



**February 24, 2022**

**9:30 am - 12:30 pm**

**Google Hangouts: [meet.google.com/pxu-hgmp-ywh](https://meet.google.com/pxu-hgmp-ywh)**

**Or by phone: 219-316-1174, PIN: 640 790 557#**

**Meeting Materials:**

**[www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/eclc-meeting-information](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/eclc-meeting-information)**

## **AGENDA**

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### **Meeting Objectives:**

- Approve the January 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Discuss Department of Early Childhood & Universal Preschool Implementation Updates
- Provide feedback on Preschool Development Grant Progress
- Consider endorsements of the Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework and the Transitions to Kindergarten Roadmap
- Remind stakeholders about *Our Voice* newsletter and opportunities to share information
- Evaluate recent and upcoming work of ECLC Subcommittees
- Learn about State Agency Legislative Updates
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community

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<b>9:30-9:35am</b>	Welcome, Introductions and Approve Minutes (Pamela Harris) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ACTION: Approve the January 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes</li></ul>
<b>9:35-9:40am</b>	Business Meeting (Pamela Harris) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2021 ECLC Annual Report</li></ul>
<b>9:40-10:10am</b>	Department of Early Childhood & Universal Preschool Implementation Updates (Michael Cooke & Tova Cohen)
<b>10:10-10:25am</b>	Legislative Updates (Bill Jaeger) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2022 Colorado Children's Campaign <a href="#">Legislative Tracker</a></li></ul>
<b>10:25-10:35am</b>	Preschool Development Grant Progress Update (Lindsey Dorneman)
<b>10:35-10:50am</b>	Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework (Amanda Culbertson & Carrie Germeroth) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider endorsement of the Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework</li></ul>
<b>10:50-11:05am</b>	Transitions to Kindergarten Roadmap (Kristie Kauerz) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider endorsement of the Transitions to Kindergarten Roadmap</li></ul>
<b>11:05-11:15am</b>	Break

- 11:15-11:25am Public Comment (Tom Massey)
- 11:25-11:30am *Our Voice* Newsletter (Tom Massey)
- 11:30-12:05pm ECLC Subcommittee Updates (Tom Massey & Subcommittee Co-Chairs)
- Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee
    - Home Visiting Investment Strategy Working Group
    - Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Working Group
  - Data Subcommittee
  - Communications Subcommittee
  - Early Childhood Workforce Development Subcommittee
- 12:05-12:25pm State Agency Legislative Updates (Tom Massey & State Agency Designees)
- Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing
  - Colorado Department of Higher Education
  - Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
  - Colorado Department of Education
  - Colorado Department of Human Services
    - Office of Early Childhood
- 12:25-12:30pm Co-Chairs' Next Steps, Final Thoughts and Adjourn (Tom Massey)
- ECLC Monthly Town Hall: March 8, 2022 at 5:30pm: [Register Now!](#)

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### ECLC 2022 Meeting Schedule

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

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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.*

The next ECLC Meeting will be held on April 28, 2022 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

For information about future meeting dates, times and locations, visit [www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org).



# Early Childhood Leadership Commission January 11, 2022 ~ 9:30-11:00 am

## MINUTES

### Meeting Objectives:

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

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**Attendees:** Tom Massey, Pamela Harris, Susan Steele, Ida Rhodes, Adeeb Khan, Leslie Nichols, Minna Castillo Cohen, Heather Craiglow, Sue Renner, Ryan Beiser, Heather O'Hayre, Jake Williams, Lucinda Burns, Melissa Colsman, Happy Haynes, Jasmin Ramirez, Mary Alice Cohen, Kristina Heyl

### Welcome, Introductions & Approve Minutes

Susan Steele called the meeting to order at 9:33 am and asked for a motion to approve the December 16, 2021 meeting minutes. Pamela Harris motioned to approve the minutes as drafted, Jasmin Ramirez seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

### Universal Preschool Recommendations

Susan began the discussion by sharing updated language for the first recommendation in the Universal Preschool Recommendations report: Building and Strengthening an Early Childhood Infrastructure. A suggested clarification was made regarding funding flow for the program: "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." The recommendation describes the importance of local leads in coordinating the distribution of funds to preschool providers within their catchment areas, but encourages the department to determine the best distribution method.

Susan asked for reactions to the updated language. The group discussed the importance of underscoring that local communities will be the best at implementing the preschool program and allocate funding appropriately in their areas, that providers should be getting the maximum amount of funding to serve children and families, and the importance of a streamlined, stable, sustainable process.

Heather O'Hayre suggested the need for further defining the phrase "maximum amount of funding" to avoid unintended consequences to funding for other programs. She asked for clarification on what funding streams would be administered by local leads and expressed concerns around providers facing a choice between serving more preschoolers and fewer infants and toddlers. Susan explained that local leads will only administer state-controlled funds. In addition, the intention of the report is to protect the entire early childhood system including infant toddler care and that will have to be monitored during implementation.

The group discussed removing the word "preschool" and instead simply stating that local leads will "coordinate the distribution of funds to providers." In addition, concerns were raised that the report focuses on center-based providers more than family child care home providers. During implementation, careful attention should be given to licensed, home-based providers. Leslie Nichols emphasized that developing the funding system for universal preschool will be a monumental task for the Department of Early Childhood.

Pamela provided a brief overview of the next five recommendations:

- Simple and Unified Family Application
- Eligibility and Prioritization for Funding
- Quality & Evaluation
- Workforce

- Special Education

Small clarifications to the recommendations were shared with the commissioners. A question was asked about the inclusion of Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) 3-year-olds. The recommendation is for the state to ensure the same total level of current CPP funding remains available for children 3 years and younger who are receiving services. Pamela provided clarification about the application, which will first focus on universal preschool, but will eventually include other wrap around services as well. The application will also be customizable to allow local communities to streamline its use. The application would be a starting point for families to discover what supports are available in their communities. Local leads will provide families with personalized help navigating the application process. More clarification was provided on creating a base rate for quality.

### **Public Comment**

Anna Jo Haynes reflected on all the work leading up to today and thanked the ECLC co-chairs and others who have participated in the process. She expressed her hopes that in the coming years the work will be honored and the results will benefit children and families in Colorado, setting an example for the rest of the country. She shared her appreciation for everyone's willingness to collaborate and work together to find solutions.

