



Thursday, February 23, 2023

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Google Hangouts: <https://meet.google.com/xzy-mmob-gqs>

Or by phone: 732-639-1054 PIN: 201 587 780#

Meeting Materials:

www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/eclc-meeting-information

AGENDA

Meeting Objectives:

- Approve the December 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Listen to the CDEC's First Annual SMART Act Presentation and learn about progress and opportunities ahead for the Department
- Provide Guidance on UPK Quality Standards
- Learn about and provide feedback on statewide strategic planning efforts including:
 - Early Childhood Leadership Commission Strategic Planning
 - Early Childhood Workforce Planning
 - *Early Colorado Childhood Framework Refresh*
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community

9:30-9:35am	Welcome and Introductions (Tammi Hiler) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACTION: Approve the December 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes
9:35-10:35am	Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) - SMART Act Presentation (Mary Alice Cohen, Deputy Executive Director, CDEC)
10:35-11:05am	Universal Preschool Quality Standards Discussion (Dawn Odean and Heather Craiglow, CDEC)
11:05-11:15am	Break
11:15-11:25am	Public Comment and Commissioner Updates (Sue Renner)
11:25-11:55am	Early Childhood Leadership Commission Priority Projects - Updates and Work Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Childhood Workforce Planning Updates (Rebecca Vlasin, CDEC)• <i>Early Childhood Colorado Framework Refresh</i> - Updates and Feedback (Sondra Ranum, Maria Tarajano Rodman, and Heather Craiglow)

11:55-12:25pm	Early Childhood Leadership Commission Strategic Planning Work Session (ECLC Strategic Planning Work Group, Jodi Hardin)
12:25-12:30pm	Co-Chairs' Next Steps and Final Thoughts (Susan Steele)
12:30pm	Adjourn

ECLC 2023 Meeting Schedule

- February 23, 2023
 - April 27, 2023
 - June 22, 2023
 - August 24, 2023
 - October 26, 2023
 - December 14, 2023
-

Note: Any presentation requested by the ECLC does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the product, process, service or organization by the ECLC.

The next ECLC Meeting will be held on April 27, 2023 from 9:30am to 12:30pm.

For information about future meeting dates, times and locations, visit www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org.



Early Childhood Leadership Commission December 15, 2022 ~ 9:30am - 12:30pm

MINUTES

Meeting Objectives:

- Approve the October 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Learn about and provide feedback on statewide strategic planning efforts including:
 - Early Childhood Leadership Commission Retreat and Strategic Planning
 - Early Childhood Workforce Planning
 - Colorado Department of Early Childhood Strategic Planning
 - Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan
- Provide Feedback on the Early Childhood Council Triennial Report
- Consider Endorsement of the Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community

Attendees: Floyd Cobb, Heather Craiglow, Jasmin Ramirez, Jeanne McQueeney, Lisa Roy, Lucinda Burns, Nicole Riehl, Whitney LeBoeuf, Rachel Hutson, Robert Werthwein, Sondra Ranum, Susan Steele, Jake Williams, Maria Tarajano Rodman, Adeeb Khan, Happy Haynes, Sue Renner, Kristina Heyl

Welcome and Introductions

Sue Renner called the meeting to order at 9:33am. She asked for a brief round of introductions. Sue then asked for a motion to approve the October 27, 2022 meeting minutes. Happy Haynes motioned to approve the minutes as drafted, Heather Craiglow seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Sue reminded the group that the ECLC is working on a refresh of the [Early Childhood Colorado Framework](#). The Framework was created in 2008 and previously updated in 2015. Sue asked people to fill out [this survey](#) ([Spanish here](#)) if they would like to be engaged in the refresh process.

ECLC Retreat Debrief and Next Steps

Commissioners met for a full day to begin strategic planning and developing goals for the next 10 years. During the retreat, Commissioners took time to brainstorm and discuss the essential role of the ECLC. They identified three core functions of the Commission: alignment, advocacy, and accountability. To support these functions and the ECLC's goals, this spring they plan to develop metrics along with short and long-term accountability plans. The Commission will work closely with the Department of Early Childhood and Governor's office to ensure objectives and priorities are closely aligned. Sue asked Commissioners to let Kristina know if they would like to participate in a working group focused on metrics and accountability planning. The working group will check in regularly with the full Commission for updated and feedback. Voting on revised ECLC bylaws and subcommittee charters has been postponed until the strategic planning process is further along.

Commissioners discussed how to include subcommittees in the strategic planning process and crossover between the *Framework* refresh and ECLC planning.

[Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan Updates - Review and Endorsement](#)

Carrie Germeroth and Mike Siebersma, Marzano Research, presented on recent Colorado Shines Brighter (CSB) Working Group discussions and [suggested updates to the Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan](#). Throughout the duration of the Preschool Development Grant Birth - Five three-year renewal grant, now in its final year, Colorado committed to an annual review and update to the Strategic Plan based on needs assessment, program recommendations, and stakeholder engagement.

[The Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan](#) was developed as a five-year plan to align and coordinate systems, innovate service delivery, maximize family knowledge and engagement, increase meaningful and

equitable access, strengthen business practices, and improve the quality of ECCE environments and the workforce. Some strategies within the Plan are funded directly by the PDG and are evaluated by a required external evaluator. Other strategies not funded by the grant have been evaluated by Marzano and the CSB Working Group. Marzano conducted a landscape analysis, met with members of the CSB Working Group, and engaged with other stakeholders to collect feedback and recommendations.

Carried shared a timeline describing the evolution of the Strategic Plan from 2019 through 2021. She shared highlights and examples of the 2022 proposed updates which include a greater emphasis on accessibility for family support, communication, and engagement strategies; strategies to be more inclusive of other programs serving children, families, and early childhood professionals; CDEC's role with state agencies on appropriate strategies; integrated support of UPK implementation with appropriate strategies; increased focus on workforce preparation, recruitment, compensation, and retention; adding Local Coordinating Organizations to the Plan; and updating references to the Colorado Preschool Program to Universal Preschool. The Plan will also include five new strategies related to the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant.

Colorado has applied for a new PDG B-5 Planning Grant for 2023. Should the state receive this grant, a more significant Strategic Plan update would become necessary, and recommendations include adding the Behavioral Health Administration as a partner in the Strategic Plan; adding a separate early childhood workforce goal in alignment with the newly updated Early Childhood Workforce Plan to be completed in 2023; and aligning with the updated *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*.

Sue invited Commissioners to ask questions or ask for clarification. The group discussed if it is necessary to make non PDG-funded strategies more measurable and timebound; the importance of elevating and aligning with the Strategic Plan strategies, and how Colorado has connected with other states that have also received this type of federal grant.

Sue asked for a motion to endorse the 2022 updates to the Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan. Rachel Hutson moved to endorse, Lucinda Burns seconded the motion, and the updates were approved unanimously.

Colorado Early Childhood Councils Triennial Evaluation (2019-2021)

Sue reminded everyone that the Early Childhood Councils (Councils) were created over 20 years ago to help organize and connect the disaggregated early childhood system. Today, Colorado has a robust network of Councils across the state. Councils undergo an outside evaluation every three years. The evaluation was funded by PDG.

Laricia Longworth Reed, The Butler Institute for Children and Families, and Meg Franko, ECE Insights, joined to share highlights of the [Colorado Early Childhood Councils Triennial Evaluation](#). The primary objective of the evaluation was to discover how Councils advance the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*; what factors impact delivery of quality early childhood services; how feasible it is for Councils to combine funding; how the state meets the needs of the Councils; and the impact of the rule waiver process.

