

Guide to Partnering with Michigan Education Corps:



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This Guide contains important information about being a host site with Michigan Education Corps (MEC) Early Learning Corps. Questions about Early Learning Corps or site selection should be directed to Renee Borg at rborg@hopenetwork.org.

Early Learning Corps Fact Sheet

What are Early Learning Corps services?

- Early Learning Corps is an evidence-based, people-powered program that can meet the needs of all students. We train and support Interventionists to deliver the critical language, literacy and numeracy skills preschool children need to be ready for Kindergarten. Interventionists work hand-in-hand with classroom teachers to deliver research-based interventions in the classroom, in small groups, or one-on-one with children.
- The Early Learning Corps model supports the implementation of a Response to Intervention (RTI)/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework in early childhood. Simply put, this model includes implementing Tier I class wide literacy and numeracy strategies, as well as measuring students' literacy and numeracy skills using data to make instructional decisions for students.
- Early Learning Corps Interventionists provide support in both literacy and math, focusing on the skills listed below.

Early Language and Literacy Skills	Early Math Skills
Oral Language, Conversation, Comprehension	Subitizing
Vocabulary and Meaning	Object Counting
Book and Print Concepts	Counting Based Comparisons
Phonological Memory and Awareness	Number After Knowledge
Alphabetic Principle and Knowledge	Mental Comparisons
	Composing and Decomposing

Who are Early Learning Corps Interventionists?

- Early Learning Corps Interventionists are AmeriCorps members who focus on a societal problem – in this case, improving reading proficiency. AmeriCorps is often referred to as the “domestic Peace Corps.”
- Early Learning Corps Interventionists are individuals engaged in a commitment of service, during the school year, to meet the needs of their local communities through AmeriCorps and are commonly referred to as “members” or “Interventionists.”
- Early Learning Corps Interventionists maintain a stable, regular schedule of hours at their assigned service site and are supervised by an Internal Coach at the site.
- Although Early Learning Corps Interventionists are part of the school community, they are **not** employees of the school and/or district and they may **not supplant** services provided by the site employees.
- Interventionists receive a competitive living allowance and earn hours of service toward an education award to pay educational expenses at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training, or to repay qualified student loans. For member’s age 55 years+, this award may be gifted to a child, grandchild, foster child, or stepchild. Retired educators may serve as MEC Interventionist without forfeiting their pension.

Early Learning Corps Fact Sheet (continued)

Which students are eligible for Early Learning Corps services?

- The Early Learning Corps Interventionist is placed in one classroom and serves all the children in that room. An Interventionist can serve multiple sections of students, such as AM and PM, or M/W/F and T/TH.
- An Interventionist must be placed in a classroom that serves 3- to 5-year-old children, with priority on classrooms with 4- and 5-year-old children, as they are closer to entering Kindergarten.
- All students receive Tier I early literacy/numeracy support from the Interventionist. Children whose assessment data indicate a need for additional support will be eligible to receive Tier 2 (small group) or Tier 3 (individualized) instruction using evidence-based early literacy/numeracy strategies by the Interventionist.

What assessments are used by Early Learning Corps?

- The literacy assessment tool is the Preschool Early Literacy Indicator (PELI). The PELI assessment is designed for preschool and pre-kindergarten children (ages 3 to 5) and assesses alphabet knowledge, vocabulary and oral language, phonological awareness, and comprehension. The assessment is given in a storybook format that will be familiar to most preschoolers. The measure is untimed and takes about 15 minutes to administer per child.
- Benchmark assessments are administered by the Interventionist to all children in the classroom in the fall, winter, and spring.
- The Early Math Inventory (EMI) is used to assess numeracy skills in 3-5-year-old students. It is untimed, takes 5-10 minutes, and is administered in fall, winter, and spring to all students in the class.
- Children receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 instruction receive brief progress monitoring checks every two weeks, or 8-10 sessions. The purpose of more frequent assessment is to gauge student progress, the effectiveness of the intervention, and support the team with instructional, data based decision-making.

What Tier 1 interventions are used by Early Learning Corps?