Diane Price shared her appreciation for the thorough explanation of the recommendations by the co-chairs. Having worked in the field for many years and understanding the challenges of the current early childhood system, and having participated in many of the transition planning meetings, she believes that these recommendations provide a plan with positive solutions to support the success and stability of early care and education. She asked for everyone to advocate and enthusiastically support the recommendations during the legislative session, and she thanked the Commission for their leadership.

Lisa Jansen Thompson asked if CCCAP would still run through counties or switch to local leads. Susan explained that the goal will be to have all funding streams closely aligned with similar reporting and standards to streamline the system as much as possible.

Lisa Franklin with Parent to Parent Colorado, which is an organization that supports families of children with disabilities, expressed thanks for the inclusion of family voices in the transition planning meetings and in the recommendations for universal preschool. Lisa was a member of the Special Education Subgroup. She shared that parents continue to emphasize the need for inclusive settings. She also highlighted the importance of local family navigation assistance.

Elsa Holguin added her support for the recommendations and reflected on the amazing community in early childhood. She reminded the group that this is still the very beginning of the process with implementation yet to come, and she highlighted the importance of an equity lens. Elsa assured the group that the Denver Preschool Program is ready to help. She pointed to the need for stakeholders to remain champions for the new department which will require even more participation and a united voice.

### **Universal Preschool Recommendations - Vote for Approval**

Tom asked for a motion to approve the [Colorado Universal Preschool Recommendations](#). Happy Haynes motioned to approve the report. Jasmin Ramirez seconded the motion. Happy notified the commissioners that Commissioner Jeanne McQueeney, though not able to attend, was in support of approval. Kristina called on each commissioner to cast their vote. Rachel Hutson with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and Angie Paccione with Colorado Department of Higher Education were also not able to attend. Melissa Colman with Colorado Department of Education abstained. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention. Tom congratulated the group and thanked everyone for their incredible participation. Susan assured everyone that the Commission will continue to be attentive and listen to the many voices of stakeholders. Pamela thanked those who have participated in the transition work, not only for their input



but also for pushing for deeper level thinking to ensure innovation and the best recommendations for the system. Pamela expressed gratitude for their diverse perspectives.

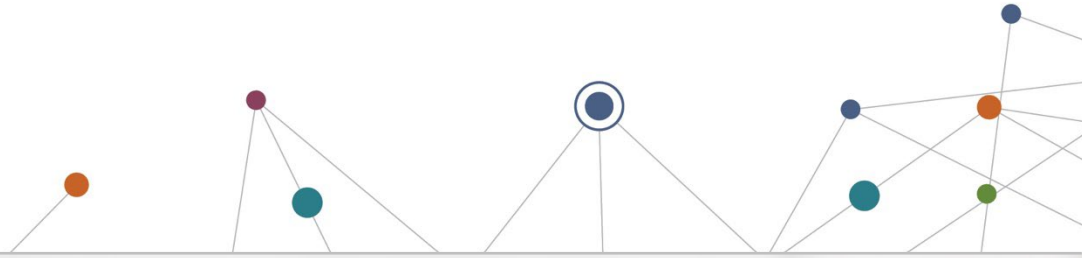
Tom introduced Michael Cooke as the new Early Childhood Transition Director in the Office of the Governor. Michael commended the work of the ECLC, Transition Advisory Group and Subgroups, and the Transition Working Group. She hopes to honor their work and continue to engage stakeholders. The new website for the Department of Early Childhood is in development and will house the two transition reports and provide details on opportunities for further engagement.

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

Tom discussed his hopes for bipartisan support for bills related to the new Department of Early Childhood during this legislative session. The co-chairs thanked everyone once again. Kristina explained that a final transition communication will be sent with the approved Universal Preschool Recommendations and asked the group to [sign up for the \*Our Voice\* newsletter](#) to continue to receive transition planning updates. Happy and Jasmin expressed their extraordinary appreciation for Kristina, the ECLC co-chairs, and the whole team for their incredible work. The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am.

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# Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework

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Prepared for the Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood

Prepared by Marzano Research

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*This project is supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0054. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*

## Overview of development of the Framework

The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) Office of Early Childhood (OEC) staff contracted with Marzano Research to develop a family engagement framework through a collaborative effort. The purpose of the Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework (Framework) is to define and identify important family engagement concepts to be applied across early childhood sectors. While many family engagement models are developed with the education sector as the main context, the Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework is intended for organizations across early childhood sectors, such as pediatricians and social services organization to guide a systematic and broad shift in the way services are designed and provided to families and young children in a variety of service contexts. While its focus is ages birth to five, this Framework can be applied to the birth to eight age range and beyond, allowing for increased alignment with other tools and resources.

To develop the Framework, Marzano Research collected, reviewed, and aligned existing international, national, state, regional, and local strategic plans to inform the development of the Framework (Appendix A). Existing plans were compared to key research-based components of, and best practices in, family engagement to put together a set of recommendations; this analysis is further described in Appendix B. Input on these recommendations was collected from OEC staff and Birth–5 system partners (Appendix C) and incorporated into the final Framework presented in this document. The Framework will be further designed and prepared for broad dissemination by the OEC and Birth–5 system partners. Potential Framework design options are provided in Appendix D.

## Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework

### What Is Family Engagement?

Effective family engagement should be a systematic, intentional, and strengths-based process of engaging in two-way communication and building positive, goal-oriented relationships with families and children.<sup>1</sup> This begins with recognizing that a child's family is their first teacher and caregiver and with valuing families' contexts of culture, language, home, and community. Celebrating and respecting diversity in terms of ability, language, values, customs, traditions, expectations, and attitudes is essential in cultivating partnerships, engaging with families, and honoring the unique interests, needs, strengths, and challenges of developing children.

