



**TRANSITION  
ADVISORY  
GROUP**

**TAG Meeting #3:  
August 25, 2021**



**TRANSITION  
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**Welcome**

# Agenda

- Welcome
- Voices from the field
- Logistics
- Review charge
- Update from subgroups
- Revisit program movement, funding, & timeline
- Preview local structures & partnerships
- Public comment
- Next Steps

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**Voices from the Field:  
Cesiah Hernandez**

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**Logistics**

# Meeting Norms

- Come prepared.
- Mute yourself when not speaking.
- Stay engaged (e.g., actively participate and use the chat function).
- Be mindful of how much “air time” each member receives.
- Always assume good intent.
- All ideas are valued.
- Center equity in all conversations.

# Expectations

**Every meeting you should expect the following:**

- **Via e-mail the Friday before:**
  - Agenda for meeting
  - Suggested pre-reading
- **In meeting:**
  - Subgroup updates
  - Background information
  - Focused discussion around a specific part of the transition plan
  - Closing/next steps

# TAG Meeting Schedule

Meetings will take place on Wednesdays from 3-5:30pm MST

Meeting Dates*	Key Focus Areas
<del>July 14</del>	- Kick-off meeting : Introductions and mission/vision discussion
<del>August 4</del>	- Movement of programs to new department - Department structure & timeline of move
<b>August 25</b>	- Revisit program movement, funding & timeline - Discussion: local structures & partnerships
<b>September 15</b>	- Revisit local structures & partnerships - Governance of DEC - Discuss technology and blending/braiding funds to support unification
<b>October 20</b>	- Review transition plan draft - Universal, voluntary preschool implementation
<b>November 17</b>	- Universal, voluntary preschool implementation to support most vulnerable populations and mixed delivery
<b>December 15</b>	- Additional topics regarding universal, voluntary preschool



# Feedback Form Responses

## A reminder about the Feedback Form [responses](#):

- The responses are all shared publicly on the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) website removing all identifying information
- TAG members should review the responses in the feedback form before every meeting
- These responses are valuable input for this stakeholder engagement process

