



January 11, 2022
9:30 am - 11:00 am
Google Hangouts: meet.google.com/qzu-oqah-cqp
Or by phone: 347-318-9795, PIN: 735 177 417#

Meeting Materials:
www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/eclc-meeting-information

AGENDA

Meeting Objectives:

- Approve the December 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- Consider approval of Universal Preschool Recommendations
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community

9:30-9:35am	Welcome, Introductions and Approve Minutes (Tom Massey) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACTION: Approve December 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes
9:35-9:50am	Public Comment
9:50-10:50am	Universal Preschool Recommendations (Susan Steele) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACTION: Approve Universal Preschool Recommendations
10:50-11:00am	Co-Chairs' Next Steps, Final Thoughts and Adjourn (Pamela Harris)

ECLC 2022 Meeting Schedule

- February 24, 2022
- April 28, 2022
- June 23, 2022
- August 25, 2022
- October 27, 2022
- December 15, 2022

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 February 24, 2022 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

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



Early Childhood Leadership Commission December 16, 2021 ~ 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

MINUTES

Meeting Objectives:

- Approve the December 2, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- Review the Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council - Workforce Waiver Update
- Consider approval of Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan Updates
- Hear updates from ECLC Subcommittees
- Learn about State Agency Updates and Legislative Priorities
- Offer input on Draft Universal Preschool Recommendations
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community

Attendees: Pamela Harris, Susan Steele, Leslie Nichols, Jeanne McQueeney, Minna Castillo Cohen, Lucinda Burns, Rachel Hutson, Angie Paccione, Sue Renner, Adeeb Khan, Anne-Marie Braga, Heather Craiglow, Jake Williams, Jasmin Ramirez, Happy Haynes, Ida Rhodes, Kristina Heyl

Welcome, Introductions & Approve Minutes

Susan Steele called the meeting to order at 9:33am and asked for a motion to approve the December 2, 2021 meeting minutes. Heather Craiglow motioned to approve the minutes as drafted, Angie Paccione seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

ECLC Member Announcements

Anne-Marie Braga announced she will be stepping down from the Commission, and Minna Castillo Cohen will be the new Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) designee. Minna is the Director of the Office of Children, Youth & Families and will ensure continued alignment with CDHS child welfare and other community programs. Minna shared an overview of her background and discussed what she is excited to work on as a member of the Commission.

K. Jehan Benton-Clark is also resigning from the ECLC. Jehan has taken on some additional work in her position at Colorado Health Foundation.

Susan thanked Anne-Marie and Jehan for their service on the ECLC and their commitment to children and families.

Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council - 12 Month Workforce Waiver Update

Susan Steele welcomed Stacy Petty, Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council Director, to provide a brief update on their Provisional Early Childhood Teacher (P-ECT) Waiver. Under the waiver, teachers who do not yet meet the requirements to be an early childhood teacher but who could complete those requirements within 12 months are allowed to function as an early childhood teacher with additional supervisor oversight and coaching. The last P-ECT graduated in early 2020, and the Council has not had an active applicant since that time. The pandemic has greatly impacted the success of the waiver. Several applicants either left the early childhood field or were asked to work in a different capacity within their programs to try and fill gaps. Many programs have had to close classrooms. Prior to the pandemic, the Council had 8 candidates successfully use the P-ECT program. Teresa Ribble from the Office of Early Childhood Child Care Licensing Unit offered some clarification about the newly revised licensing rules that reduce the education and experience requirements for early childhood teachers to help with the early childhood workforce crisis. PDIS credentials were also updated to support additional pathways for early childhood professionals. This waiver will remain in place through 2022 while workforce needs continue to be evaluated.

Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan Working Group Updates

As part of the Preschool Development Grant Birth-5, Colorado developed a [Strategic Plan](#) that is updated annually to respond to the continuous changes to the Colorado early childhood landscape. Carrie Germeroth

with Marzano Research provided an overview of recent updates to the strategic plan moving into the final year of the grant. Marzano research leads stakeholder engagement around the Plan, facilitates the Colorado Shines Strategic Plan Working Group, and reviews relevant early childhood policy documents to inform updates to the Plan. The working group, under the ECLC Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee, convenes to identify and monitor activities that support strategies in the Strategic Plan that are not funded through the Preschool Development Grant. The working group recommends changes based on the current early childhood environment. In 2021, the early childhood landscape was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, stimulus funding, and legislation around universal preschool and the new Department of Early Childhood (DEC). The strategies in the Plan are well aligned with the recommendations for the DEC. To ensure continued quality improvement, this year, 22 PDG funded and 10 non-PDG funded strategies are recommended for updating, while 27 remain unchanged. There were 2 new strategies developed and recommended for inclusion in the Strategic Plan and are both related to the early childhood workforce.