### Why Is Family Engagement Important?

Family engagement is important for children's healthy growth and development. When organizations and agencies engage and collaborate effectively with families to meet children's needs, their development is enhanced through the K–12 years and beyond.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, when families are actively engaged as respected partners in their children's learning and development, it promotes learning and education environments that are safe, welcoming, and trusting.<sup>3</sup> Finally, positive engagement practices support family members' self-efficacy, confidence, and skills.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mapp, K. A., & Kuttner, P. J. (2013). *Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships*. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

<sup>2</sup> Froiland, J. M., Peterson, A., & Davison, M. L. (2013). The long-term effects of early parent involvement and parent expectation in the USA. *School Psychology International, 34*(1), 33–50.

Van Voorhis, F. L., Maier, M. F., Epstein, J. L., & Lloyd, C. M. (2013). *The impact of family involvement on the education of children ages 3 to 8*. MDRC. [http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Family\\_Involvement\\_FR.pdf](http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/The_Impact_of_Family_Involvement_FR.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Powell, D. R., Son, S. H., File, N., & San Juan, R. R. (2010). Parent-school relationships and children's academic and social outcomes in public school pre-kindergarten. *Journal of School Psychology, 48*(4), 269–292.

<sup>4</sup> Green, C. L., Walker, J. M. T., Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (2007). Parents' motivations for involvement in children's education: An empirical test of a theoretical model of parental involvement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 99*(3), 532–544.

## Engaging Families in Colorado

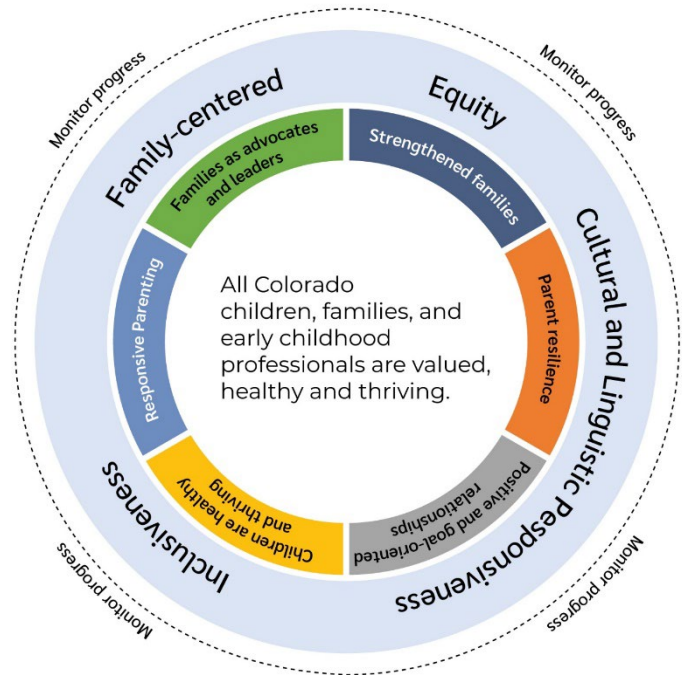
The Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework identifies important family engagement concepts to be applied across early childhood sectors and agencies to support the vision that all Colorado children, families, and early childhood professionals be valued, healthy, and thriving. While its focus is on ages birth to five, this Framework can be applied to the birth to eight age range and beyond, allowing for increased alignment with initiatives and resources. The Framework was informed by an analysis of existing international, national, state, regional, and local family engagement frameworks. Drafts of the Framework were reviewed by early childhood system partners including Colorado families. Input from these stakeholders resulted in the Framework presented in this document.

**ALL COLORADO CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS ARE VALUED, HEALTHY, AND THRIVING.**

**THE FRAMEWORK WILL HELP TO ORGANIZE THINKING AND MOBILIZE ACTION FOR ENTITIES ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES IN COLORADO. IT PROVIDES AN ANCHOR TO WHICH ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS CAN ALIGN THEIR OWN STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS.**

[holding place until designed version is complete]

The Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework is grounded in four organizing principles, which are shown on the light blue ring in the design to the right. The principles should guide the actions of partners as they work to support family engagement. The multicolored inner ring represents the outcomes that can be achieved when family engagement is effective and supports the vision that all Colorado children, families, and early childhood professionals be valued, healthy, and thriving. To achieve these outcomes, early childhood professionals need training and resources to use the Framework and to engage families using effective practices. The outermost ring acknowledges the importance of intentional, consistent, and joint monitoring of, reflection on, research into, and evaluation of family engagement practices by families and partners to support quality improvements in all aspects of engagement planning and practices.



## Principles

The four principles represent fundamental values that, when adopted or implemented with intention as part of family engagement, support positive outcomes for children and families.

### Principle 1. Family-Centered

Families are at the center of relationship-building, decision-making, interactions, communications, and children's learning. Family engagement practices recognize that a child's family is their first teacher and caregiver, and this understanding is the cornerstone of developing strong partnerships with families.

Ways this principle encourages family engagement include but are not limited to:

- Engaging in discussions with families and planning based on the cultural and individual needs of the child.
- Understanding the impact outside factors may have on children when partnering with families to support growth, learning, and development.
- Making families partners in decision-making by ensuring they are in leadership roles; respectfully negotiating alignment among the school, home, and community; and upholding every family's right to make decisions for and with their children. Shared decision-making increases families' self-efficacy and allows them to choose the programs, services, and resources that they prefer.
- In partnership with families, planning opportunities that promote networking between families and building trusting relationships.
- Acknowledging and focusing on the strengths of every family.

### Principle 2. Equity

Family engagement must be equitable because equitable access promotes healthy norms and destigmatization. All families must have access to resources and opportunities for engagement with the goal of positive outcomes for all families. Partners must enter a social contract where both families and professionals communicate expectations and goals. Finally, engagement opportunities must be accessible regardless of families' level of or approach to engagement.

Ways this principle encourages family engagement include but are not limited to:

- Using communication strategies that promote family agency as well as communicating in the primary or preferred language of children and families to enable communication in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Providing an environment for all families that is positive, healthy, accessible, inclusive, and culturally welcoming.
- Implementing a family communication system, using various tools such as translators, that makes information accessible to families regardless of technology, reading, or language differences. This system will enable families to access educational materials and information on daily activities, schedules, and children's development, learning, and progress.