First, the evaluation looked at whether Councils were engaging with stakeholders and developing strong partnerships. Councils reported having all or more than their required membership; diverse stakeholder engagement; having between 7 and 80 members; hosting monthly meetings with an average of 8 meetings annually; and being actively involved in exchanging information, sharing resources, and guiding coordination with partner organizations.

Councils were asked to rank how effective they felt they were in implementing the Strategies for Action from the *Framework* on a scale of zero to four. The strategies ranked highest for implementation were Promote and Share Knowledge, Implement Quality Standards, and Pursue Continuous Quality Improvement. The lowest ranked for implementation was Support Consumer Affordability. Many Councils shared they are

working on programs to address development and retention of the early childhood workforce including training and coaching, tuition support opportunities, piloting apprenticeship models, and creating opportunities for high school and college students to pursue a career in this field.

Council services are also assessed under the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* domains of Family Support and Education, Learning and Development, and Health and Well-Being. This time they focused on how early childhood providers experienced the Councils' services. Providers reported that they mainly interact with Councils for the Learning and Development domain which corresponds with where Councils allocate the largest portion of their funding. Providers indicated they were highly satisfied with their Council's supports and services related to the Framework's three domains.

They also evaluated what factors impact the delivery of quality early childhood services in Colorado by asking Councils about existing Community and Council barriers to delivery. The biggest factors impacting the delivery of services include workforce shortages and low workforce compensation, inadequate funding overall for community early childhood services, limited funding for the work of the Councils, and staffing shortages in Councils. The evaluation found that most funding for Councils comes from government grants, especially state grants, and funding from foundations, especially from the Buell Foundation. Many Councils reported needing one full-time employee just to manage and combine funding sources. Councils noted specifically the challenges associated with reimbursement-based funding.

Additionally, the assessment looked at how the state meets the needs of Early Childhood Councils. On average, Councils reported a high level of satisfaction with state supports with highest satisfaction reported for EQIT support. Councils were less satisfied with training and help desk supports. State training specifically for Councils is limited as the state relies heavily on ECCLA to provide that support. Help Desk dissatisfaction was centered mostly on technical issues, specifically the need to use too many different technology platforms.

They also assessed the Councils' involvement in decision making and leadership. About 45% indicated they were mostly satisfied with the state's decision-making process, and 45% indicated they were somewhat satisfied, however 85% of Councils felt they were either sometimes or never included in decision-making processes, but many acknowledged that a lot of growth and progress has been made over the last year.

Finally, they assessed the impact of the rule waiver process. Only three Councils had waivers in effect at the time of the evaluation, and they indicated the impact of the waivers to be quite small. All three waivers were for provisional early childhood teachers in order to address workforce shortages. Councils reported hoping these waivers would lead to longer-term, systemic solutions.

As a result of the evaluation, they developed five recommendations:

1. Support Council effectiveness in the three lowest ranked Strategies for Action which were supporting consumer affordability, developing and retaining the workforce, and advancing sustainable business practices
2. Collaborate with Councils, ECCLA, the state, and local stakeholders to develop innovative solutions to address workforce challenges
3. Assess the purpose of waivers and consider policy and rule recommendations based on waiver requests
4. Remove barriers to combining funding and consider how to reduce funding burden on Councils
5. Improve shared decision-making with the Councils by creating structures within CDEC to collect input on decisions that impact them, including new initiatives, and continue to leverage the strong leadership of ECCLA.

Commissioners asked questions regarding whether these recommendations have been suggested or implemented in other states; opportunities to make the waiver application process simpler and to implement more permanent, systemic changes based on their effectiveness and usefulness; current

strategies to increase funding and offer advanced cash reserves as a way to ease the burden of reimbursement-based funding; and the inclusion of both community and provider responses as well as Council responses in the assessment to ensure participants felt they were included and involved as part of the evaluation process.

Public Comment and Commissioner Updates

- Kristina Heyl shared the [updates from State Agency Partners](#) as well as the link to the ECLC Monthly [Town Hall](#), held on December 13, 2022, which included many UPK updates.
- Nicole Riehl announced Steamboat Ski Resort is opening a new child care facility to serve employees and community members, and several other employer-based child care facilities are underway around the state. Additionally, the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit will be up for renewal during the 2023 legislative session. EPIC will be working with the Colorado Children's Campaign and other partners to encourage reauthorization and improvements to the tax credit.

Colorado Department of Early Childhood

Lisa Roy shared hiring updates including Tom Massey as Chief Administrative Officer; Karen Fox Elwell as Division Director of Strategy, Policy, Communications & Partnership; Rebecca Vlasin as Early Childhood Workforce Director; Elena Kemp as RAC Administrator; and Julie Chavez as UPK Manager. The Department is reviewing final candidates for the Family, Friend and Neighbor Care Program Administrator.

Lisa shared about emergency and permanent rule meetings in September and November for Colorado Child Care Assistance Federal Poverty Guidelines and State Median Incomes as well as Universal Preschool Program Eligibility. There was also an emergency rule meeting for Additional Eligibility, Preschool Services and Rate Setting on November 21. Part-time UPK programming will be considered 10 hours per week, half-day will be 15-20 hours per week, and full-day will be 30-40 hours per week. The rate-setting formula was considered during rule promulgating on November 21. The rule defined three-year-old rates with one qualifying factor for up to 10 hours per week. All children are eligible for up to 15 hours of preschool per week in the school year before entering kindergarten. Children with one qualifying factor in the school year before kindergarten are eligible for up to 30 hours of preschool per week. Denver and Canon City have waivers to also serve a limited and targeted amount of children birth to three years. Lisa shared the rate formula and the [link to the rate document](#).

The UPK provider application is now live, and the family application will launch on January 17. Providers can customize program information, and families will be able to search for participating providers and prioritize their choices. The state will be engaging with providers and stakeholders to develop UPK quality standards this coming spring. Lisa shared the [link to the UPK FAQ document](#).

Karen Fox Elwell, CDEC Division Director for Strategy, Policy, Communications & Partnerships, and Alicia Redwine, CDEC Strategy & Performance Management Manager, joined to share on the Department of Early Childhood's Strategic Planning Framework. Karen serves as the new leader for the Department in strategic planning, performance management, and partnerships development. She briefly reminded the group of CDEC's mission, vision, and core values. They are now working on CDEC's proposed goals to make them easily digestible for broad stakeholders by incorporating community-centered language. Karen asked Commissioners to provide feedback on the proposed goals by January 3. She asked other attendees to provide feedback in the chat.

Commissioners asked for frequent updates from Karen and her team to ensure the development of these goals is integrated into the ECLC's work.

Early Childhood Workforce Planning Updates

Stephenie Hickman and Angela Ben-Zekry, CDEC, and Ellen Johnson and Kaitlyn McGovern, Afton Partners, provided an update on early childhood workforce planning.

Ellen reminded the group about the Colorado Early Childhood Compensation & Benefits Task Force. The Task Force was charged with developing a compensation and benefits plan for Colorado's ECE workforce, building on the Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Plan. The context for the planning involves recognizing that ECE educators play an integral role in society but are often under-respected and under-compensated; recognizing that this is an acute challenge in Colorado; and understanding that increasing ECE compensation requires consideration of related factors including affordability for families, limited profits for providers, and benefits cliffs.

The Task Force is recommending three salary scales based on the cost of living across three regions of the state. The salary scales represent a pay floor and should serve as a guide for all ECE settings. They should be updated annually to reflect changes in cost of living and will represent dramatic increases in compensation for many Colorado ECE workers, with equity across positions and increases in responsibility at higher levels of credentials. The Task Force is also providing recommendations around evaluating K-12 salaries. The Task Force recommends the state explore options to mitigate benefits cliffs. Importantly, these scales do not represent a mandate for providers but rather a north star vision for compensation across the state.