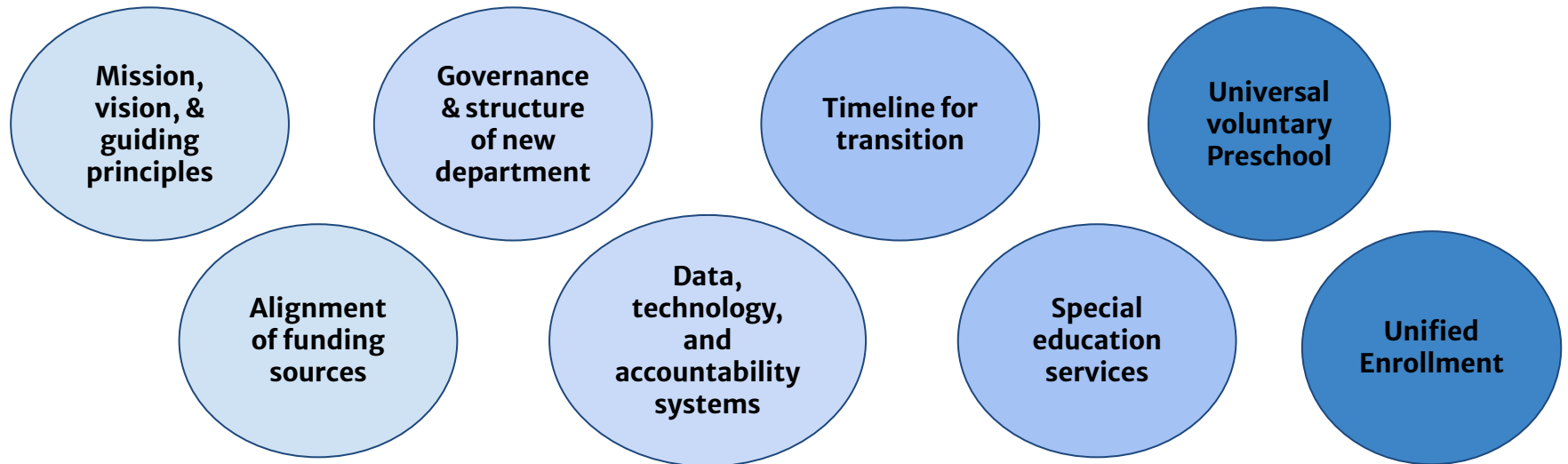


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**Review Charge**

# TAG Charge

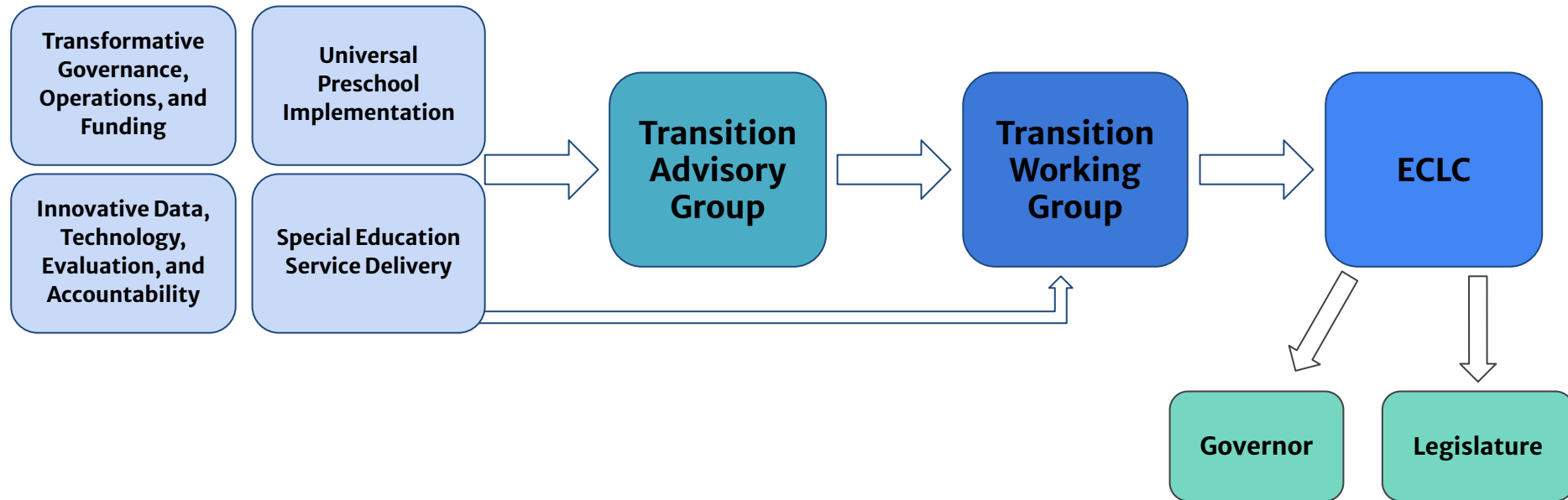
The Transition Advisory Group (TAG) will convene to discuss ideas and recommendations for the transition plan to offer to the Transition Working Group (TWG), taking into consideration the work done in the topic subgroups, focus groups, town halls, and all other stakeholder engagement structures. Themes to be considered:



*This will help render a plan for the new department and implementation of the new statewide, universal, voluntary preschool program that is robust, comprehensive, and centered on the children and families of Colorado.*

# Subgroup Structure

TAG is convening subgroups to offer insights that will guide the creation of a transition plan to the new unified department of early childhood. Each group will offer recommendations from their perspectives or in their areas of expertise.



# TWG Charge

House Bill 21-1304 called for the creation of the TWG, which will develop a transition plan and recommendations for a new statewide, universal, voluntary preschool program, working with a consultant and the advice of the TAG. The plan must address:

- Mission and Vision, Guiding Values, and Principles
- Governance and structure of new department
- Fiscal Structure for the new department & services provided & programs administered including administration and operations
- Timeline for completing key transition activities for the new dept. Including moving services & programs from existing dept to new dept and considerations for a phased transition approach to ensure ongoing alignment
- Aligning and combining funding sources for EC (taking previous local efforts for streamlining into account)
- Technology required to achieve goals to support parents/caregivers to identify local, appropriate, and available EC program and service options and support unification
- Early Childhood data systems strategies to inform planning, leverage resource, allocations, maximize children's access to programs, & support data-driven decision-making

***Additional strategies to support:*** reducing overregulation, early childhood and early elementary alignment, alignment with child welfare system and child maltreatment prevention, alignment with existing departments, alignment with multi-generation strategies to support families, coordination and collaboration with programs that are not moved to the new department, robust stakeholder engagement strategies that include parents, and education and training related to trauma informed approaches to early childhood.

# Guiding Principles



# Mission and Vision

## **Vision**

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

## **Mission**

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood champions (or promotes) a comprehensive, community-informed, effective, high quality and equitable early childhood system that supports the care, education and well-being of all Colorado's young children, their families and early childhood professionals in all settings.