- Ensuring engagement opportunities are accessible in a variety of formats and on a variety of levels from passive to partnership, depending on family preference.
- Modifying the readability of materials and the inclusiveness of strategies so partners can communicate with families based on families' preferences.
- Implementing policies, procedures, and practices that include individual supports and strategies with a specific focus on equity to help all families and children succeed.
- Acknowledging and seeking to understand structural inequities and their impact over time.

### **Principle 3. Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness**

Opportunities and resources for family engagement must meet families' cultural and linguistic needs. Children's lives are rooted in their families and communities, so centering families in the context of their culture, language, home, and community is paramount in building strong connections with children and their families. Acknowledging and accepting the need to engage all families also recognizes the strengths that come from their diverse backgrounds.

Ways this principle encourages family engagement include but are not limited to:

- Using families' input about their culture, racial identity, language, varied early learning histories, child-rearing values, strengths, and areas where additional supports might be needed when interacting with and partnering with them.
- Using families' input regarding cultural practices when implementing programming and engagement.
- Understanding different parenting styles, family preferences, and cultural beliefs and their impact on children's learning and development in an antibiased, anti-racist manner.
- Applying antibias and anti-racist strategies to implement engagement practices, activities, and environments that are supportive of diverse families.
- Recognizing partners' cultural barriers and biases that might hinder the development of mutually respectful relationships with families. This includes taking responsibility for biased actions, even if unintended, and actively working to repair harm.
- Recognizing that current research is normative and based primarily on white, middle-class, English-speaking children without disabilities and intentionally seeking information from families about their social and cultural beliefs and practices to complement research.

#### Principle 4. Inclusiveness

This principle recognizes that respecting diversity in terms of ability, language, values, customs, traditions, expectations, and attitudes is essential for family engagement. Engagement is a collaborative process shared by families and community partnerships that optimizes children’s growth, development, and learning. Inclusive partnerships are intentional about creating environments where all families are welcomed, engaged, and valued.

Ways this principle encourages family engagement include but are not limited to:

- Fostering belonging such that families have power, access, and opportunity to contribute to and define partnerships. This goes beyond the inclusion of families within activities.
- Ensuring an environment for all families that is positive, healthy, accessible, inclusive, and culturally welcoming.
- Recognizing and respecting the uniqueness of each family and, in partnership with families, planning engagement opportunities that affirm an individual, cultural, and linguistic sense of belonging and other strengths and needs.
- Keeping family voice at the center of decision-making, planning, and communication.
- Planning and implementing activities *with* families, not *for* families.

#### Translating Principles into Action

There are many ways organizations and entities can engage families using the four family engagement principles in the Framework. Below are examples of practices that could support effective family engagement. These examples were gathered from early childhood stakeholders, including families of young children, in Colorado during input gathering sessions to develop this Framework. This is not considered an exhaustive list.

- Supporting the development of family leadership and advocacy skills so that families can choose to take on a variety of roles in planning.
- Helping families understand information about their child, such as assessment results, so that they can participate in decision-making as partners.
- Creating parent boards and hosting meetings to cultivate family engagement.
- Offering activities that support parent–child relationships and child development, including language, dual language, literacy, and biliteracy development.
- Hiring community members and providing them with training to promote and practice inclusivity.
- Treating everyone with respect and honoring them as whole individuals.
- Making libraries freely available to all. For example, many libraries have eliminated fines and fees on children’s materials to reduce barriers to using the library.
- Providing civic engagement and advocacy capacity-building to immigrant/refugee parents to help them engage directly in early childhood initiatives that impact them.
- Offering home visits to families in five languages to ensure that as many families as possible can benefit from the program.
- Engaging families in the design stage to cocreate resources and materials and plan facilitation.

- Polling the community to find out how and when they want to be engaged.
- Communicating using multiple methods (e.g., phone, email, social media) and in multiple languages.
- Consistently designing and implementing materials and facilitating activities that are accessible to everyone.
- Providing regular trainings on equity and inclusion to make sure that partners are able to honor culturally diverse communities.
- Acknowledging the expertise that families bring (i.e., reciprocity) to partnerships.
- Starting off by asking, “What is most important for you to take away from this time/activity/engagement?”
- Offering classes, such as painting, cooking, and sewing, that are taught by families.
- Ensuring that programming and resources are responsive and inclusive.
- Providing childcare, food, and interpretation services.
- Providing opportunities for families to network and develop personal relationships with one another that are culturally and linguistically safe.
- Engaging families in planning, leadership, and meaningful volunteer opportunities that result in changes and improvements at the organization.
- Giving parent leaders the flexibility to develop and implement their own priorities and projects.

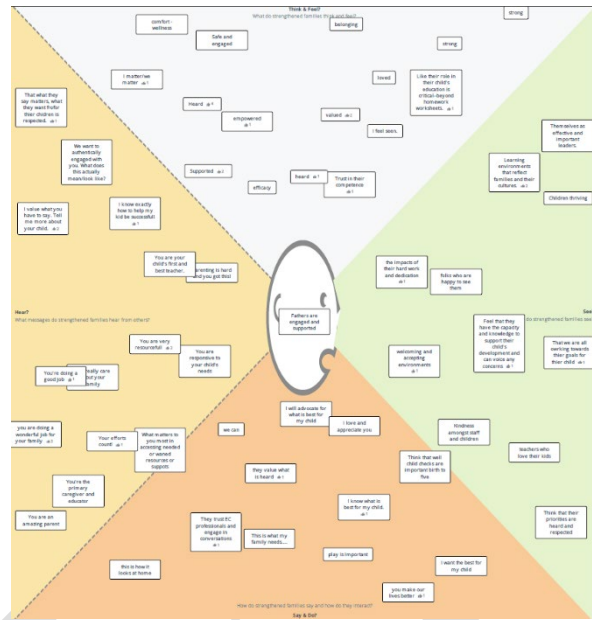
## Outcomes

Outcomes are what we aim to achieve in partnership with families when the four Framework principles are put into action.

### **Outcome 1. Strengthened Families**

Being a parent is hard work. There are plenty of ups and downs. Some days are more stressful than others, and stress can affect parenting behaviors. Strengthened families are connected with the resources and services they need to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Strengthened families can cope with stress, they know the role they play in their children’s development, and they feel empowered to support their children. Strengthened families are not perfect but are able to make “informed” decisions to support themselves and their children based on their own preferences, values, and culture. They advocate for themselves to get access to what they need according to their own preferences.