The Task Force also recommends a short-term, point-in-time strategy to provide financial support for ECE professionals while work is underway to reach the long-term compensation goals. Stipends were identified as the most viable short-term solution. This would include a universal stipend and a targeted stipend approach for priority segments of the ECE workforce.

The Task Force is designing specific one-pagers for policymakers, providers, and supporters such as advocacy groups, community members, businesses, etc. and will include action steps for each audience. Commissioners drew attention to the need to highlight for policymakers both the fact that early childhood educators are not contributing to wage inflation as is happening in other industries and the large revenue gap providers are facing when trying to increase wages for teachers without passing that cost on to parents. Ellen asked the group for suggestions on opportunities to market and share the report when it is complete.

Next, Angela provided updates and next steps for development of the Workforce Plan. The discovery phase is winding down and included drafting a report of the accomplishments made as a result of the Workforce 2020 Plan. Partners at Early Milestones and Marzano Research having been pulling information from surveys and other bodies of work to create a foundation for discussions for the engagement phase which will launch in early 2023. An advisory committee will be tasked with overseeing the progress of the engagement phase which will include extensive work groups, smaller focus groups, and one-on-one interviews with representatives from the field. The committee will meet one to two times per month starting in February through summer of 2023. Angela asked Commissioners to consider whether they would be interested in participating on the advisory committee, and she will reach out after the new year to recruit one or two ECLC members. She also asked for the ECLC's help in connecting her team with other groups that could provide valuable insight for the Workforce Plan. They are hoping to ask for ECLC endorsement in October 2023.

Angela then shared some additional CDEC workforce activities. Across CDEC's scholarship opportunities during the summer academic term, the Department issued 533 scholarships to individuals pursuing credentials, certificates, and higher education degrees. They have a goal of issuing 1200 scholarships for the entire academic year.

Additionally, the ECE Teacher Salary Increase Pilot Program is launching this week, with 74 early childhood centers opting in. Centers had to be a level 3-5 program with over 40% of children enrolled receiving CCCAP. Out of the 74 centers that opted in, 22 were selected with a total of 314 teachers who will be able to choose if they want to participate. Those teachers will receive from a \$3.00 to a \$7.40 increase in wages per hour. The pilot will use a robust design to study retention and teacher well-being through surveys over the next two years.

Last, Angela introduced Dr. Rebecca Vlasin as CDEC’s new Workforce Division Director.

Co-Chairs’ Next Steps and Final Thoughts

Kristina asked attendees to let her know if they aren’t already but would like to be included in 2023 ECLC calendar invites. Kristina also announced they are currently accepting applications for an [ECLC Administrator position](#).

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:12pm.

Note: Any presentation requested by the ECLC does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the product, process, service, or organization by the ECLC.

DRAFT

Thank you for joining! We will begin shortly.

ECLC

Early Childhood Leadership Commission

February 23, 2023

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Google Meet



- Please remember to mute your computer or phone when not speaking ●
 - We will be recording the meeting ●
- All materials can be found at: www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/eclc-meeting-information ●



Welcome, Introductions & Approve Minutes

Tammi Hiler

Meeting Objectives

- Approve the December 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Listen to the CDEC's First Annual SMART Act Presentation and learn about progress and challenges ahead for the Department
- Provide Guidance on UPK Quality Standards
- Learn about and provide feedback on statewide strategic planning efforts including:
 - Early Childhood Leadership Commission Strategic Planning
 - Early Childhood Workforce Planning
 - *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* Refresh
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community



Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) -
SMART Act Presentation

Mary Alice Cohen, Colorado Department of Early Childhood



COLORADO

Department of Early Childhood

**Department of Early Childhood
2023 SMART Act Presentation**

**Presented to the Early Childhood Leadership
Commission**

Mary Alice Cohen, Deputy Executive Director

CDEC Vision and Mission

Vision

All Colorado children, families, and early childhood professionals are **valued, healthy and thriving.**

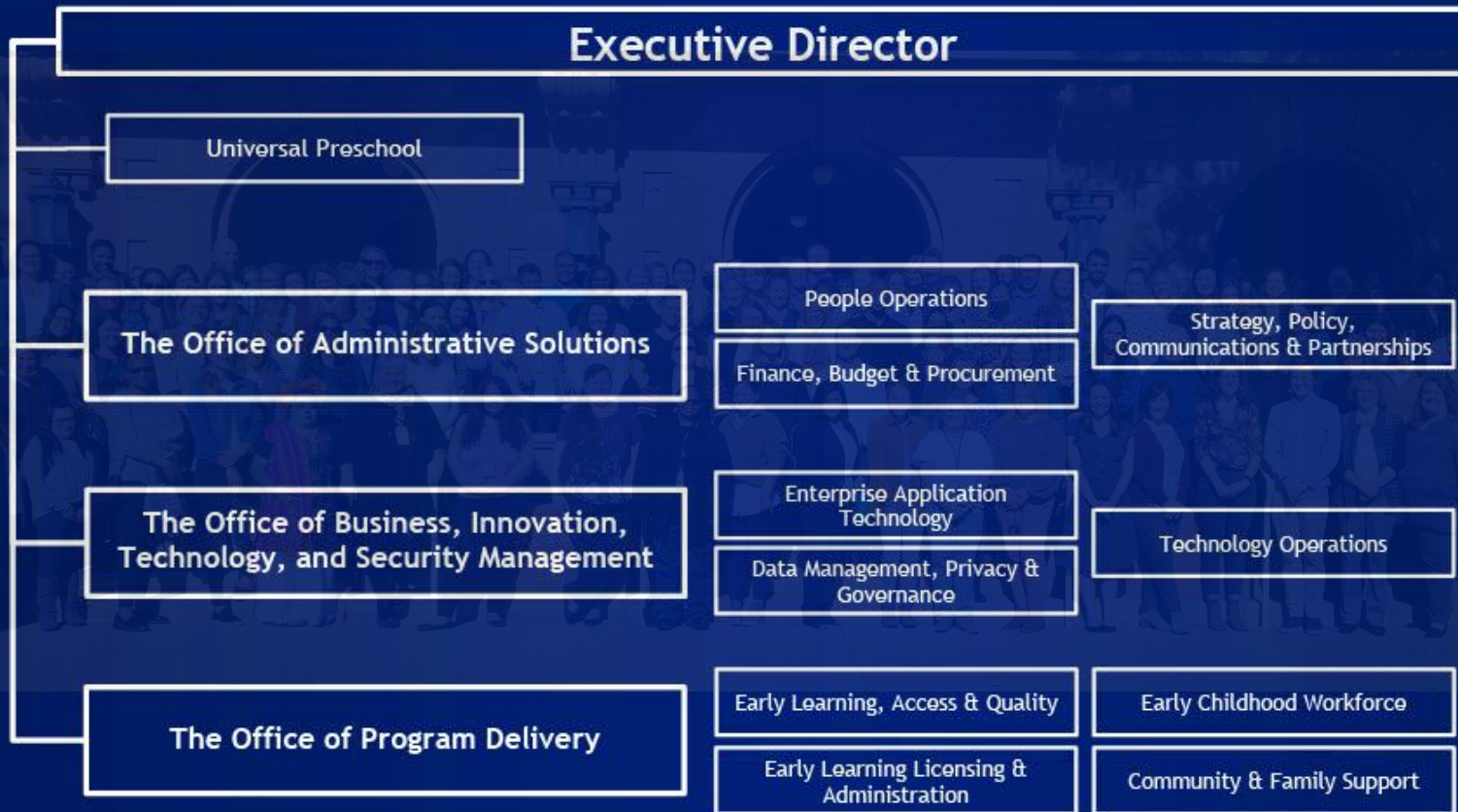


Mission

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood ensures the delivery of an **inclusive, community-centered, data-driven, high quality, and equitable** early childhood system that supports the **care, education, and well-being** of all Colorado's young children, their caregivers, and early childhood professionals in all settings.