## **Values**

- We value equity across the early childhood system and are committed to utilizing an equity-focused lens to drive priorities and decision making.
- We believe that formal and informal care environments can provide high quality, developmentally appropriate care and learning.
- We respect and appreciate the diversity and strengths of all of our communities in Colorado.
- We believe that accessibility to early childhood services considers affordability, cultural responsiveness, and parent choice.
- We value an innovative and expansive approach to our early childhood system.

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**Key Themes from Ongoing  
Conversations**



# Listening Sessions Summary

## Two Provider Listening Sessions: August 3

### *Key Themes*

- Collaboration across all aspects of the EC system from the state to local level is essential
  - Current regulations are often burdensome and unaligned; alignment and streamlining would greatly benefit providers
  - A stronger emphasis is needed on recruiting, retaining, and supporting the early childhood workforce
  - Families should have access to affordable child care and choice of what best meets their needs.
  - More supports are necessary to help both families and providers navigate the early childhood space.
- 

## Two Family Listening Sessions: August 24

### *Key Themes*

- Families want more choices for types of care for their children.
- More accommodations are needed for the transportation of children to and from care, particularly for children with special needs.
- Long waitlists prevent children from accessing the types of care they need and that would best serve the entire family.
- Services ought to be offered in multiple languages in order to accommodate families and children who do not speak English as their first language.
- Parents who work full time struggle to supplement care for their children who only have part time child care.

*There will be two workforce listening sessions happening September 21 and a report out will be brought to the October 20 TAG meeting.*

# Subgroup Meetings Update

## Data, Technology, Evaluation & Accountability

### Week 1: Serving Families

- Some strong local data collection efforts
- Opportunities to leverage technology to ease burdens on families accessing and sharing information

### Week 2: Serving Providers

- Need for centralized data, analytic, evaluation and research supports
- Opportunities to align enrollment, capacity, and demand data including at the local and state levels

### Week 3: Evaluation & Accountability

- Better integrated, interoperable state data systems across programs, agencies, and systems will improve common understanding of child and family outcomes
- Tech systems need to be easier to access and utilize for providers

### Week 4: Structures to support Alignment to Kindergarten and Beyond

- Focused on the whole child – linked to Early Learning and Development Guidelines.
- One accountability system

## Special Education Service Delivery

### Week 1: Family Experiences

- High rates of inclusive classrooms in Colorado
- Difficult, confusing system to navigate; hard to know where and how to access available resources

### Week 2: Provider Experiences

- Public funding is available to support children who qualify for special education
- Inadequate funding, space and workforce available to support needs, especially in rural areas

### Week 3: IDEA and Part B

- CDE staff presented an overview of the history and key components of IDEA and Part B, Section 619

### Week 4: IDEA and Part C

- CDHS staff presented an overview of IDEA Part C
- Look at strong models like Head Start and consider universal connectors between systems

# Subgroup Meetings Update

## Universal Preschool Implementation

### Week 1: Shared Outcomes

- Well-resourced programs that meet the needs of all families are available in a mixed-delivery system
- Streamlined processes for enrollment, funding and data support providers in their work

### Week 2: Integration with CPP

- Vision for a single system that reduces barriers and provides family choice
- Importance of blending and braiding funds in a manner that reduces burdens
- Maintain services for those currently accessing CPP

### Week 3: Local Infrastructure

- Communities may need implementation supports for recruiting / retaining workforce, trainings, space, etc
- Strong alignment, coordination and collaboration is needed across all levels
- Consider needed wrap-around supports, such as transportation and mental health

### Week 4: Balancing Universality vs. Serving Most in Need

- Ability to blend and braid funds at the state agency level rather than burden falling to providers and parents
- Need to increase workforce to meet the take-up capacity

# Subgroup Meetings Update

## Transformative Governance, Operations and Funding

### **Meeting 1: Factors for a Unified Early Childhood System**

- There was a high degree of agreement among participants to consider moving a wide range of programs that serve children and families
- More consideration needed for programs that cross age ranges or families outside of early childhood

### **Meeting 2: Current Early Childhood Governance Structure**

- Don't lose the progress made in aligning services and programs; avoid creating new silos and interruptions in service delivery and access
- Build on existing functions; support / scale models that are working well
- Continued focus on equity and reaching under-resourced communities

### **Meeting 3: Blending and Braiding Funds to Serve Families**

- Current system is complicated for providers and families; we need a streamlined system with easy applications and alignment of requirements, funding structures, and eligibility
- Technological solutions to support blending and braiding of funds, attendance tracking, and application processes for families and providers
- Equity should continue to be prioritized with funding being targeted to the most at-risk and a range of age groups (3-year olds) served