Susan Steele requested someone motion to approve the [updates](#) to the Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan. Jasmin Ramirez motioned to approve the changes. Happy Haynes seconded the motion, and the updates were approved unanimously.

Legislative Updates

Bill Jaeger provided a preview of the upcoming 2022 legislative session, which is set to begin January 12. Election dynamics will likely play a role as several legislators will be facing an election contest in November, there is a new congressional district, and a gubernatorial election. Several legislators are also facing term limits this year. The pandemic and associated federal stimulus dollars that must be spent by the end of 2026 will also influence the session. According to the September forecast, it is anticipated that the Colorado General Assembly will have approximately \$3.3 billion more in one-time funds to spend or save in fiscal year 2022-2023 over last year due to the TABOR cap. Democrats remain the party leader in both the House and the Senate, which will shape legislative conversations.

Bill shared the Colorado Children's Campaign [Legislative Tracker](#) that will be continuously updated throughout the legislative session. Department of Early Childhood funding remains part of the Governor's budget request and anticipated budget amendments. The Office of Early Childhood is proposing several investments including recommendations around enforcement of child care licensing, supporting children with at-risk factors who do not qualify for early intervention programming, federal refinancing around the state's child care subsidy program, and a one-time fund proposal regarding a new office within the Office of Economic Development and International Trade to invest in child care infrastructure at existing state facilities including institutes of higher education to increase access to child care. The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing has a value-based payment request related to maternal and primary care. The Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission is advancing legislation related to early childhood workforce compensation. There will be other legislation around the implementation of the new Department of Early Childhood and universal preschool program. The Long Bill will need to be reorganized to cover the programs that will be moving to the DEC and DEC leadership investment.

There was additional discussion about CCCAP refinancing and implications. The ECLC will need regular reporting on the legislative session to keep Commissioners updated, especially regarding legislation around the DEC and universal preschool to ensure accountability to the Transition Plan and UPK recommendations.

Subcommittee Updates

- **Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee:** Jeanne McQueeney shared that the subcommittee provided guidance around the updates to the Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan, offered feedback on the creation of the Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework, discussed how the early childhood field can support the implementation of the DEC and universal preschool, and discussed the creation of an Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Working Group. Heather Craiglow provided an overview of the new ECCS Grant, which will provide \$255,000 annual over the next five years for advancing Colorado's maternal and early childhood systems of care. Heather

asked members to consider approval of the new workgroup under the PQA. The group discussed what type of representation would sit on the workgroup. Anyone interested in participating can reach out to Heather. Jeanne McQueeney motioned to approve the ECCS Working Group under the PQA Subcommittee. Adeb Khan seconded the motion. After several comments from members supporting the work, the ECCS Working Group was approved unanimously.

- **Data Subcommittee:** Susan Steele shared that this subcommittee has been considering data opportunities within the new DEC and will continue to advise on how data can best be utilized by the new department and universal preschool.
- **Communications Subcommittee:** Katie Facchinello discussed the subcommittee's 2021 Communications Plan with tactics including communications mini grants and updating content shared through the *Our Voice* newsletter. Katie and Happy encouraged members and their networks to take a brief survey in the [December edition of *Our Voice*](#) to offer input on the types of content they would like to see included in the newsletter moving forward.
- **Early Childhood Workforce Development Subcommittee:** Heather Craiglow shared that the subcommittee has been focused on supporting the early childhood transition process and universal preschool. The subcommittee has highlighted the importance of a healthy, thriving workforce; the need to update the Workforce 2020 Plan in response to the evolving early childhood landscape; the importance of simplifying early childhood workforce pathways; and policies to address workforce compensation.

State Agency Updates and Legislative Priorities

- **Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood (OEC):** Mary Alice Cohen, OEC Director, was unable to attend to provide updates. Any written department updates will be provided following the meeting.
- **Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE):** Dr. Angie Paccione, CDHE Director, shared that the department is committed to partnering with institutes of higher education, state agencies, and stakeholders to recruit, prepare, and support a thriving early childhood workforce. The University of Colorado Denver was one of six institutions to receive a grant from the Early Educator Investment Collaborative (EEIC) to transform early childhood teacher preparation. CDHE, in partnership with CU Denver, used grant funds to create a new position focused on early childhood education workforce policy. Sondra Ranum has been with the department since July and is providing support around the transition planning for the DEC and universal preschool. Moving forward, this work will be focused on increasing access to early childhood degree pathways. Additionally, through the implementation of Senate Bill 185, the department is designing a teaching career pathway to support individuals entering the teaching profession, including early childhood education. The Department hired an Educator Preparation Pathways Specialist to lead this work. In partnership with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), CDHE began convening a workgroup to identify barriers to the recruitment, preparation, and retention of a workforce that more closely represents the student population and to provide recommendations in 2022 on strategies. CDHE also hosted a Colorado Educator Preparation Faculty Convening that included sessions focused on diversifying the workforce. Over 200 credentials were issued in Early Childhood four-year programs during the past academic year. Last, the Office of Early Childhood is providing funds to cover fees and tuition for ECE 101 and ECE 103 courses.
- **Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing (HCPF):** Tom Massey was unavailable to provide department updates at this time.