CDEC Organizational Structure



CDEC Leadership

Office of Business Innovation, Technology, and Security Management (BITS)

- **Colleen Lynn** - Business Product Director

Office of Administrative Solutions

- **Tom Massey** - Chief Administrative Officer
- Division of People Operations
 - **Naomi Gonzales** - Human Resources Director
- Division of Finance, Budget, & Procurement
 - **Jeanni Stefanik** - Chief Financial Officer
- Division of Strategy, Policy, Communications & Partnerships
 - **Karen Fox Elwell** - Division Director

Division Universal Preschool (UPK)

- **Dawn Odean** - Division Director

Office of Program Delivery

- **Mary Alice Cohen** - Deputy Executive Director/Office Director
- Division of Early Learning Access & Quality
 - **Jesse Burne** - Division Director
- Division of Early Childhood Workforce
 - **Rebecca Vlasin** - Division Director
- Division of Community & Family Support
 - **Kendra Dunn** - Division Director
- Division of Early Learning Licensing & Administration
 - **Carin Rosa** - Division Director

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

EDI Strategies

(completed simultaneously with the EDI assessment)

- Language justice translation services and coursework
- Developing partnerships, professional development opportunities, and accessible career pathways for the early childhood workforce
- Development of Strategic Plan with equity as one of its five values

Specific EDI Work

- Hiring of EDI and Tribal consultants
- Development of EDI performance metrics including development of Action Plans
- EDI Baseline Auditing
- Development of EDI resource dashboard
- Integration of EDI early childhood best practices
- Budget Request of \$2.8m and 600K ongoing for language justice including dedicated staff and application translation

Cabinet WIG 1 → Operationalization of the Universal Preschool Program

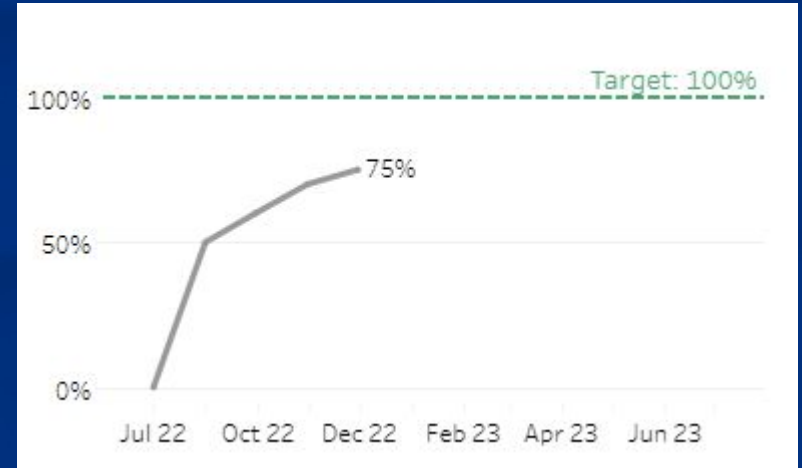
WIG: Implement the comprehensive strategic plan to deliver 10 hours of universal, voluntary preschool to all Colorado children in their year before kindergarten by July 1, 2023.



Trend: Progress is moving forward and ahead of schedule. The team has been established, planning is in progress, and has been shared with stakeholders.



Why this matters: Successful completion of this goal will ensure we have implemented a quality universal preschool model in Colorado that prioritizes family voice and choice and emphasizes the value of a mixed delivery system.



Goal: 25%
Team established

Goal: 50%
Planning in progress

Goal: 75%
Shared with stakeholders

Goal: 100%
Initial finalization of plan

UPK Progress and Next Steps

Progress to Date

- 32 Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs) selected to support families and providers in implementing UPK
- UPK eligibility rules promulgated to:
 - Define part-time, half-day and full-day
 - Define qualifying factors for additional hours
 - Set the UPK rate formula for high-quality
- MOU developed with Colorado Department of Education for special education
- Provider enrollment launched in November
- User-friendly family application launched in January

Current Numbers

- Enrolled providers (as of Feb. 20): 1,649
- Family applications (as of Feb. 20): 29,881

What's Next

- First round of matching between families and providers begins week of February 27
- Application stays open to new families into fall
- Quality standards - authentic and robust process starting in February 2023 including stakeholder engagement and research on what's worked well and what can we do better
- UPK classes start: Fall 2023!



Office of Business, Innovation, Technology, & Security Management

Objective

- CDEC BITS will review, manage, and optimize our technology investments so that they yield the highest benefit to the CDEC Users and the individuals of our State.
- We will also be innovative and break barriers to inclusivity and interoperability across the Early Childhood landscape.

Approach and Guiding Principles

Our approach is to optimize service through technology solutions that are:

- **Affordable**
- **Sustainable**
- **Adaptable**
- **Accessible**
- **Secure**
- **Productive**



Office of Program Delivery

Division of Early Learning, Access and Quality (DELAQ)

DELAQ supports Colorado children with new and innovative approaches to achieving school readiness, safe, stable and nurturing environments, and resilience in early childhood.

The Division's strategic focus consists of increasing access to affordable, high-quality early learning environments.

Division of Early Learning, Licensing and Administration (DELLA)

DELLA is the State's lead in planning and implementing public child care policy in compliance with federal and state regulations.

The Division is responsible for the licensing and monitoring of approximately 5,000 child care facilities in Colorado, including child care centers, preschools, family child care homes, neighborhood youth organizations, and children's resident camps.

Division of Early Childhood Workforce (DECW)

DECW takes the lead for the State in honoring, professionalizing, and growing early care and education professionals to ensure that we recruit and retain a diverse, well-compensated, highly competent and thriving Early Childhood Educator (ECE) workforce across all Colorado communities.

Division of Community and Family Support (DCFS)

DCFS helps to provide families and communities across Colorado with the resources needed to support young children to thrive.

DCFS is organized into four units: Early Childhood Mental Health, Early Intervention Colorado, Family Strengthening, and State Systems Building Initiatives.



Stimulus Money Implementation

Access

Ensure all families have equitable and easy access to high quality early care and education services.

Workforce

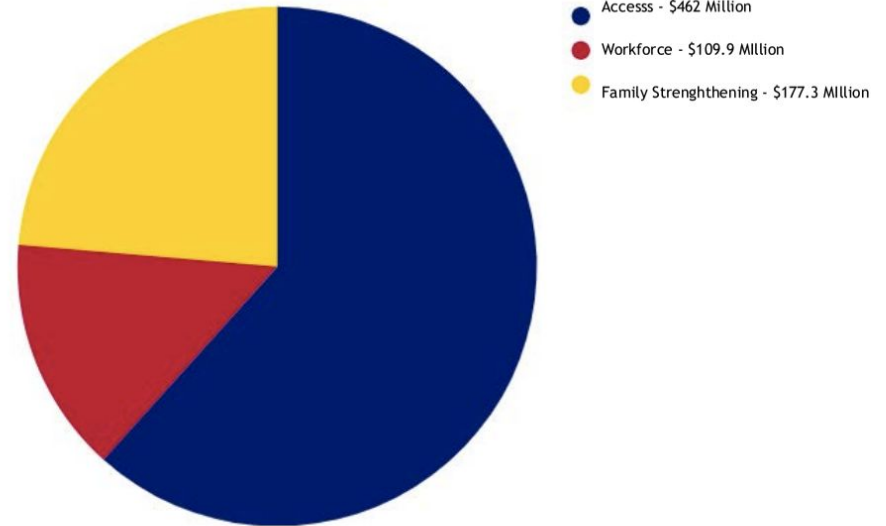
Support the early care and education workforce to expand the number of educators in the state and equip them with the tools they need.