### **Meeting 4: Building on Local Infrastructure**

- Program specific options for families: Home visiting; free resources such as libraries, food banks, 211, churches; CCCAP
- Opportunities: Simplifying systems and helping families access the services they need while increasing funding
- Programs like DPP and CPP have strong models and local providers have in-depth knowledge of their communities' needs

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**TAG Discussion: Program  
Movement Recommendations  
and Timeline**

# Current State-Level Program Overview



CPP/  
ECARE

PreK  
Special  
Education  
Services

Office of  
Early  
Childhood

Office of  
Economic  
Security  
(TANF)

Child and  
Adult Care  
Food Program

Additional funding  
sources, including Title  
1 PreK

Office of Children, Youth and  
Families (Child Welfare)

Maternal and  
Child Health  
Block Grant

Early Childhood  
Workforce  
Development

WIC

# August 4 TAG Meeting Recap

Themes that emerged in the small group conversations and the follow up responses from last TAG meeting include:

- Key to a seamless transition and establishing alignment to K-12 system is strong **interagency collaboration**
- Important to intentionally create new department so the **functions of the state directly align to the experiences** we want children and families to have
- **Concern over losing funding and supports** that currently work; if a program moves so should its funding stream
- A strong desire for families to get access to a comprehensive system of support with **a single point of entry**
- Need for informed **family choice** from the portfolio of offerings
- Revise all rules, regulations and processes to **ease burden on providers and families**
- Focus on **centering equity** by ensuring those most in need receive services
- All three aspects of the CO Early Childhood **Framework** should be considered: Learning & Development, Family Support & Education, and Health and Well Being

# Current Early Childhood Structure

CDE	
P-3 Office	Colorado Preschool Program (& additional school-system administered preschool funding sources, e.g. ECARE)
	Preschool Special Education †
	Early Childhood Assessment and Results Matter
	EC Workforce Development Team

CDPHE	
CACFP*	
Maternal and Child Health (Block Grant) * †	
WIC	

CDHS		
OEC	<b>Division of Early Learning Access and Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child Care Attendance Tracking System</li> <li>- Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)*</li> <li>- Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)</li> <li>- Early Childhood Councils &amp; CCR&amp;Rs</li> <li>- Early Childhood Workforce &amp; Professional Development (PDIS)</li> </ul>
	<b>Division of Community and Family Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child Abuse Prevention Trust Fund</li> <li>- Colorado Community Response</li> <li>- Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program</li> <li>- Early Childhood Mental Health</li> <li>- Early Intervention</li> <li>- Family Resource Centers</li> <li>- Fatherhood Program*</li> <li>- Head Start</li> <li>- Home Visiting Programs (e.g.,NFP, SafeCare, PAT, Healthy Steps, Child First, HIPPPY)</li> <li>- Incredible Years</li> <li>- Promoting Safe and Stable Families</li> </ul>
	<b>Division of Early Learning, Licensing and Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Background Investigation Unit</li> <li>- Child Care Licensing*</li> </ul>
	<b>Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communications</li> <li>- Early Childhood Leadership Commission</li> <li>- Federal Opportunities (e.g., Preschool Development Grant)</li> <li>- Finance and Contracts</li> <li>- Strategy / Policy</li> </ul>
OES		TANF* †
OCYF		Child Welfare*

\*these programs provide services to children beyond 5 years old see next slide for more information



# Program Movement – Proposal

Decisions	Department of Early Childhood (DEC)
Programs included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">CPP</a></li><li>• <a href="#">All of OEC</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Early Childhood Workforce Development*</a></li></ul>

NOTE: PreK Special Education is still pending discussions

- For each of the programs above, their purpose is aligned with the vision for the department, the guiding principles, values, and its mission to create a comprehensive, community-informed, effective, high quality and equitable early childhood system.
- To create a unified structure and seamless family, workforce and provider experience, existing rules or regulations of these programs may need to be amended to ensure alignment across the landscape.
- As programs shift to the new department, the intent would be for DEC to also acquire the authority and regulatory power of the funding sources tied to these programs.

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# Timeline Consideration

The new Department of Early Childhood will launch in **July 2022**.

Universal, voluntary statewide preschool will launch in **July 2023**.

1. A major priority for the Department of Early Childhood (DEC) is the successful launch of universal preschool. In addition, DEC should ensure that children, families, and providers don't experience a disruption in other services and programs within the early childhood system.
2. Not all families will access universal preschool. Ensuring that a complementary continuum of family supports are delivered side by side with the universal preschool program can help the new department to meet each family's needs.
3. Once the new department is fully established, Colorado should continually review the entire early childhood landscape to understand where additional alignment support, program movement, or landscape change is needed to bring coherence to the child, family, and provider experiences.