- **Colorado Department of Education (CDE):** Melissa Colman was unavailable to provide department updates at this time.
- **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE):** Rachel Hutson provided an update around the Child Tax Credit. CDPHE will utilize AmeriCorps volunteers to help with the next tax filing season with a focus on people who traditionally have not filed taxes because they have not been required to based on income. They have provided 11 mini grants to free tax assistance sites across the state to help build their capacity in advance of the upcoming tax season. The department is also in the process of hiring staff for a FARE Grant focused on women who earn low wages, the BIPOC community, and those who have traditionally not filed taxes. They are finalizing a contract for purchased media that will launch after the new year to serve as a marketing campaign for the tax credit.

Public Comment

Katie Facchinello shared that Illuminate is pulling together a group of folks interested in helping to plan collective efforts during Child Abuse Prevention Month. If you are interested, please join Illuminate, CDHS, Coalition for Home Visiting, Colorado CASA, American Academy of Pediatrics Colorado Chapter and many other organizations and individuals on January 4th at 11:00 am. Email Katie at Kfacchinello@illuminatecolorado.org for more information.

Jasmin Ramirez shared links from Gary Community Ventures' Early Childhood Education Human Centered Design Project.

- [Project Overview](#)
- [Parent Journey Map](#)

Draft Universal Preschool Recommendations Discussion

Pamela Harris introduced Nasha Patel with Watershed Advisors to walk members through [draft Universal Preschool Recommendations](#) highlighting changes and additions made in response to ongoing stakeholder feedback. Nasha encouraged Commissioners to read the full draft report for the more details on the recommendations.

The first recommendation involves building and strengthening infrastructure to achieve the goal of a universally available preschool program. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of local leads charged and empowered to solve local challenges and a demonstrated commitment from DEC to fully resource local leads and ensure Colorado's aligned early childhood vision is executed successfully across the state.

Local leads need to bring community partners together to build an early childhood community plan. Local leads must be selected through a rigorous application process with demonstrated buy-in from local partners. Any public agency or nonprofit could apply, including newly formed organizations or other locally determined innovations.

DEC should define the scope of authority and expectations for local leads, collaborate with and fully support them, and create an accountability mechanism for them. If a community is unable to identify an appropriate local lead, DEC should fulfill those responsibilities until one is determined. DEC should establish a statewide vision for early childhood.

ECLC members discussed the number of local leads needed, the potential cost implications, and the efficiency of this type of infrastructure.

The second recommendation is for DEC to develop a single, unified application for families to access universal preschool and comprehensive early childhood services that is equitable and streamlines the enrollment and eligibility process for both families and early childhood providers. DEC should develop an implementation plan with all necessary partners to ensure that the application is functional for the launch

of universal preschool in 2023. Local communities should be able to adapt the application to fit the needs of their community.

The third recommendation states that DEC should work with stakeholders and experts to create a base rate for universal preschool with additional adjustments or incentives to ensure access for all children. The rate should balance the tensions between universally funding quality for ten hours a week and providing additional targeted funds for children with greatest needs.

DEC should ensure Colorado Preschool Program funding is integrated into universal preschool funding, and total funding for preschool should not drop below current levels. The universal preschool rate should not be tied to the school finance formula and should be kept stable or increase over time. DEC should plan for funding allocation in times of scarcity or excess.

Commissioners discussed the need for careful oversight and thoughtfulness when DEC is creating a base rate for universal preschool. School finance has historically been difficult, and it will be necessary to partner with experts in this area. There was also discussion around leveraging existing early childhood councils.

The fourth recommendation calls for DEC to establish a single set of standards for the universal preschool program and contract with an external evaluator to measure the success of universal preschool. DEC should consider a phased approach to quality to support all communities as they scale quality and should create free and widely accessible professional development on the Early Learning and Development Guidelines. DEC should engage with a wide range of stakeholders to inform program standards and quality improvement.

There was discussion around finding balance between the role of the state and the role of local partners to support families who will use the services.