- Early Learning Corps Tier 1 interventions are designed to support core instruction in the classroom. The Early Learning Corps model works well with any research-based curriculum (e.g., Creative Curriculum, OWL, etc.).
- Early Learning Corps Interventionists provide embedded and explicit language, literacy, and math support to all students throughout their daily routines, including but not limited to: Arrival, Sign-in, Daily Message, Choice Time, High Quality Aloud, Tier 2 or Tier 3 Intervention time, Journaling, Meal Time, Small Group, and Transitions.
- Early Learning Corps classrooms are expected to incorporate a dialogic reading into the daily routine. The same theme-related book is read daily for one week. The teacher and interventionist incorporate talking, reading, writing, and math into each reading to develop vocabulary and comprehension and early math skills.

What Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions are used by Early Learning Corps?

- 7 children per class are identified to receive targeted literacy and/or numeracy interventions.
- Tier 2 = small groups of 2-3 children; 10-15 minutes daily.
- Tier 3 = One-on-one; 5-10 minutes daily

Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions:

- High Quality Read Aloud/Dialogic Reading: To increase vocabulary, oral language, and comprehension.
- Sound Awareness: To increase skills in auditory discrimination, including environmental sounds, rhyming, and alliteration.
- Letter Identification: To increase skills in auditory and visual discrimination, including letter names and letter sounds.
- Early Math (7 levels): To increase skills in early numeracy, including subitizing, object counting, counting-based comparisons, number after knowledge, mental comparisons, composing and decomposing, and number after equals one more.

Is Early Learning Corps a Good Fit for Your Site?

Early Learning Corps thrives in a wide variety of contexts. Please consider following before applying:

- ❑ Does your PreK program serve students ages 3-5? Priority will be given to classrooms with 4- and 5-year-old students.
- ❑ Is your site a Head Start, or GSRP school district early childhood programs, or nonprofit childcare programs (e.g., YWCA)?
 - For-profit childcare centers may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- ❑ Is student contact time sufficient for an Interventionist schedule (37.5 hours per week)?
- ❑ Is there support for research-based literacy and math interventions to occur during the school day?
- ❑ Is there a person on your staff with the interest, capacity, and time to serve as the Internal Coach?
Please go to page 9 for the “Description of Internal Coach” in this document and review it. Review this with the identified staff person in advance of applying to host MEC interventionist(s). Ensure they understand the role and time commitment.
- ❑ How will the Internal Coach's schedule include time for Early Learning Corps (approx. 6-9 hours per Interventionist per month, which is 2-3 hours per week)? How will the Internal Coach's schedule include approximately 5 hours of training?
 - Do you need to compensate the Internal Coach for the time completing required training?
 - Do you need to compensate the Internal Coach for time spent on Early Learning Corps duties throughout the year?
 - Are there tasks/duties/responsibilities that need to be removed from this individual's workload to accommodate Early Learning Corps duties?

Here are some other factors that are helpful to consider:

- ❑ What curriculum are you currently using, if applicable, and what assessments do you use and for what purpose?
- ❑ To which computer(s) or other device(s) would Interventionist(s) have regular, reliable access? Regular access to an electronic device is required and must include a camera and microphone, along with login credentials.



- What secure (locked) storage could the Interventionist utilize (for student files, for personal effects, etc.)?
- What is the lead classroom teacher's perspective on helping to implement Early Learning Corps in the classroom?
- Which classrooms with which teachers will be identified for Early Learning Corps Interventionist(s)?
- How is the Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support model of service delivery utilized at your site?
- What is your current enrollment of preschool students? Do you predict noteworthy changes for next year?
- What local district or agency policies for partnerships will MEC need to follow? For example:
 - Background checks. MEC is required to run extensive background checks for any MEC Interventionist prior to placement in a school. MEC, nor Interventionists, may pay for additional background checks beyond what MEC is required to conduct. **If additional background checks are required, that will be a site cost.**
 - Interventionist Recruitment. How can we partner to post open Interventionist positions on a district or site employment page or share the opportunity on social media?
 - MEC Partner Sign. Our grant requires posting a sign (provided by MEC) with the AmeriCorps logo, Early Learning Corps logo, and potentially the logo of any funder who is sponsoring the program at your site. Where could this sign be posted? (Most sites post this sign at the main office or tutoring location).