# Department of Early Childhood Structure

The new department should have a leadership team with a diverse set of skills, strong equity focus, and significant expertise that operate together to:

1. **Simplify** the family, workforce and provider experience (all programs included), including organizing the Department with a focus on coherence for the field, not around administration of individual programs and functions.
2. **Implement** the state's unified plan to increase access to quality early care and education slots, services, and supports, which includes workforce recruitment, development, and retention.
3. **Maximize dollars** to achieve a unified vision
  - a. Will require a finance expert who is oriented toward using their significant understanding of financial regulations to meet Colorado's funding needs
4. Sustain and strengthen **cross-agency partnerships**
5. Develop equitable, effective regulatory alignment, and ensure legislative engagement
  - a. Will require a senior lead whose expertise is in **policy and governmental affairs**
6. Develop **robust data collection and analysis** system that is used to inform future strategies, and guide decision making.

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**Preview: Colorado's Local  
Control Context**

# TAG Charge

**HB21-1304 calls for the transition plan to address:**

- **Aligning and combining funding sources for EC (taking previous local efforts for streamlining into account)**
- **Technology required to achieve goals to support parents/caregivers to identify local, appropriate, and available EC program and service options and support unification**
- **Early Childhood data systems strategies to inform planning, leverage resource, allocations, maximize children's access to programs, & support data-driven decision-making**

**Given Colorado's local control context, making recommendations to improve these areas will take shifting from discussion of the state role and programs to develop an understanding of the current state - local - family interactions.**

# State and Local Relationship

**Stakeholders have expressed that there is a need to reimagine the early childhood experience, not just at the state level but in coordination with their local communities as well.**

In order to implement its mission and vision of creating a unified system, the new department will need deep partnerships with localities to support the unique needs of each community in Colorado.

How should a unified state agency, administering all of these programs, think about its relationship with localities?

## Transformative Governance, Operations and Funding

### **Meeting 1: Factors for a Unified Early Childhood System**

- There was a high degree of agreement among participants to consider moving a wide range of programs that serve children and families
- More consideration needed for programs that cross age ranges or families outside of early childhood

### **Meeting 2: Current Early Childhood Governance Structure**

- Don't lose the progress made in aligning services and programs; avoid creating new silos and interruptions in service delivery and access
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- Programs like DPP and CPP have strong models and local providers have in-depth knowledge of their communities' needs

# Current State: Local Governance Structures

Colorado has multiple initiatives to support children, families, and providers. These initiatives are funded and authorized by different state agencies, and are locally led by different agencies and organizations, including:

- **64** County CCAP Administrators
- **34** ECCs: Early Childhood Councils
- **178** DACs: District Advisory Councils
- **35** FRCs: Family Resource Centers
- **1 statewide** CCR&R: Child Care Resource & Referral (hotline)
- **17** CCR&R: Child Care Resource & Referrals (regionally based)
- **4** Home Visiting State Intermediaries
- **21** BOCEs: Boards of Cooperative Educational Services
- **Over 180** AUs: Administrative Units
- **178** School Boards
- **20** CCBs: Community Centered Boards
- **7** CACFP Sponsor Sites
- **110** WIC Clinics
- **2** Tribal Communities: Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and Southern Ute Indian Tribe

A major theme emerging out of ongoing conversations has been the need for a more coherent experience for families, providers, workforce, and children as they navigate these programs and services.



# Funding Sources for Slots

State funding	Local funding	Mixed governance of funding
<p>Universal Preschool (Prop EE funding)</p> <p>Targeted universal preschool funds</p> <p>Colorado Preschool Program (CPP)</p> <p>Early Childhood At-risk Enhancement (ECARE)</p>	<p>Additional school funds, including Title I, Title V, local funds (e.g., Colorado Preschool Program match funds)</p> <p>Head Start (federal to local grantees)</p> <p>Tax funds, including mill levies</p> <p>Philanthropic funds</p> <p>Tuition</p>	<p>Child Care Development Fund (Child Care Assistance Program)</p> <p>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B</p> <p>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)</p>

# TAG Considerations

**Informed by subgroups and your own experiences, as it relates to funding and data systems:**

- What is important to preserve about the current interactions families, workforce and providers have with local leaders and with the state? What are important burdens or challenges to address?
- What partnerships and technology are needed, at the state and local levels, to support the blending and braiding of funding?

[Note catcher](#)

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**Closing/Next Steps**

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**Public Comment**