Family Strengthening

Provide communities and families with the support they need so children have a healthy environment in which to thrive.

Percentage of Spending Breakdown

Access, Workforce, and Family Strengthening Totals

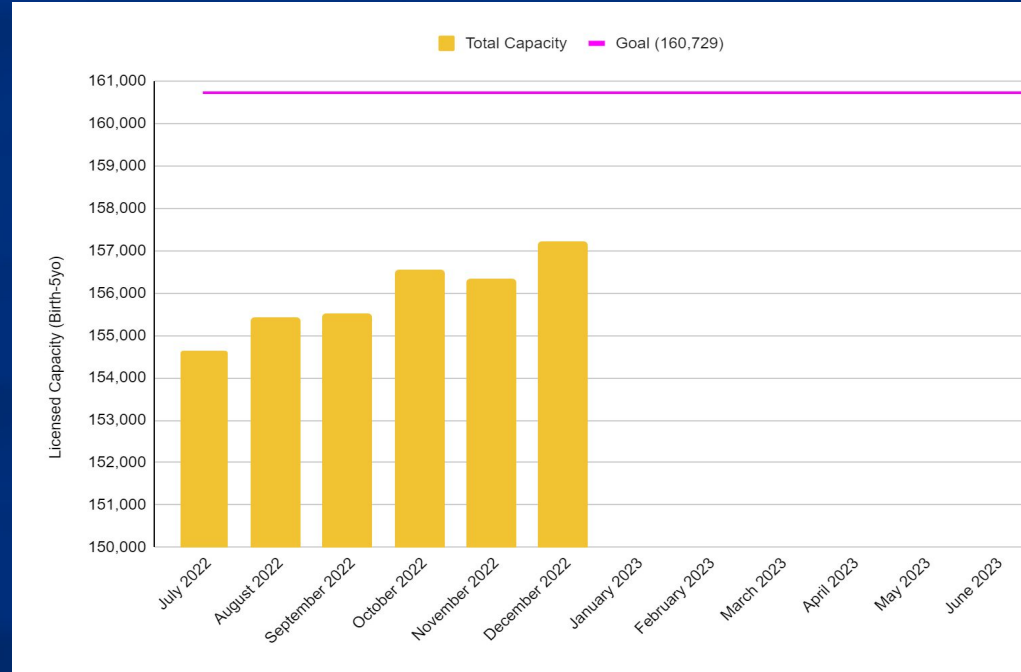


Working Group WIG 1 → Access: Increase Child Care Capacity for Ages Birth to Five

WIG: Increase statewide licensed child care capacity for children ages birth to five by 5 percent from 153,075 to 160,729 by June 30, 2023.

- On track for surpassing our goal to increase licensed child care capacity for children ages birth to five.

**3,531 seats
away from
CDEC Goal of
160,729 seats**



Office of Program Delivery Access Work

Access



Emerging and Expanding Grants

Created to expand access and availability of licensed child care throughout Colorado. Priority is given to programs in underserved communities, childcare deserts and for infant and toddler capacity.

Cohort 1: \$10 million awarded to 262 programs resulting in an increase in capacity of 5,459 new child care slots.

- Awarded programs span 47 counties of which 148 were centers and 115 home providers
- Within the total capacity increase, 1,643 slots were for Infants and Toddlers

Cohort 2: \$11 million will be available for application effective January, 2023.

Office of Program Delivery Access Work

The CIRCLE grants will provide nearly \$23 million in grants to pursue innovative solutions to challenges worsened by the pandemic. Grants will support projects to make child care more affordable; fill gaps in infant and toddler care; strengthen providers' financial stability; boost workforce preparation; and contribute to the health and learning of all children, including those with special needs and dual-language learners.

Grant Allocations as of November 2022:

- \$21.5 million in CIRCLE grants have been awarded
- 227 awards have been granted across 52 counties
- Last round of 21 awards will soon be completed by CDEC vendor, Early Milestones Colorado

Access

CIRCLE GRANTS

*Funding Innovative
child care solutions in
response to challenges
underscored by the
COVID-19 pandemic*



Office of Program Delivery Access Work

Access



Employer-Based Child Care Facility Grant

The purpose of this grant is to provide financial assistance to employers to allow them to construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care center to provide licensed child care services on or near site to its employees.

Grant Allocations as of November 2022:

- \$7.6 million awarded in the first two cohorts
- \$10 million to be committed by December 30, 2024
- 14 grantees, serving 1,365 children
- New sites include hospitals, school districts, ski resorts, affordable housing and other innovations
- Approximately 141 EC educators and 21 EC staff will be hired
- One entity has achieved a Level 2 Colorado Shines Quality Rating; Four entities are rated at Level 1

Working Group WIG 2 Workforce → Diverse & Qualified Child Care Workforce

WIG: Ensure there are enough diverse and qualified early childhood professionals to provide care and education to children birth to five by increasing the workforce by a total of 11.6 percent from 21,167 to 24,130 by June 30, 2023.



Trend: Reporting on this annually at the end of the 22-23 state fiscal year.



Why this matters: Successful completion of this goal will help to meet child care needs across Colorado by ensuring we have the qualified early childhood professionals to support the necessary expansion of child care capacity.

Early Childhood Workforce Overview



Professional Learning and Development

Workforce

Targeted Scholarships Awarded as of Dec 2022:

- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Colorado Scholarship Program (123 recipients)
- CDA Credential supports (161 participants active and/or completed)
- Apprenticeships funded (38 apprentices)
- Free Courses: ECE 101/103 (3,126 recipients)

Total Number of Awards = 3,448 to early childhood educators



Living Wage and Compensation

Workforce



- Loan Forgiveness (134 working educators awarded \$233,333)
- Teacher Salary Increase Pilot (314 lead/asst teachers to receive wage increases for pilot)
- Teacher Peer Mentorship (30 working educators participating)
- ECEP Tax Credit Eligibility (9,898 new credentials awarded since June 2021 with 27% identifying as Latinx/Hispanic)

Access and Belonging



Workforce

Family, Friends and Neighbors (FFN) Supports Program

- FFN Administrator onboarding to begin on January 17, 2023
- Launch FFN State Advisory Council
- Training grant solicitation in draft form
 - Grant will provide professional development opportunities for providers



Community and Family Support Overview

CDEC partners with families and organizations to meaningfully and equitably engage, support, and empower families and communities to promote children's overall development, learning, and well-being.

The Division of Community and Family Support houses 24 programs that focus on meeting young children's needs in the places that they spend their time, beyond child care and preschool.



Early Intervention Unit (EI)



Provides developmental support and services for children from birth through two years of age who are referred due to a suspected developmental delay or disability.

- The Early Intervention unit serves approximately 12,000 infants and toddlers annually.
- Early Intervention Colorado includes:
 - Referral and Intake
 - Eligibility Evaluations
 - Responsibility for the evaluations moved from the Colorado Department of Education on July 1, 2022
 - Eligibility definition broadened on January 1, 2023
 - Service Coordination
 - Direct Services
 - Workforce retention and expansion



Family Strengthening Unit

Provides services focused on building protective factors that prevent adverse childhood experiences. The unit includes:

- Home Visiting Team funding seven evidence-based home visiting programs across the state.
 - Last year, CDEC was able to expand services with stimulus funding in accordance with the Colorado Home Visiting Investment Plan.
 - [Here is the most recent update from the Home Visiting Investment Task Force](#)
- Family Support Team comprised of eight programs designed to prevent child abuse and neglect through parenting and economic security supports. Also, houses the network of family resource centers.