The fifth recommendation discusses the early childhood workforce. DEC will need a strong workforce to successfully launch universal preschool in 2023. DEC should immediately focus funding to ensure there are enough workforce members to work on day one of universal preschool implementation and also ensure continued access for all ages. Members of the workforce should be appropriately compensated with a livable wage. DEC should review the current workforce qualification pathways to create a simple process to attain credentials and qualifications. The process to enter the field should be welcoming with minimal barriers to entry. DEC should consider how to recruit and incentivize different populations, and DEC should consider an induction model to decrease the time it takes to get a teacher into a classroom.

The group discussed the magnitude of both the workforce crisis and the recommended strategies. They also discussed the importance of blending and braiding funding to address early childhood workforce compensation challenges.

The final recommendation addresses special education. The Transition Working Group's recommendations in the [Department of Early Childhood Transition Plan](#) related to special education also apply to the implementation of universal preschool. DEC should consider additional funding for children with disabilities and ensure strong collaboration between DEC and CDE on special education service delivery through an interagency agreement.

The group discussed opportunities to address concerns raised in letters from stakeholder groups and effective strategies for family and provider outreach to ensure people are aware of the benefits provided by the new universal preschool program.

Pamela reviewed next steps in the universal preschool recommendations process. The Transition Working Group will meet to discuss feedback on the draft recommendations and will then submit the completed report to the ECLC by January 1, 2022. The ECLC will have two weeks to approve the plan and send it to the Governor and Legislature. The ECLC will vote on the Universal Preschool Recommendations at their meeting

on [January 11, 2022](#). The co-chairs encouraged commissioners to raise any comments or concerns soon so they can be addressed in a timely manner.

Co-Chairs' Next Steps, Final Thoughts and Adjourn

Pamela wished everyone happy holidays. The meeting was adjourned at 12:34pm.

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

January 11, 2022

9:30 am - 11:00 am

Google Hangouts



- 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 ●

Meeting Objectives

- Approve the December 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- Consider approval of Universal Preschool Recommendations
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community



Welcome, Introductions and Approve Minutes

Susan Steele



Universal Preschool Recommendations - Suggested Clarifications Co-Chairs

Universal Preschool Recommendations

1. Building and Strengthening an Early Childhood Infrastructure
2. Simple and Unified Family Application
3. Eligibility and Prioritization for Funding
4. Quality & Evaluation
5. Workforce
6. Special Education

1. Clarification Regarding Funding Flow

- Local Leads: Plan for the allocation of all available early childhood funding in an equitable manner
- DEC should be responsive to all communities and support them in accordance with their needs
 - If no local lead in a community is able to undertake the financial responsibilities of this role, DEC should support them accordingly or through a partner to ensure the equitable distribution of public funds in each community

Suggested Additional Language re: Funding Flow

Fiscal responsibility for payment is dependent on infrastructure and technology and should be informed by additional expertise to set the department and the universal preschool program up for the most success. The maximum amount of funding should be directed to preschool program providers to meet the needs of the children and families they serve. DEC should make decisions about how to make payments for providers based on local context, efficiency, the potential for multiple funding streams, possible partners, as well as short and long-term capacity goals for DEC and local leads.

The DEC should work with local communities and - through a competitive-selection process - identify a local lead, such as a public agency or a Colorado nonprofit, that will then coordinate the distribution of funds to preschool providers within their catchment area. DEC should ensure, through its capacity, contracts, and partnerships, all areas in the state have implementation coverage, as local partners prepare to lead in all parts of the state. However, if no local lead in a community is able to undertake the financial responsibilities of this role, DEC should support them accordingly or through a partner to ensure the equitable distribution of public funds in each community. Funding must be transparent, auditable, and reinforce clear accountability to ensure dollars are spent wisely and efficiently.

Universal Preschool Recommendations

1. Building and Strengthening an Early Childhood Infrastructure
2. Simple and Unified Family Application
3. Eligibility and Prioritization for Funding
4. Quality & Evaluation
5. Workforce
6. Special Education



Public Comment

Tom Massey

Public Comment

- Each speaker may take up to three (3) minutes to make his or her comments. This time constraint may be modified by the ECLC Co-Chairs.
- Any opinions, advice, statements, services, offers, or other information or content expressed or made available by stakeholders or members of the public during public comment does not constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the ECLC.



Universal Preschool Recommendations

Tom Massey

Universal Preschool Recommendations

1. Building and Strengthening an Early Childhood Infrastructure
2. Simple and Unified Family Application
3. Eligibility and Prioritization for Funding
4. Quality & Evaluation
5. Workforce
6. Special Education

- Discussion
- Vote to approve the Completed Universal Preschool Recommendations





Co-Chairs' Next Steps, Final Thoughts and Adjourn Co-Chairs

ECLC

Early Childhood Leadership Commission

Next Meeting:

February 24, 2022

9:30 am - 12:30 pm



Thank you!