[Possible graphic design option to include “what strengthened families look like, see, feel, do, say” from the perspective of families.]



**Outcome 2. Parent Resilience**

Resilience as an outcome means experiencing positive change and growth when faced with stressful situations and challenges. Resilience is scaffolded by supportive environments and relationships. Parents that demonstrate resilience when faced with stress and challenges are more likely to support healthy and positive outcomes for themselves and their family. Additionally, demonstrating resilience allows parents to see the outcomes of their choices and actions in a positive way, increasing their confidence or efficacy. By managing stress, parents can provide a safe, loving environment and model for their child how to cope when stress and problems arise.

**Outcome 3. Positive and Goal-Oriented Relationships**

When shared goals are at the center of engagement, it supports the principles of equity, inclusiveness, and cultural and linguistic responsiveness. A positive and goal-oriented relationship is one that focuses engagement, communication, and partnerships on goals shared by all involved (e.g., children, organization staff, family members). The goals are cocreated and shared in an authentic, respectful, and meaningful manner. This supports a sense of belonging for all. Positive, goal-oriented relationships reduce isolation and stress for families by connecting them with a broader community and social network.

**Outcome 4. Responsive Parenting**

Responsive parenting creates a stable environment in which children experience less stress and have a strong foundation for positive learning, health, and behavior. Research suggests that responsive parent–child interactions have a significant impact on how the brain develops and adapts to adversity and trauma. When parents respond to children’s needs and signals in a

consistent and responsive manner, it supports brain development in young children and creates strong, secure attachments.

#### **Outcome 5. Families as Advocates and Leaders**

Empowered families are advocates for their children's education and other areas affecting their lives. When families authentically share power with organizations, they have a voice in governance, program design, and decision-making. Families should have opportunities to participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, and community and state organizational activities to improve children's development and learning experiences. When family engagement practices that create meaningful and ongoing opportunities for families to serve in different types of leadership roles are in place, it supports their development of advocacy and agency.

#### **Outcome 6. Children Are Healthy and Thriving**

A child's development is maximized and supported within their family, culture, and community. Collaborative, reciprocal partnerships with families help to optimize children's growth, development, and learning. The positive effects of family engagement last all the way through a child's K-12 years and beyond.

## Appendix A: Sources Consulted

Source	Resource Title	Link
Academic Development Institute	<i>Handbook on Family and Community Engagement, “Family Engagement in Rural Schools,” “New Directions for Title I Family Engagement: Lessons From the Past,” “Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning: Complementary Goals for School–Family Partnerships,” “Family and Community Engagement in Charter Schools,” “Family Engagement in High Schools”</i>	<a href="https://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/downloads/FACEHandbook.pdf">https://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/downloads/FACEHandbook.pdf</a>
American Institutes for Research (formerly Southwest Educational Development Laboratory)	<i>Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships</i>	<a href="https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf">https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf</a>
Arizona Department of Education	<i>Meaningful Family Engagement</i>	<a href="https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2018/02/ADE%20ECE%20PDG%20Presentation%20%28Meaningful%20Family%20Engagment%29.pdf?id=5a81e7c03217e10e700de058">https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2018/02/ADE%20ECE%20PDG%20Presentation%20%28Meaningful%20Family%20Engagment%29.pdf?id=5a81e7c03217e10e700de058</a>
Arkansas State Parent Advisory Council	<i>The Arkansas Guide for Promoting Family Engagement</i>	<a href="http://arheadstart.org/Arkansas%20Family%20Engagement%20ReportRevised.pdf">http://arheadstart.org/Arkansas%20Family%20Engagement%20ReportRevised.pdf</a>
Ascend The Aspen Institute	“Two Generations, One Future: Guiding Principles”	<a href="https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/two-generation/guiding-principles/">https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/two-generation/guiding-principles/</a>
Associations of Alaska School Boards	<i>Stronger Together: The Power of School and Family Partnership in Alaska</i>	<a href="https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/20ELE_AASB_Digital_3E.pdf">https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/20ELE_AASB_Digital_3E.pdf</a>
Build Initiative	<i>Family Engagement Toolkit</i>	Link not available
California Department of Education	<i>Family Engagement Framework: A Tool for California School Districts</i>	<a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/pf/documents/famengageframeenglish.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/pf/documents/famengageframeenglish.pdf</a>
California Department of Education	<i>Family Engagement Toolkit: Continuous Improvement through an Equity Lens</i>	<a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/documents/family-engagement.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/documents/family-engagement.pdf</a>
California Department of Education	<i>Infant/Toddler Learning &amp; Development Program Guidelines, 2nd Edition</i>	<a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/itguidelines2019.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/itguidelines2019.pdf</a>