Early Childhood Mental Health Unit



The Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Unit strengthens adult-child relationships and engages families in children's social emotional learning and development. The unit includes:

- ECMH Consultation
- ECMH Support Line
- The Incredible Years
- Child First
- Training on Trauma Informed Approaches for providers and families

Office of Administrative Solutions

People Operations

- HR, Employee Development, and Facilities/Operations for CDEC
- Spearheads much of our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging work
- Department's Emergency Action Plan & Continuity of Operations Plan

Finance, Budget & Procurement

- Includes our Finance, Contracts & Procurement, Stimulus \$, Budget, and Audits & Compliance Units
- Responsible for budget development, tracking fiscal progress and needs, and so much more

Strategy, Policy, Communications & Partnerships

- Includes the Rules Advisory Council, Family Voice Council, and Early Childhood Leadership Commission
- Leads CDEC Strategic Planning process



Rulemaking and Regulatory Agenda

Rules Advisory Council (RAC)

- Consultation and advice in promulgation of rules
- Covers functions, programs, and services of CDEC
- 15 members from a wide range of perspectives and expertise regarding early childhood and family support services

The [2023 Regulatory Agenda](#) will guide rulemaking work of CDEC

2022 Rules

- Annual Federal Poverty Level (FPL) & State Median Income (SMI) updates
- UPK eligibility, factors, and additional hours
- Rate-setting for UPK
- Early Intervention (EI) eligibility

2023 Incoming

- 18 proposed rules
- Covers all divisions & programs
- Includes transfer of rules from CDHS



Legislative Agenda

- **UPK Provider Bonuses** - Establishes statutory authority for \$5 million in one-time bonuses for providers who offer universal preschool (UPK) in the first year, with additional bonuses for providers who have never participated in a state-run preschool program and UPK providers who also sustain or expand infant/toddler slots.
- **Legislative Clean-up of Early Childhood Statute** - Makes technical revisions to remove or revise duplicitious statutory language, and adds language to clarify statutory ambiguity and authority regarding the new Department and CDEC programs.
- **Retaining Proposition EE Tobacco Tax Revenue for Universal Preschool** - Refers a measure to the 2023 ballot for voters to vote to retain excess Proposition EE revenue for universal preschool.



FY 2023-24 Budget Priorities

Standing Up Universal Preschool

\$326.1 million
UPK Program
Implementation

\$4.9 million to
increase
participation in
UPK

Supporting Our People, Providers & Those We Serve

\$14.9 million
for Provider
Workforce

\$105.3 million
continuation &
restructure of
stimulus funds

\$969,704
Nurse Home
Visitor Program

\$150,000 Child
Sexual Abuse
Prevention
Training

\$390,333
Early
Childhood
Mental Health
Support Line

Structured Investments

\$2.2 million
CDEC
applications
translation

\$10.5 million
Employer
Childcare
Facility Grants

\$1.3 million
Transition
to/from
CDHS/CDEC



THANK YOU!!

QUESTIONS?



Universal Preschool Quality Standards Discussion

Heather Craiglow and Dawn Odean, CDEC



COLORADO

Department of Early Childhood

Planning for UPK Colorado

Overview of Quality Standards-A Phased Approach

February 23, 2023

UPK Division

Dawn Odean-Director UPK Division

VACANT
Program
Assistant

**McKenna Roholt
LCO Manager**

VACANT-
LCO Regional Specialist

VACANT-
LCO Regional Specialist

VACANT-
LCO Regional Specialist

VACANT-
LCO Regional Specialist

VACANT-
LCO Regional Specialist

**Julie Chavez
UPK Manager**

VACANT-
UPK Specialist

VACANT-
UPK Specialist

VACANT-
UPK Specialist

VACANT-
UPK Specialist

**Heather Craiglow
HSCO Director**

Brittany Hsieh
HSCO Coordinator

VACANT
Transitions Specialist





UPK Family Application Data 2/21/2023

39,283- Applications Created

30,185- Applications Submitted

25,424- 4 Year Old Applications Submitted

4,761- 3 Year Old Application Submitted



Quality Standards

Quality standards are focused on **items established by research and best practice** to result in effective early childhood care and education programming and **improved child outcomes.**



Teacher Development and Instructional Practices



Professional development for teachers:

- Must be focused on improving teacher-child interactions and quality of instruction, including improving fidelity in implementing evidence-based curricula and student outcomes

Instructional practice:

- Must promote learning through developmentally appropriate practices that include a mix of structured activities and play
- Must increase and support learning using instructional practices that build on previous learning
- Must include a focus on age-appropriate classroom environments and ongoing informal assessments of learning
- Must using teaching strategies that have been shown to meet the needs of children who are dual-language learner

Healthy Development

- Must limit use of out-of-school suspension and expulsion
- Must reflect best practices in early childhood mental health, including promoting access to early childhood mental health consultation
- Must offer voluntary vision, hearing, dental, and health screenings in their home language, and, upon parent request, referrals to appropriate health providers for enrolled children
- Must offer voluntary health and developmental screenings, which must include the use of valid and reliable screening tools that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate



Family and Community Engagement



- Must engage with parents and neighborhood leaders in a formal and meaningful way, including seeking input for policy and programming decisions
- Must communicate with children's parents/families in their home language

UPK Quality Standards Planning

The planned phases of work include the following:

- Phase I - Research, Review, and Stakeholdering for UPK Quality Standards Rule
- Phase II - Develop Cross-Department Standards, including workforce, professional learning credentials and pathways
- Phase III - Resource library, pathways, reporting plan

The CDEC will announce details of each phase by March 31, 2023.



Call to Action

CDEC is committed to provide updates and feedback opportunities

Considerations towards children's health and well-being



Resources



- [Colorado Department of Early Childhood](#)
- [UPK FAQ](#)
- [Colorado Universal Preschool Recommendations](#)
- [Universal Preschool Colorado: Preschool FREE to all - YouTube](#)
- cdec_upkcolorado@state.co.us
- 303-866-5223

THANK YOU!

Questions

Dawn Odean -
dawn.odean@state.co.us

Heather Craiglow -
heather.craiglow@state.co.us





Break Time!
Back in 10 minutes...



Public Comment and Commissioner Updates

Sue Renner



Early Childhood Leadership Commission Priority Projects - Updates & Work Session

Early Childhood Workforce Planning Updates

Rebecca Vlasin, CDEC

Workforce Wins



Many stimulus strategy successes:

- Targeted scholarships, apprenticeships and free coursework to over 3,4448 educators.
- Loan forgiveness and potential eligibility for tax credits to 10,000+ educators.
- Compensation pilots and supporting coaching capacity across the state.
- Alignment of training, credit for prior learning, on-ramps for degree pathways that honor competencies, contextualized, and hands on learning.

