



## Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee November 3, 2023 ~ 9:00-11:00 am

### MINUTES

#### **Meeting Objectives:**

- Approve the September 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- Approve the the final draft of the PQA Subcommittee charter to be reviewed by ECLC
- Learn about supports for employer-based child care and how Subcommittee members can support these efforts
- Provide input on the strategies and branding of the Statewide Early Childhood Strategic Plan
- Consider the addition of a new Working Group as part of the PQA Subcommittee
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community

**Attendees:** Alethea Gomez, Alisha Emile, Alyssa Pappas, Amanda Benson, Anna Jo Haynes, Chris Miller, Chrissy Nichols, Christina Walker, Dawn Alexander, Dawn Newby, Denise Fletcher, Floyd Cobb, Gina Robinson, Greg Bellomo, Heather Craiglow, Heather Matthews, Jeanne McQueeney, Jenny Lerner, Jessica Bennett, Kristen Lang, Kristina Heyl, Lisa Jansen Thompson, Lisa Schlueter, Marika Padilla, Mary Houlihan, Mathieu Aubuchon, Megan Rogers, Michele Stewart, Namarta Bhasin, Nicole Riehl, Rebecca Klein, Ryad Hussien, Samantha O'Neill Dunbar, Shannon Wilson, Stephanie Stout-Oswald, Tamilah Richardson

#### **Welcome, Introductions & Approve Minutes**

Floyd Cobb called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. He explained the meeting objectives. He asked for a motion to approve the September 8, 2023, meeting minutes. Gina Robinson motioned to approve. Heather Craiglow seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

#### **Finalize PQA Subcommittee Charter Revision**

Shannon Wilson reminded the Subcommittee that we are in the process of reviewing the Subcommittee Charter to align with the ECLC Strategic Plan and Work Plan. She explained that the ECLC Executive Subcommittee determined a standard outline for Subcommittee Charter and agreed that Subcommittees will create an Annual Work Plan that will outline what the Subcommittee wants to accomplish throughout 2024.

She then shared the proposed final draft of the charter, which reflects the changes that Subcommittee members suggested at the September meeting. This draft was reviewed and approved by the Subcommittee co-chairs prior to the meeting. She explained each section of the charter and allowed members to read through it.

Anna Jo Haynes then asked for a motion to recommend the draft to the ECLC for approval. Gina Robinson motioned to approve; Nicole Riehl seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Employer-Based Child Care Grant Update**

Alyssa Pappas, CDEC, explained the history of the Employer Based Childcare Facility Grants, which is being offered again this year. She then listed the grant requirements. Grantees must: be a non-child care employer or co-op of employers; provide a financial match; commit to remain open and operating for up to 5 years; commit to serving families receiving CCCAP; and commit to obtaining at least a Level 2 rating in Colorado Shines. So far, there have been four rounds of this grant with \$15.5 million awarded to 27 recipients in 17 counties resulting in 2,314 estimated slots created.

CDEC has partnered with Colorado EPIC to offer The Design Lab to support this grant. The purpose of The Design Lab is to equip employers throughout the state with the knowledge to create sustainable, quality,

and affordable employer-based child care models responsive to the needs of their workers and the tools they need to apply for the Employer-Based Child Care Facility Grant Program. Participants should end the program with a strong grant application. The application to apply for the Design Lab opened November 1. The early action deadline is December 15, and the final deadline is January 9. The Design Lab program will take place from February to May.

### **Employer-Based Child Care Feasibility & Assessment Guide**

Marika Padilla, CDEC, explained that CDEC worked closely with the team at EPIC to create Child Care Business Guides, including guides for center-based providers and home-based providers, which are available in English and Spanish. This year, they have decided to expand the scope and audience of these guides by creating the Employer-Based Child Care Feasibility and Assessment Guide.

Alethea Gomez, EPIC, explained that the purpose of the new guide is to serve as an initial exploration of resources for employer organizations considering creating a child care site. The target audience of these guides is staff at a workplace that is considering the feasibility of creating a child care site as a benefit for employees. The guide covers the main components of a feasibility stage including strategic rational, needs assessment, and facilities and financials. The guide provides background to support advocacy and action, digital and interactive resources, case studies, and worksheets.

Marika explained the state's approach to distribution, which includes presenting at the State TA day, Small Business Development Centers, and other external partners and posting it to the CDEC website. Alethea explained that EPIC is also working to distribute the guide to business leaders at various network meetings and to explain its benefits toward economic development and workforce development.

### **Statewide Strategic Plan Input**

Tamilah Richardson explained Start Early, in partnership with CDEC and ECLC, are now in the process of finalizing and adding detail to the refreshed Strategic Plan. They have gathered information and partner input over the past several months including holding community conversation, focus groups, key informant interviews, and document reviews. They have synthesized the information gathered and are now determining what strategies will be included in the final plan. Based on information gathering, nearly 100 new strategies were identified, including strategies regarding perinatal and child health, cultural responsiveness and language access, and economic mobility. She asked Subcommittee members to take and help disseminate a survey asking participants to prioritize the strategies that should be included in the final plan.

Rebecca Klein explained that there have been considerations around audience, specificity, who will implement, feasibility, and how to consider lived experience as well as evidence-base and research. She then asked Subcommittee members for feedback on the right level of specificity for the strategies included in the plan. Subcommittee members said that including more detail provides readers with more concrete steps that they could take to contribute. They also suggested adding bullet points to the more detailed strategies to make it more readable.

Tamilah then explained that they are also working on branding for the plan, including creating a title, tagline, and graphics for the plan. She shared examples of similar plans from other states. She asked for members to share their thoughts on what they want to see in the branding on a [Padlet](#).

### **Proposal for new PQA Working Group: Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Advisory Council**

Lisa Schlueter, CDEC, proposed that the PQA Subcommittee add the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Advisory Council as an official working group. The IECMH Advisory Council was stood up this summer with the purpose of creating a collaborative of partners leveraging their expertise to guide the

development and implementation of a robust, equitable, accessible continuum of mental health services and supports, from promotion and prevention to intervention and treatment for expecting and pregnant persons, infants and young children through age 5 and their families and communities. She explained the logistics of the Advisory Council including meeting times, membership, the council structure, and the role that PQA and ECLC will play if they become a working group. She then explained how the PQA Subcommittee and the Advisory Council can support one another, including through increased alignment, consideration of the IECMH workforce, and focusing on the health of children and caregivers. She also explained how the Advisory Group will contribute to the three results of the ECLC Strategic Plan.

A subcommittee member commented that adding this working group will help the PQA Subcommittee to be more inclusive of all sectors of the early childhood community and connect with the Whole Person Health and Wellbeing domain on the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*. Another member commented that there is a strong argument for how this aligns with the work of the ECLC. There were no concerns raised about adding the Advisory Council as a working group. The next step will be for the ECLC to approve this addition at the December meeting.

#### **Member Updates and Public Comment**

Anna Jo Haynes reminded everyone that ballots for the election are due next Tuesday and encouraged everyone to vote.

#### **Next Steps, Final Thoughts and Adjourn**

Jeanne McQueeney shared the proposed dates for 2024 meetings and asked if there are any concerns. No one shared concerns. A subcommittee member asked if we might have an in-person or hybrid meeting next year; Jeanne responded that the co-chairs will consider this. The meeting was adjourned at 10:56.

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

#### **ECLC Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee Charge:**

The Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee (PQA) of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission is charged with identifying opportunities for, and barriers to, the alignment of standards, rules, policies, and procedures across programs and agencies that support young children and to enhance the alignment and provision of services and supports for young children.