Source	Resource Title	Link
Center for the Study of Social Policy	<i>Community Conditions that Strengthen Families: Protective Factors Work at the Community Level</i>	<a href="https://cssp.org/resource/community-conditions-report/">https://cssp.org/resource/community-conditions-report/</a>
Center for the Study of Social Policy	<i>Core Meanings of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors</i>	<a href="https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Core-Meanings-of-the-SF-Protective-Factors-2015.pdf">https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Core-Meanings-of-the-SF-Protective-Factors-2015.pdf</a>
Center for the Study of Social Policy	<i>Protective Factors Framework</i>	<a href="https://cssp.org/our-work/projects/protective-factors-framework/">https://cssp.org/our-work/projects/protective-factors-framework/</a>
Center for the Study of Social Policy	<i>The Research Behind Strengthening Families (Five Phases)</i>	<a href="https://cssp.org/resource/research-behind-strengthening-families/">https://cssp.org/resource/research-behind-strengthening-families/</a>
Center for the Study of Social Policy	<i>The Strengthening Families Approach and Protective Factors Framework: Branching Out and Reaching Deeper</i>	<a href="https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Branching-Out-and-Reaching-Deeper.pdf">https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Branching-Out-and-Reaching-Deeper.pdf</a>
Center on the Developing Child	<i>3 Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families</i>	<a href="https://46y5eh11fhgw3ve3ytpwxt9r-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/3Principles_Update2021v2.pdf">https://46y5eh11fhgw3ve3ytpwxt9r-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/3Principles_Update2021v2.pdf</a>
Colorado Assuring Better Child Health & Development	<i>Quality Standards</i>	<a href="https://4452689a-87bb-42e7-80ce-86dd11d5b40f.filesusr.com/ugd/72c73b_179c80f142504577aba96411498dfe1f.pdf">https://4452689a-87bb-42e7-80ce-86dd11d5b40f.filesusr.com/ugd/72c73b_179c80f142504577aba96411498dfe1f.pdf</a>
Colorado Department of Education	<i>Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators</i>	<a href="https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoralent/ecwd-competencies">https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoralent/ecwd-competencies</a>
Colorado Department of Education	<i>Family School and Community Partnerships (FSCP): A Preschool through 12th Grade Guide for Colorado School Districts</i>	<a href="https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/fscp_framework_pdf_011020">https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/fscp_framework_pdf_011020</a>
Colorado Office of Early Childhood	<i>Colorado Shines Brighter: Birth Through Five Strategic Plan 2020-2025</i>	<a href="https://dcfs.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/#410000012srR/a/4N000000AGyC/mrW1bt1kWUwXur3Ss0ZgYnC58C30CedVzb5qV3X2UXE">https://dcfs.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/#410000012srR/a/4N000000AGyC/mrW1bt1kWUwXur3Ss0ZgYnC58C30CedVzb5qV3X2UXE</a>
Connecticut State Department of Education	<i>Full, Equal and Equitable Partnerships with Families: Connecticut's Definition and</i>	<a href="https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Full-Equal-and-Equitable-Partnerships-with-Families">https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Full-Equal-and-Equitable-Partnerships-with-Families</a>



Source	Resource Title	Link
	<i>Framework for Family Engagement</i>	
Department of Youth & Community Development	<i>The Circle of Support: A Family Engagement Framework</i>	<a href="https://familyengagementtycdconnect.nyc/docs/Circles-of-Support-FE-Framework-Revised-July-2017.pdf">https://familyengagementtycdconnect.nyc/docs/Circles-of-Support-FE-Framework-Revised-July-2017.pdf</a>
Dual Capacity	“The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (Version 2)”	<a href="https://www.dualcapacity.org/">https://www.dualcapacity.org/</a>
Early Childhood Leadership Commission	“Early Childhood Colorado Framework”	<a href="https://earlychildhoodframework.org/">https://earlychildhoodframework.org/</a>
Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County	<i>Family Engagement and Leadership Framework</i>	<a href="https://www.ecpac.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/FamLeadershipEngagement.pdf">https://www.ecpac.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/FamLeadershipEngagement.pdf</a>
Early Milestones Colorado	<i>JeffCo Bright Futures Roadmap: Executive Summary</i>	<a href="https://earlymilestones.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Jeffco-Roadmap-Exec-Summary.pdf">https://earlymilestones.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Jeffco-Roadmap-Exec-Summary.pdf</a>
Family Resource Center Association	<i>Family Pathways Framework</i>	<a href="https://cofamilycenters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Family-Pathways-Fact-Sheet-FINAL-11-21-18.pdf">https://cofamilycenters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Family-Pathways-Fact-Sheet-FINAL-11-21-18.pdf</a>
First 5 Alameda County	<i>Ripples of Transformation: Families Leading Change in Early Childhood Systems</i>	<a href="https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/FirstFive-EngagementToolkit-5.pdf">https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/FirstFive-EngagementToolkit-5.pdf</a>
FrameWorks Institute	<i>From Caring to Conditions: Strategies for Effectively Communicating About Family, School, and Community Engagement</i>	<a href="https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/nafsce-brief-from-caring-to-conditions.pdf">https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/nafsce-brief-from-caring-to-conditions.pdf</a>
Government of South Australia Department for Education	<i>Parent Engagement Framework</i>	<a href="https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/parent-engagement-framework.pdf">https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/parent-engagement-framework.pdf</a>
Illinois State Board of Education	<i>Family Engagement Framework: A Guide for Illinois School Districts, Schools, and Families</i>	<a href="https://www.isbe.net/Documents/fe-guide.pdf">https://www.isbe.net/Documents/fe-guide.pdf</a>
Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee	<i>Indiana Early Childhood Family Engagement Toolkit</i>	<a href="http://www.elacindiana.org/elacindiana/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Family-Engagement-Toolkit-1.pdf">http://www.elacindiana.org/elacindiana/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Family-Engagement-Toolkit-1.pdf</a>

Source	Resource Title	Link
Los Angeles Partnership for Early Childhood Investment	<i>From Principles to Practice: Building a Family Engagement Culture</i>	<a href="https://www.packard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Building-a-Family-Engagement-Culture.pdf">https://www.packard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Building-a-Family-Engagement-Culture.pdf</a>
Engage R+D		
Maryland Family Engagement Coalition	<i>The Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children</i>	<a href="https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/system/files/filedepot/4/md_fam_engage.pdf">https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/system/files/filedepot/4/md_fam_engage.pdf</a>
Massachusetts Family Engagement Coalition	<i>Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts</i>	<a href="https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf">https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf</a>
Michigan Department of Education	<i>MiFamily: Michigan's Family Engagement Framework</i>	<a href="https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MiFamily_Family_Engagement_Framework_683447_7.pdf">https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MiFamily_Family_Engagement_Framework_683447_7.pdf</a>
Mississippi Department of Education	<i>Mississippi Family Engagement Framework and Toolkit</i>	<a href="https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/final_ms_family_engagement_framework_final_1.pdf">https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/final_ms_family_engagement_framework_final_1.pdf</a>
National Association for the Education of Young Children	<i>Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators</i>	<a href="https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/standards_and_competencies_ps.pdf">https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/standards_and_competencies_ps.pdf</a>
National Association for the Education of Young Children	<i>Family Engagement, Diverse Families, and an Integrated Review of the Literature</i>	<a href="https://parentsatthetable.org/storage/app/media/resources/Early%20Childhood/Family%20Engagement%20Diverse%20Families%2026%20Early%20Childhood%20Integrated%20Literature%20Review.pdf">https://parentsatthetable.org/storage/app/media/resources/Early%20Childhood/Family%20Engagement%20Diverse%20Families%2026%20Early%20Childhood%20Integrated%20Literature%20Review.pdf</a>
National Association for the Education of Young Children	"Principles of Effective Family Engagement"	<a href="https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/family-engagement/principles">https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/family-engagement/principles</a>
National Center for Cultural Competence	<i>A Guide for Advancing Family-Centered and Culturally and Linguistically Competent Care</i>	<a href="https://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/fcclcguide.pdf">https://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/fcclcguide.pdf</a>
National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement	<i>Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework</i>	<a href="https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pfce-framework.pdf">https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pfce-framework.pdf</a>