Site Expectations in Implementing Early Learning Corps

1. **Identify a staff person to fill the role of Internal Coach** and allocate 2-3 hours/week or 6-9 hours/month per Interventionist for the person to complete training and fulfill the responsibilities of Early Learning Corps. Responsibilities include providing on-site supervision, approving bi-weekly timesheets, regular check-ins, coaching and general support of the Early Learning Corps Interventionist. Classroom teachers and administrators are typically not good candidates for the Internal Coach role because it is difficult to find time to conduct observations during the school day.
2. Collaborate with MEC staff to **find high-quality Early Learning Corps Interventionists** for your site. The majority of our candidates are connected to the program by our site partners. Your participation in recruitment is very welcome (and essential!), as you are the experts in who is best for serving your kids at your school.
3. Prioritize the placement of Early Learning Corps **Interventionists in classrooms that serve 4- and 5-year-olds** who are going to Kindergarten the next year.
4. **Educate lead teachers and teaching teams** prior to the program start about the Early Learning Corps model to capture buy-in, support and shared understanding for implementation.
5. **On day 1, provide a site orientation for the Interventionist. This includes welcoming the Interventionist to the site**, introducing them to staff, and giving a tour (where do they put their lunch? Where are the restrooms? Where will intervention occur?).
6. Provide a space for the Interventionist to use, including a locked storage cabinet (for files and personal items), a device, e.g., computer with working camera and microphone, and access to the site's internet with login credentials.
7. **Literacy and Math Rich Schedule:** The classroom teaching staff and Interventionist commit to using the Early Learning Corps Literacy and Math Rich Schedule, which is a tool that outlines the classroom expectations for Early Learning Corps. The schedule serves as a guide to build evidence-based routines into the daily schedule, and helps classrooms determine how the essential skills will be embedded and explicit throughout these daily routines and how to individualize instruction. The Literacy and Math Rich Schedule includes the following elements:
 - **Arrival:** Children are greeted daily.
 - **Sign-in:** Children write their names daily, with the support of an Interventionist or teacher.
 - **Mealtime:** Mealtime conversations with children are encouraged by using a "Strive for 5" conversation loop, with an emphasis on theme-related vocabulary and math talk.
 - **Large Group:** Children are provided an opportunity for large group learning.
 - **High Quality Read Aloud:** The teacher and/or Interventionist incorporate talking, reading, writing, and counting into each reading with the intention of developing vocabulary, comprehension, and early math skills.
 - **Tier 1 Small Group:** Interventionist lead an additional Tier 1 small group Read Aloud once a week.
 - **Journal:** Children are given the opportunity to write and draw something of interest in a journal each week.
 - **Choice Time/Active Learning:** Children have time to make choices and pursue their own interests in a literacy-rich classroom.
 - **Tier 2 & Tier 3 Interventions:** Interventionists implement Tier 2 (small group, 10-15 minutes) or Tier 3 (one-on-one, 5-10 minutes) with selected students daily.