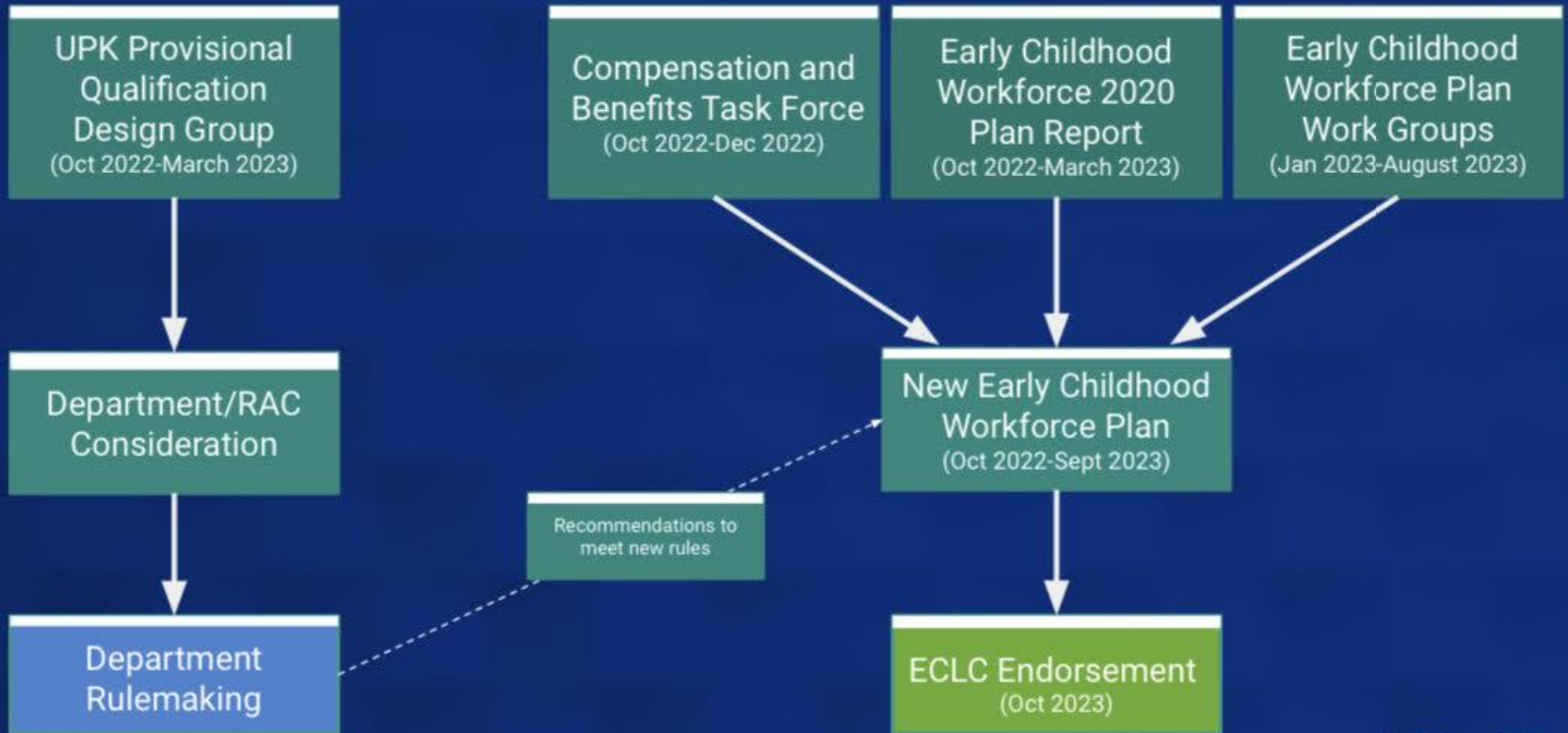
Workforce Wins



More to come, look for:

- Funding for FFN Professional Learning
- Funding for Substitute Initiatives
- New Compensation & Benefits
- Petey, the PDIS Help Desk Chat Bot, went live last weekend.
- Expansion of workforce supports for Home Visitors, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants, Early Intervention providers and all consultative roles

How does this work come together?



Listening Sessions: Comprehensive Early Childhood Workforce Plan

A critical component of this project is to engage providers and key partners representing a diverse set of perspectives, roles, and connections across the early childhood system. **We would like to invite you to share your feedback** regarding workforce priorities, goals, and recommendations for future investments through one of our March 2023 virtual listening sessions.

Meetings will be capped at 100 participants, and more meetings will be added if necessary. All sessions will be held via Zoom and in Mountain Time (US and Canada).

Please join us for the listening session that best represents your [region](#):

Denver-Metro Urban

March 6, 2023 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Rural/Frontier

March 13, 2023 | 12:00 – 2:00 PM

Non-Denver Metro Urban

March 15, 2023 | 12:00 – 2:00 PM

Open to All Regions

March 21, 2023 | 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Mountain Resort

March 23, 2023 | 12:00 – 2:00 PM

All sessions will be recorded.

For those attending the [Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Conference](#), we will be hosting the following session on March 10, 2023 from 1:30 – 3:00 PM:
A Comprehensive Early Childhood Workforce Plan: Informing the EC Workforce 2020 Plan Update.

Early Childhood Colorado Framework Refresh - Updates and Feedback

Sondra Ranum, Maria Tarajano Rodman, and
Heather Craiglow

EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK REFRESH

UPDATES AND GUIDANCE

ECLC Meeting - February 2023



EARLY CHILDHOOD CO FRAMEWORK REFRESH

Facilitate a statewide stakeholder engagement process to provide an **updated Early Childhood Colorado Framework**



Process and Timeline

October 2022-September 2023

START

Oct 2022-Sept 2023

Through Sept 2023

Through April 2023

Jan-April 2023



SINCE WE LAST MET...



Conducted a Stakeholder Engagement Interest Survey *(English and Spanish)*

Over 200 stakeholders interested in participating and/or supporting outreach



Seated and met with a Public-Private Steering Committee

Committee of over 30 stakeholders representing a diversity in demographics (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, region, role) guiding key decisions in process



Developed an Outreach Plan

Proposal on how best to connect with communities (outreach plan) based on alignment of the stakeholder interest survey and the Steering Committee input

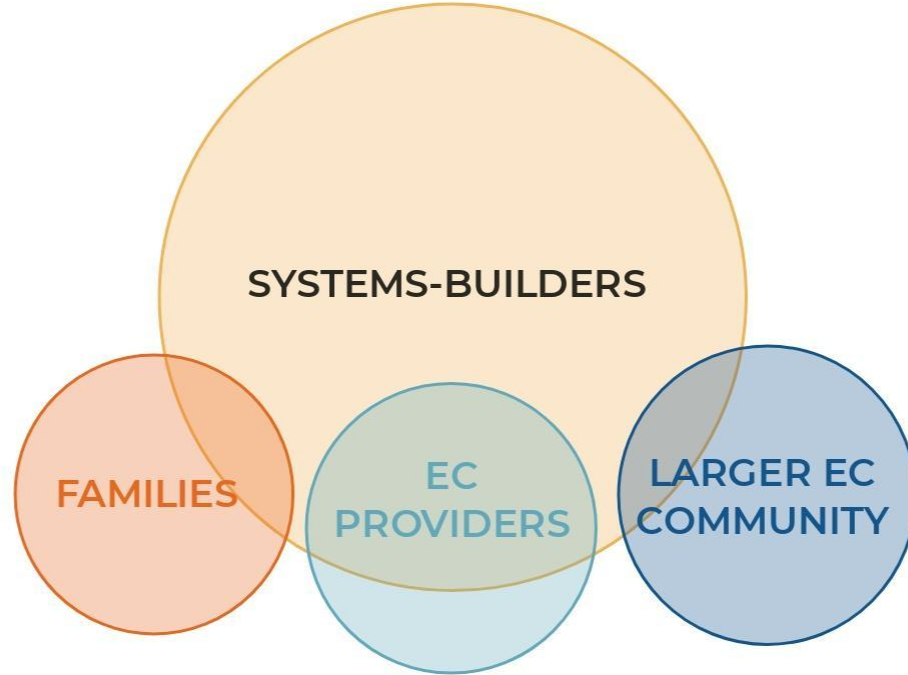


Began the Literature Scan and Framework Gap Analysis

Foundational document review and framework gap analysis of other CO frameworks (and other state frameworks) to inform updates to the framework

CONFIRMING ASSUMPTIONS ON AUDIENCE

A FRAMEWORK FOR...