Source	Resource Title	Link
National Family Support Network	<i>Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening &amp; Support</i>	<a href="https://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards-of-quality">https://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards-of-quality</a>
Nevada Department of Education	<i>Nevada's Family Engagement Framework: Birth through Grade 12</i>	<a href="https://doe.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/nded/oenvgov/content/Family_Engagement/Nevada_Family_Engagement_Framework.pdf">https://doe.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/nded/oenvgov/content/Family_Engagement/Nevada_Family_Engagement_Framework.pdf</a>
New Mexico Public Education Department	"A Framework for Family-School Partnerships in New Mexico"	<a href="http://nmengaged.com/">http://nmengaged.com/</a>
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Child Development and Early Education	<i>North Carolina Early Childhood Family Engagement and Leadership Framework</i>	<a href="https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Portals/0/documents/pdf/F/FEandL_Framework.pdf">https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Portals/0/documents/pdf/F/FEandL_Framework.pdf</a>
Oklahoma State Department of Education	<i>Oklahoma State Department of Education Family Engagement Framework</i>	<a href="https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Family%20Engagement%20Framework%20Guide%20%281%29.pdf">https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Family%20Engagement%20Framework%20Guide%20%281%29.pdf</a>
Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child & Youth Mental Health	<i>Quality Standard for Family Engagement</i>	<a href="https://www.cymh.ca/Modules/ResourceHub/?id=98d4c18b-e062-4ebb-b16d-1a9cc1c0ae80&amp;lang=en">https://www.cymh.ca/Modules/ResourceHub/?id=98d4c18b-e062-4ebb-b16d-1a9cc1c0ae80&amp;lang=en</a>
Pennsylvania Department of Education	<i>The Pennsylvania Family Engagement Birth through College, Career, Community Ready Framework</i>	<a href="https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Teachers-Administrators/Federal%20Programs/Title%20I/PA%20Family%20Engagement%20Framework.pdf">https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Teachers-Administrators/Federal%20Programs/Title%20I/PA%20Family%20Engagement%20Framework.pdf</a>
Pennsylvania Department of Human Services		
Quality Counts California	<i>Family Engagement Toolkit</i>	<a href="https://www.qualitycountscalifornia.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/FE-toolkit-infographic.pdf">https://www.qualitycountscalifornia.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/FE-toolkit-infographic.pdf</a>
Queensland Government Department of Education	<i>Advancing Partnerships – Parent and Community Engagement Framework</i>	<a href="https://education.qld.gov.au/parents/community-engagement/Documents/pace-framework.pdf">https://education.qld.gov.au/parents/community-engagement/Documents/pace-framework.pdf</a>
Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific	<i>Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education Part 1: Building an understanding of family and community engagement</i>	<a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016148.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016148.pdf</a>

Source	Resource Title	Link
Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific	<i>Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education Part 2: Building a cultural bridge</i>	<a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016151.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016151.pdf</a>
Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific	<i>Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education Part 3: Building trusting relationships with families and the community through effective communication</i>	<a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016152.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016152.pdf</a>
Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific	<i>Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education Part 4: Engaging all in data conversations</i>	<a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016153.pdf">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016153.pdf</a>
State of South Carolina Department of Education	<i>South Carolina Family Engagement K–12 Framework</i>	<a href="https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/student-intervention-services/family-community-engagement/family-and-community-engagement/school-information/scde-family-engagement-k-12-framework/#:~:text=The%20South%20Carolina%20Family%20Engagement,implement%20strategies%20for%20engaging%20families.&amp;text=The%20mission%20of%20the%20SCDE,students%20graduate%20prepared%20for%20success.">https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/student-intervention-services/family-community-engagement/family-and-community-engagement/school-information/scde-family-engagement-k-12-framework/#:~:text=The%20South%20Carolina%20Family%20Engagement,implement%20strategies%20for%20engaging%20families.&amp;text=The%20mission%20of%20the%20SCDE,students%20graduate%20prepared%20for%20success.</a>
Vermont Agency of Education	<i>Family Engagement Toolkit and Self-Assessment</i>	<a href="https://education.vermont.gov/sites/ae/files/documents/edu-vermont-family-engagement-toolkit-and-self-assessment.pdf">https://education.vermont.gov/sites/ae/files/documents/edu-vermont-family-engagement-toolkit-and-self-assessment.pdf</a>
Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families	<i>Foundational Quality Standards for Early Learning Programs (WAC Chapter 110-300) Guidebook</i>	<a href="https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/FoundationalQualityStandardsAwarenessGuide.pdf">https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/FoundationalQualityStandardsAwarenessGuide.pdf</a>
YouthForce NOLA Urban League of Louisiana	<i>Family Engagement Toolkit</i>	<a href="https://urbanleaguela.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/YFN-ULLA-Family-Engagement-Toolkit-2017.pdf">https://urbanleaguela.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/YFN-ULLA-Family-Engagement-Toolkit-2017.pdf</a>

## Appendix B: Source Document Analysis Process

OEC staff provided Marzano Research with a list of family engagement framework resources and resources collected from an online survey sent to individuals in the early childhood field. Marzano Research searched for additional international, national, state, regional, and local family engagement frameworks. A total of 102 documents were collected. While the list was comprehensive and inclusive of commonly used frameworks, it was not exhaustive. Next, Marzano Research identified which documents were most useful for developing a family engagement framework. This resulted in a proposed list of 63 documents, which OEC staff approved. Throughout the review process, four documents were eliminated due to being duplicative of another document, resulting in a final total of 59 coded documents.