- **Literacy and Math Rich Transitions:** The Interventionist and/or teacher use a song or rhyme focused on literacy or math to transition children from one activity to the next.
 - **Family Engagement:** The family literacy intervention*, Talk, Read, Write, and Count with Me!, is sent home weekly to partner with families in talking, reading, writing, and counting at home.
* Note: Early Learning Corps provides Talk, Read, Write, and Count with Me! materials are provided annually, but asks that the site be responsible for inventorying and housing extra materials from one program year to the next.
8. **Student Assessments:** Support benchmarking by the Interventionist during the fall, winter and spring benchmark periods for children in Early Learning Corps classrooms. In addition, support bi-monthly progress monitoring by the Interventionist to guide instruction and interventions, along with collection of baseline data as applicable.
 9. Schedule 10-15 minutes per day for communication or schedule weekly meetings with MEC Interventionists each week.
 10. **Response To Intervention (RTI)/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Ensure successful implementation of Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support data-driven decision-making process. Coordinate decisions about teaching strategies and intervention selection with the Internal Coach and/or teachers based on the needs of each individual child and/or groups of children.
 11. **Provide demographic data & state-assigned student ID** number for students receiving Early Learning Corps services. Support the Early Learning Corps program in following federal (i.e., FERPA) and state regulations for data security and sharing. A detailed description of data required from the site for participating students is provided in the Early Learning Corps Site Agreement.
 12. **Communicate with the families/caregivers** of students who are receiving Early Learning Corps services in collaboration with the Early Learning Corps Interventionist. Provide a mechanism for informing families/caregivers that their child is receiving Early Learning Corps services.
 13. Ensure that Early Learning Corps Interventionists consistently serve their minimum weekly hours and **a minimum caseload of students at any given time.**
 14. Ensure **service site is accessible** to people with disabilities.
 15. Pay the **MEC Participation Fee.**
 16. Our program has a **disciplinary process** that applies to all MEC Interventionists. If an issue of concern arises that could be disciplinary, in most cases, Internal Coaches should and are expected and encouraged to address those immediately and directly with the Interventionist and document the conversation. Internal coaches will then notify MEC staff. MEC staff are always available to provide additional guidance. Details are provided in the AmeriCorps/Program Orientation, documents, and training provided by MEC to Internal Coaches prior to the start of programming. If there are any questions, please contact Tom Bobo at tbobo@hopenetwork.org.

Description of Early Learning Interventionists

Role Description: The Early Learning Corps Interventionists are embedded into a classroom of children ages 3 – 5 and serves alongside a teacher to develop children's early literacy and math skills in preparation for Kindergarten.

Early Learning Corps Interventionist

Who is this person?	Someone recruited from the community – a recent college graduate, a parent, a retiree, etc.
What does the Interventionist do at the site?	The Interventionist collaborates with the classroom teaching staff to incorporate specific Early Learning Corps strategies into the daily routine.
Are there other things the Interventionist is expected to do?	The Interventionist is required to complete ongoing Early Learning Corps training and participate in professional development with their Coaches and/or MEC staff. Interventionists are required to complete data entry to track student progress that must be completed weekly. Interventionists may also participate in supplemental activities at their site or in their community with the approval of MEC Program staff. The Interventionist may not supplant an employee of the school or district.
What is the time commitment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-Time (FT) Interventionist serves 37.5 hours/week <p>Cohorts of Interventionists start at designated times and commit to serving through the end of the school year. MEC will host for separate start dates: August 29, 2022, September 6, 2022, October 24, 2022, and January 9, 2023.</p>
What are the financial benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly, competitive living stipend • Segal AmeriCorps Education award up to \$4,546.50 to pay for college tuition or student loans • Student loan forbearance on federal loans • Health insurance (MEC pays monthly premium) and child care assistance (if eligible) (FT members only)
What are the non-financial benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA). MEC provides a scholarship to cover all costs • Develop 21st century skills such as data-driven decision making, communication skills and problem solving • Make an impact on the community • Serve students every day through one-on-one, research-based interventions. • Gain resume-building professional experience • Earn college credit while studying at participating institutions • Learn early literacy and math intervention strategies • Play a vital role for children to help close reading achievement gaps and position them for long-term success in school and life
How do they get involved?	Start the process by completing an Early Learning Corps application online at mieducationcorps.org . Applications will open on April 4th.