DISCUSSING THE VISION

KEEP VISION AS IS

Current vision in the Framework:

All children in Colorado are valued, healthy, and thriving.

CONSIDERATIONS TO KEEP

- Aligns with other established work in which this vision is a guiding principle
- Embedded across other state frameworks
- A strong framework to build from

EXPAND VISION

For example's sake: ***All CO children, families, and early childhood professionals are valued, healthy, and thriving.*** (CDEC Vision)

CONSIDERATIONS TO EXPAND

- More reflective and representative of full early childhood system
- Inclusive of families, communities, and other adults in young children's lives
- Communities can see themselves in the vision

TIMELINE: SNAPSHOT OF UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Now through April 2023

ECLC Meeting
updates and input
on vision

FEB 23 (TODAY)

Stakeholder
outreach and
engagement

MARCH

ECLC Meeting
updates on
findings and/or
additional decision
points

APRIL 27

Literature review
and framework gap
analysis

FEB-APRIL

Steering committee
meeting to share
preliminary
findings

APRIL 19



Early Childhood Leadership Commission
Strategic Planning Work Session
ECLC Strategic Planning Work Group, Jodi Hardin

Project Objective

Develop a 10-year commitment and plan that is clear and compelling and **guides the ECLC's time, energy and work**

High-level, systems and policy focused

Reasonably simple to see, read, and understand

Builds on and strengthens previous and current work

Describes where we want and need to go

Allows space for the work to evolve (i.e. flexible and adaptable)

Really guides ECLC work (i.e. becomes ECLC's north star)

Project Activities & Timeline

Develop Draft of ECLC's 10 Year Plan

January & February 2023

- * Launch work group
- * Review relevant notes, reports, etc
- * Develop draft #1
- * Working session at February 2023 ECLC Meeting

Vet Draft

March & April 2023

- * Work group incorporates Commissioner input
- * Full draft compiled
- * Design stakeholder vetting via ECLC Town Hall
- * Facilitate discussions with key leadership, as needed (e.g. CDEC, Governor's Office)

Finalize 10-Year Plan

May 2023

- * Incorporate final input from ECLC, stakeholders, and state leaders
- * Finalize content of 10-Year Strategic Plan

ECLC Strategic Plan Components

Ultimate Vision

<all children are valued, healthy, and thriving – EC CO Framework>

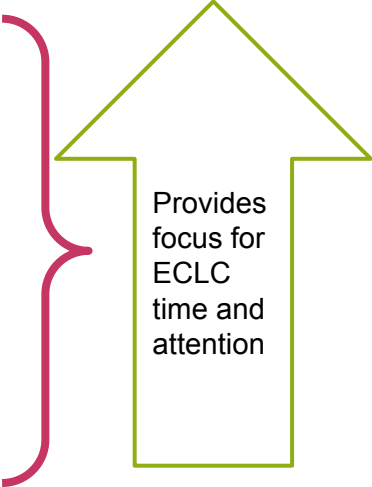
Commitment/Result:
the long-term truth we
want to see in 10
years

Commitment/Result:
the long-term truth we
want to see in 10
years

Commitment/Result:
the long-term truth we
want to see in 10
years

Milestones/Metrics: dashboard that monitors progress and learning

ECLC Work via its core roles of alignment, accountability, advocacy



Provides
focus for
ECLC
time and
attention

Resources Used to Draft Plan Components

Primary Sources:

- ECLC Discovery notes
- ECLC Retreat notes
- Work Group meeting discussions

Cross Referenced:

- Governor Office WIGs
- CDEC WIGs and strategic plan

DRAFT System and Policy Level Commitments/Results

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood is successful in administering a system of early childhood care and education supports so that families can navigate and access services for their children, including universal preschool.

Children receive early childhood services and supports provided by a well-prepared, diverse, and effective workforce that is appropriately compensated.

Colorado's early childhood system has the data needed to make sound decisions and the funding resources to put those plans into place.

Commitment/Result: The CDEC is successful in administering a system of early childhood care and education supports so that families can navigate and access services for their children, including universal preschool.

Milestone: <i>an achievement marker on the way towards the result</i>	ECLC Role: <i>What are we doing via our core roles of alignment, accountability, and advocacy? Where does the ECLC focus its time and energy over the next 1-3 years?</i>
Adequate statewide child care and preschool capacity	advocate for mixed delivery system, including FFN
Coordinated community-level systems	

Progress Metric (TBD, 1-3 metrics): *Based on the ECLC role, how might we monitor progress towards the result?*
 Ex: increase in statewide licensed child care capacity, increase in infant/toddler care

DRAFT

DRAFT

DRAFT

Commitment/Result: Children receive early childhood services and supports provided by a well-prepared, diverse, and effective workforce that is appropriately compensated.

Milestone: <i>an achievement marker on the way towards the result</i>	ECLC Role: <i>What are we doing via our core roles of alignment, accountability, and advocacy? Where does the ECLC focus its time and energy over the next 1-3 years?</i>
Adequate workforce across the mixed delivery system to ensure enough qualified early childhood professional to meet the demand.	promote alignment across qualifications advocate for multiple pathways
Diversity within the early childhood workforce	
Adequate investments in workforce compensation and benefits	

Progress Metric (TBD, 1-3 metrics): *Based on the ECLC role, how might we monitor progress towards the result?*
Ex: increase in total EC workforce, increase in professionals of color at director or assistant director levels, increased investments in workforce compensation and benefits

DRAFT

DRAFT

DRAFT

Commitment/Result: Colorado's early childhood system has the data needed to make sound decisions and the funding resources to put those plans into place.

Milestone: <i>an achievement marker on the way towards the result</i>	ECLC Role: <i>What are we doing via our core roles of alignment, accountability, and advocacy? Where does the ECLC focus its time and energy over the next 1-3 years?</i>
Progress towards CO having an established data system that tracks progress and fosters collaboration.	advocate for a data sharing MOU across Departments
Consistent messaging on policy priorities	align policy agendas; work with the EC and School Readiness Commission
Barriers to local public funding options are minimized	engage in TABOR repeal discussions; promote early childhood special district options
Stable EC funding as federal stimulus dollars decrease	advocacy with state agencies and foundations

Progress Metric (TBD, 1-3 metrics): *Based on the ECLC role, how might we monitor progress towards the result?*
 Ex: interagency data sharing MOU in place,

ECLC Unique Role

Alignment

- championing and advancing a shared, statewide vision for early childhood
- promoting collaboration across state agencies, public/private, and state/local partners

Advocacy

- identifying and advising on the policies, practices and systems change needed
- working with the Governor's Office and the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission to inform and advance goals
- advising the Colorado Department of Early Childhood and other state agencies

Accountability

- monitoring and evaluation of the early childhood system, centering on equity
- assessing how Colorado is meeting goals related to public investments
- identifying gaps and needs for systems enhancements
- holding the ECLC accountable to its charge and goals

Small Group Discussion: reactions to the draft ECLC 10-Year Plan

Small group discussions:

Result #1 “CDEC is successful in administering a system of early childhood...” (Jasmin, on line)

Result #2 “...a well prepared, diverse, and effective workforce...” (Happy)

Result #3 “...the data needed to make sound decisions and the funding needed....” (Nicole)

- To what degree does the commitment/results statement convey what the ECLC is positioned to influence and address?
- What are the **achievement markers or milestones** that contribute towards this result?
- What is the **ECLC’s unique role in moving this particular result** forward? What is the ECLC doing over the next 1-3 years?



Co-Chairs' Next Steps and Final Thoughts

Susan Steele

ECLC

Early Childhood Leadership Commission

Next Meeting:

April 27, 2023

9:30 am - 12:30 pm



Thank you!