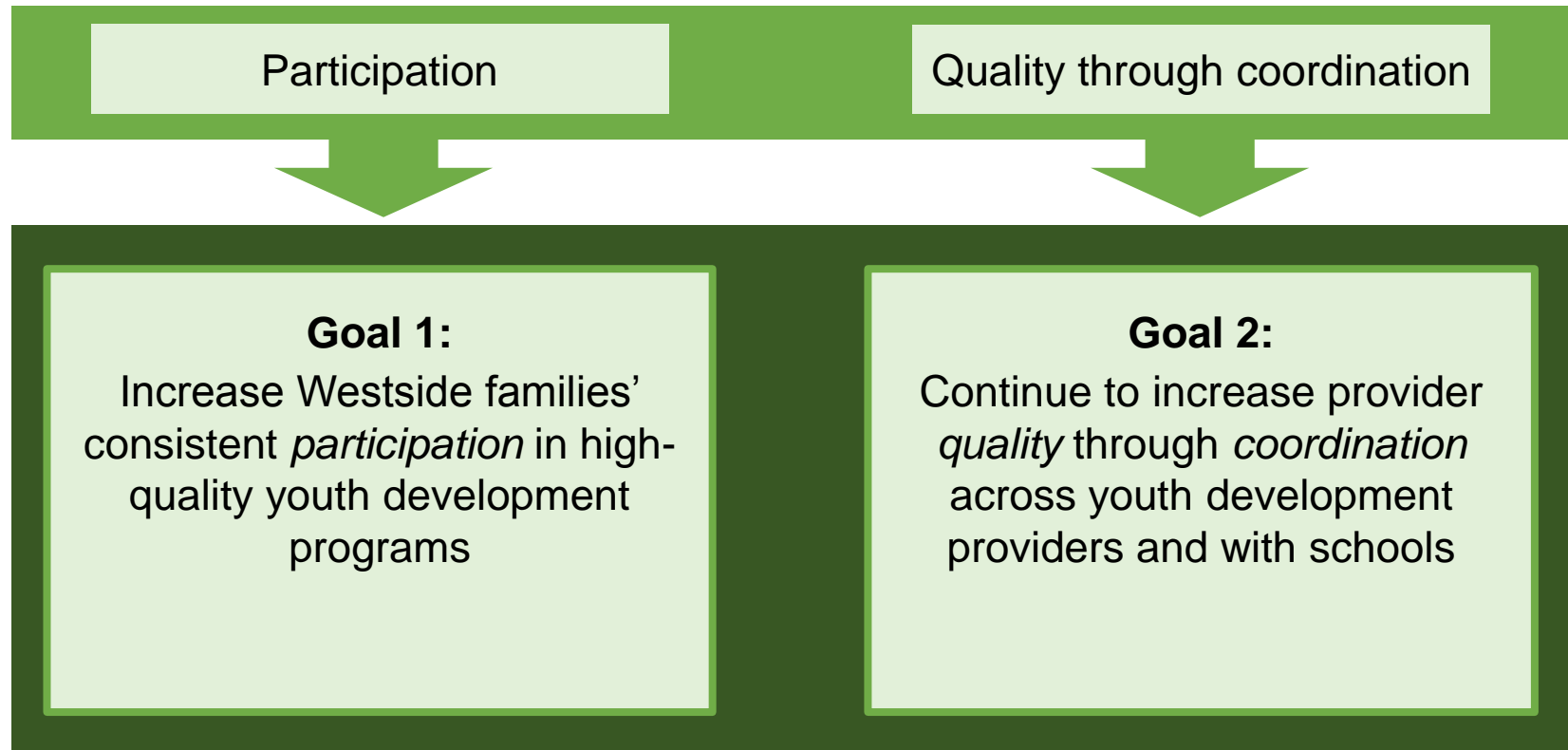


# 10 ECE strategies, with 3 year one priorities & 4 “get started in year one” long-term strategies



	= Short term (6-12 months)		= Strong ties to K-12
	= Longer term (1-3 years)		= Strong ties to family engagement
	= Strong ties to Health Collab.		= Strong ties to youth development

## 2 youth development **goals**




# 4 youth development strategies, with 3 year one priorities


## Goal 1:


Increase consistent *participation* in quality youth development programs


## Goal 2:



Increase provider *quality* through *coordination* across providers and with schools

 a) Build and maintain a **database of information** on Westside youth development providers (e.g., services offered, areas served, contact info)

 b1) Create a **coordination mechanism / forum** to help youth development providers communicate with one another and make / track commitments toward common goals, including **breaking down barriers to family participation** in youth development programs (e.g., lack of transportation, hours of operation)


 b2) Support APS to define a strategic approach to **partner selection**, tied to goals and commitments, and aligned to STEM Signature Program


 c) Build **integrated out-of-school time opportunities** (including professional development) with collaboration between school-day providers, youth development providers, and corporate sponsors


  d) Develop a shared set of measurable, research-based “**best practices**” for youth development quality, for providers to self-assess their performance against and develop strategies for improvement




 = Short term (6-12 months)

 = Longer term (1-3 years)

 = Strong ties to K-12

 = Strong ties to ECE

 = Strong ties to family engagement

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