Description of Internal Coach

Role	The Internal Coach is designated by an administrator and will be trained by Early Learning Corps to provide literacy and math support and oversight to the Early Learning Corps Interventionists. Internal Coaches will uphold the Early Learning Corps model and act as a liaison between school staff, the Interventionists, and the program.
Person	<p>An Internal Coach is an employee of the service site. An Internal Coach should have interest in and time available to dedicate to the program, including supporting members, completing required training, and participating in coaching sessions. It may be beneficial for an Internal Coach to be knowledgeable about interventions or early literacy instruction.</p> <p>Challenges occur when this responsibility is assigned to staff without creating dedicated time during school hours for Early Learning Corps coaching. Administrators should review the requirements of the Internal Coach position with assigned staff prior to completing a site application.</p>
Time Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average of 6-9 hours of coaching and Interventionist support (including adequate supervision) <u>per classroom</u> per month • Approximately 5 hours of required online training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required training + coaching for 1 classroom = approx 0.1 FTE Required training + coaching for 2 classrooms = approx 0.15 FTE Required training + coaching for 3 classrooms = approx 0.2 FTE
Training	Internal Coaches are required to complete about 5 hours of training, and will have access to additional information and professional development through our learning management system, if needed. Training information will be sent to Internal Coaches before the start of the program year, and must be completed within 14 calendar days or 10 business days of an Interventionist starting service at the school/site.
Responsibilities	<p>Provide an on-site orientation for the Interventionist to introduce them to your site. This includes:</p> <p>Develop a consistent weekly schedule with the Interventionist that accounts for the daily and weekly hours commitment of their position: A full-time (FT) Interventionist serves 37.5 hours/week. Interventionist should work with a full caseload of students at any given time. If the school schedule does not allow for 37.5 hours per week, please reach out to Renee Borg at rborg@hopenetwork.org to discuss other options.</p> <p>Provide support to allow the Interventionist to develop professionally throughout the year, including inviting the Interventionist to participate in professional development opportunities at the service site and in the community.</p> <p>Consult with the Early Learning Corps Coaching Specialist to ensure the following takes places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help Early Learning Corps Interventionist and teaching team implement the Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support data-driven decision-making model to review data & set goals • Assist in the Interventionist's implementation of student literacy and math assessments • Conduct integrity observations of the assessments (three times/year) and interventions (twice-monthly) used by the Interventionist to ensure fidelity to the model • Ensure integrity to the Literacy and Math Rich Schedule • Support the Interventionist in implementing the family engagement intervention, Talk, Read, Write, and Count With Me! • Ensure the Interventionist is accurately reporting student data, including assessment scores and demographic information, by the deadlines <p>Work closely with MEC program staff and site administration to proactively manage Interventionist performance and address issues as they arise. Interventionists are expected to adhere to site policies and procedures regarding confidentiality, safety, dress code, attendance, etc.</p>

<p>Complete a semi-annual online program survey and participate in semi-annual site visits with MEC program staff. Advance notice will be provided.</p> <p>Approve Interventionist timesheets once every two weeks and complete an Interventionist performance evaluation two times per year</p> <p>Consult with the Early Learning Corps Coaching Specialist, who meets with the Internal Coach and Interventionists to do observations, conduct fidelity checks for assessment and interventions, and review student progress. The frequency of the Early Learning Corps Coaching Specialist visits depending on the site's needs & Internal Coach's experience with Early Learning Corps. Additionally, Early Learning Corps Coaching Specialists, Internal Coaches, and Interventionists engage in discussions and review of student data/progress. "Visits" can be defined as in-person or virtual.</p> <p>As needed, participate in special site visits to highlight and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Early Learning Corps program, as applicable. These site visits may include media, legislators, corporations, funders, MEC Advisory Board Members, etc.</p>
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The Cost of Early Learning Corps

The chart below breaks down the cost associated with Early Learning Corps.

Description of cost	MEC pays	Site pays*
MEC Participation Fee**		✓
Interventionist recruitment efforts	✓	
Background checks on Interventionists	✓	***
Interventionist living allowance & benefits	✓	
Worker's Compensation / AD&D policy for Interventionists	✓	
Interventionist transportation costs to attend Early Learning Corps-required training	✓	
Interventionist transportation costs to attend site-required training (if applicable)		✓
Cost of including Interventionists in site-sponsored training		✓
Misc. supplies used by Interventionist (e.g. markers, photocopies, paper, stickers)		✓
Computer with video camera, and Internet access for Interventionist and Internet access for Interventionist (whether in-person or virtual)		✓
Work space for the Interventionist, including locked storage cabinet (in-person)		✓
Salary of Internal Coach to fulfill Early Learning Corps responsibilities, including required training		✓

Salary of Early Learning Corps Coaching Specialist and Program Staff to fulfill Early Learning Corps responsibilities	✓	
Early Learning Corps manual, along with assessment & intervention materials	✓	
Expenses related to Internal Coach attendance at Early Learning Corps training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training content fees for regularly schedule Early Learning Corps trainings • Training content fees for make-up Early Learning Corps trainings (approx. \$75/hr.) • Travel expenses, if applicable (e.g. mileage, pay, etc.) Salary of Internal Coach to attend training days, if applicable	✓	 ✓ ✓

* The expenses incurred by a site for participating in Early Learning Corps are considered in-kind contribution by the site. If this is a barrier to partnership, please contact the MEC Executive Director, Dr. Holly Windram, at hwindram@hopenetwork.org.

** MEC charges a \$5,000 per Interventionist fee for each Interventionist awarded to each school. Example funding options include Title 1, 31a, Additional Time Grant, and ARP PATHS funds.

***If site or district policy requires a background check above and beyond what is conducted by MEC, that fee is not paid by the program, nor may it be passed on to the Interventionist. It is expected the site or district will cover any additional background checks.

Michigan Education Corps Participation Fee

MEC is non-profit. MEC charges a \$5,000 fee per Interventionist as part of the agreement with sites to receive the Early Learning Corps program. The fee is \$5,000 per interventionist whether Part-Time or Full-Time. This fee helps cover expenses to recruit, onboard, train and coach a new Interventionist prior to them starting to tutor students at a school. Example funding options for the participation fee include Title 1, 31a, Additional Time Grant, General School Fund, etc. MEC will also work with schools to approach community partners to cover this and/or additional costs as needed.

MEC does not reimburse the \$5,000 participation fee once an Interventionist has tutoring minutes (regardless of how many minutes) with one or more students. If an Interventionist starts at a school and then leaves of their own accord or is dismissed by MEC staff (i.e. after a few weeks or even a few months), MEC will work diligently to replace that Interventionist. MEC will not charge an additional participation fee for the replacement Interventionist. *It is prohibited for schools to hire the Interventionist while they are serving their AmeriCorps term of service. MEC will not reimburse a school or district if the AmeriCorps member is hired by the school or district, nor will MEC replace the Interventionist, unless school or district is willing to pay an additional \$5,000 participation fee.*

In some cases, a part-time Interventionist can only replace a full-time Interventionist. There is no participation fee reduction if a school has a full-time Interventionist and that Interventionist must be replaced with a part-time Interventionist. MEC will work with sites on a case-by-case basis and strive for minimal disruption to the amount of Early Learning Corps service provided with Interventionist transitions if they occur. Further, if MEC can replace a full-time Interventionist with two part-time Interventionists, MEC will not charge an additional participation fee for the additional, second Interventionist. Finally, if MEC is unable to place Interventionists with the fully awarded request, MEC will only charge for the number of Interventionists actually placed at the school.

In summary, MEC will charge the participation fee one time for each unique Interventionist awarded to a service site and only when the individual has tutoring minutes with one or more students (regardless of how many minutes) at their site.

When a school site is awarded with the requested number of Interventionists and the site agreement is signed, and then the *school later requests fewer number of Interventionists*, MEC **WILL CHARGE** the participation fee for the number of Interventionists agreed upon in the site agreement.

Next Steps to Partnering with Early Learning Corps

Prepare to Submit Your Application

- ❑ Identify a staff member to serve as an Internal Coach, and review the expected responsibilities as described on page 9.
- ❑ Identify a staff member to serve as a Recruitment Contact and Interview Contact (if different).
- ❑ Determine the number of Early Learning Corps members and type for which to apply.
- ❑ [Complete and submit your site application](#). Site applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.

After You Apply

- ❑ Receive communication with site award decisions and details.
- ❑ Communicate with MEC program staff to further discuss the partnership.
- ❑ [Complete the site onboarding training course](#). Share this with the identified Site Supervisor and other relevant staff.
- ❑ Begin recruiting using the recruitment launch kit (provided to sites after the site agreement is signed).

Before the Program Year Begins

- ❑ Sign the Site Agreement.
- ❑ Ensure the Internal Coach is ready to complete program-required tasks and training and has the capacity to dedicate 6-9 hours per member, per month.
- ❑ Educate staff about Early Learning Corps.
- ❑ Prepare to welcome Early Learning Corps Interventionist(s) to your site by determining a designated workspace and communicating with the Early Learning Corps Interventionist(s) once they are selected and prior to the start of the training. Interventionist contact information will be sent prior to the start of training.