Marzano Research conducted a document analysis to identify themes relevant to a family engagement framework. The final coding scheme was anchored to the components of the *Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework* and the *Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework* as these are both widely used frameworks in the Colorado Birth–5 system; additional codes were added as needed. Table B1 provides the final list of codes. Table B2 provides a description and document excerpt for each of the final codes.

Table B1. Analysis Codes and Sources

Coding Category	Source
Parental Resilience	<i>Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework</i>
Social Connections	
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development	
Social and Emotional Competence of Children	
Concrete Support in Times of Need	
Equity	<i>Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework</i>
Inclusiveness	
Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness	
Positive and Goal-Oriented Relationships	
Family-Centered Partnerships	Added during coding based on common content.
Monitor Progress	
Build Capacity	

Table B2. Code Descriptions and Examples

Code	Description	Document Example
Family-centered partnerships	Content that focuses on putting families at the center of decision-making, interactions,	<i>The Arkansas Guide for Promoting Family Engagement</i> : Positive two-way communication must be modeled in order to build trust and relationships with all partners, including

Code	Description	Document Example
	communication, and their children's learning.	encouraging family-to-family interaction. Family engagement should create a safe environment where all questions are welcomed and ideas embraced.
<b>Build capacity</b>	Efforts to improve families' skills, confidence, leadership, and advocacy to support and contribute to their children's development and learning.	<b>Mississippi Family Engagement Framework and Toolkit:</b> To empower families to have the skills, resources, and confidence to address their basic needs and take on roles that contribute to their child's learning.
<b>Cultural and linguistic responsiveness</b>	Opportunities and resources to meet families' cultural and linguistic needs.	<b>NAEYC's Family Engagement, Diverse Families, and an Integrated Review of the Literature:</b> Promote acceptance of all families by (a) inviting role models of different cultures to participate in the classroom, (b) incorporating activities into the curriculum that teach about the cultural practices and traditions of all children in the classroom, and (c) translating essential materials into families' home languages.
<b>Inclusiveness</b>	Creates an environment where all families are welcomed, engaged, and valued.	<b>The Pennsylvania Family Engagement Birth through College, Career, Community Ready Framework:</b> Create inclusive environments. Ensure that children and families can access and engage as full participants within the learning community. Ensure that programming offered for families is developed to be meaningful and engaging to the families of all your learners, including those with disabilities, dual language learners, etc.
<b>Knowledge of parenting and child development</b>	Efforts are made to enhance families' understanding of parenting and their child's development.	<b>California Department of Education's Infant/Toddler Learning &amp; Development Program Guidelines, 2nd Edition:</b> Programs regularly provide family members with information about their children's learning and development, well-being, and everyday experiences. A key to building successful partnerships with parents is to make them true partners by sharing with them the same kinds of



Code	Description	Document Example
		educational information and ideas that are important to the teachers and staff.
<b>Equity</b>	Provide all families with access to resources and opportunities for engagement. Address system inequalities.	<b>Vermont Agency of Education’s Family Engagement Toolkit and Self-Assessment:</b> Educators are responsible for ensuring that every child and family has the opportunities they need to be successful in the educational experience, including ensuring that children are treated equitably and have access to high-quality learning opportunities. Educators must differentiate their services and supports based on the unique needs of each child and family, including disability, culture, language, and socioeconomic status.
<b>Concrete support in times of need</b>	Efforts to meet families’ basic needs, particularly when families are facing a crisis.	<b>The Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland’s Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children:</b> Maryland’s family engagement initiatives and the family engagement practices of early care and education providers should promote the safety, health, and financial security of families so that they can successfully parent their young children.
<b>Monitor progress</b>	Observe family and child behavior to understand what may be impacting development.	<b>Colorado ABCD’s Quality Standards:</b> Train all staff on the monitoring process. Make sure staff have access to quality resources on typical and nontypical child development. Explain the purpose and process of monitoring to the family.
<b>Social connections</b>	Families establish connections with schools, the community, and peers that provide support and resources.	<b>Indiana Early Childhood Family Engagement Toolkit:</b> Families form connections with peers and mentors in formal and informal social networks that enhance family well-being and allow for smooth transitions into and between educational settings.
<b>Social and emotional competence</b>	Promote the social and emotional growth of children so they can be successful in school and beyond.	<b>Stronger Together: The Power of School and Family Partnership in Alaska:</b> Help families support students’ emotional growth. Adults can help students regulate their emotions and manage their behaviors, an essential skill for success in school and beyond. We do this by modeling, creating expectations, helping students



Code	Description	Document Example
		explore emotions, and identifying effective coping skills to manage negative emotions.
<b>Positive and goal-oriented relationships</b>	Encourage positive and goal-oriented relationships between a child and their family to support the child's learning and development.	<b>Center on the Developing Child's 3 Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families:</b> For children, responsive relationships with adults have a double benefit: promoting healthy brain development and providing the buffering protection needed to prevent very challenging experiences from producing a toxic stress response. For adults, healthy relationships also boost well-being by providing practical advice and emotional support, which strengthen the hope and confidence needed to weather stressful situations.
<b>Parent resilience</b>	Increase families' ability to deal with stress, manage challenges, solve problems, and enhance their well-being.	<b>California Department of Education's Infant/Toddler Learning &amp; Development Program Guidelines, 2nd Edition:</b> To support family functioning and promote resilience in families and young children, programs and teachers can establish community partnerships and identify key resources for families, connecting them to specific resources considered appropriate.

## Document Analysis Results

Fifty-nine resources from international, national, state, and regional or local entities were included in the final analysis. Table B3 provides the breakdown of the number of international, national, state, and local or regional organizations that were included in the final list of resources.

Table B3. Organization Level

Organization Level	Count
<b>International</b>	3
<b>National</b>	18
<b>State</b>	30
<b>Local/regional</b>	8

Content that aligned with family-centered partnerships was most frequently coded in the final 59 documents (Figure B1).

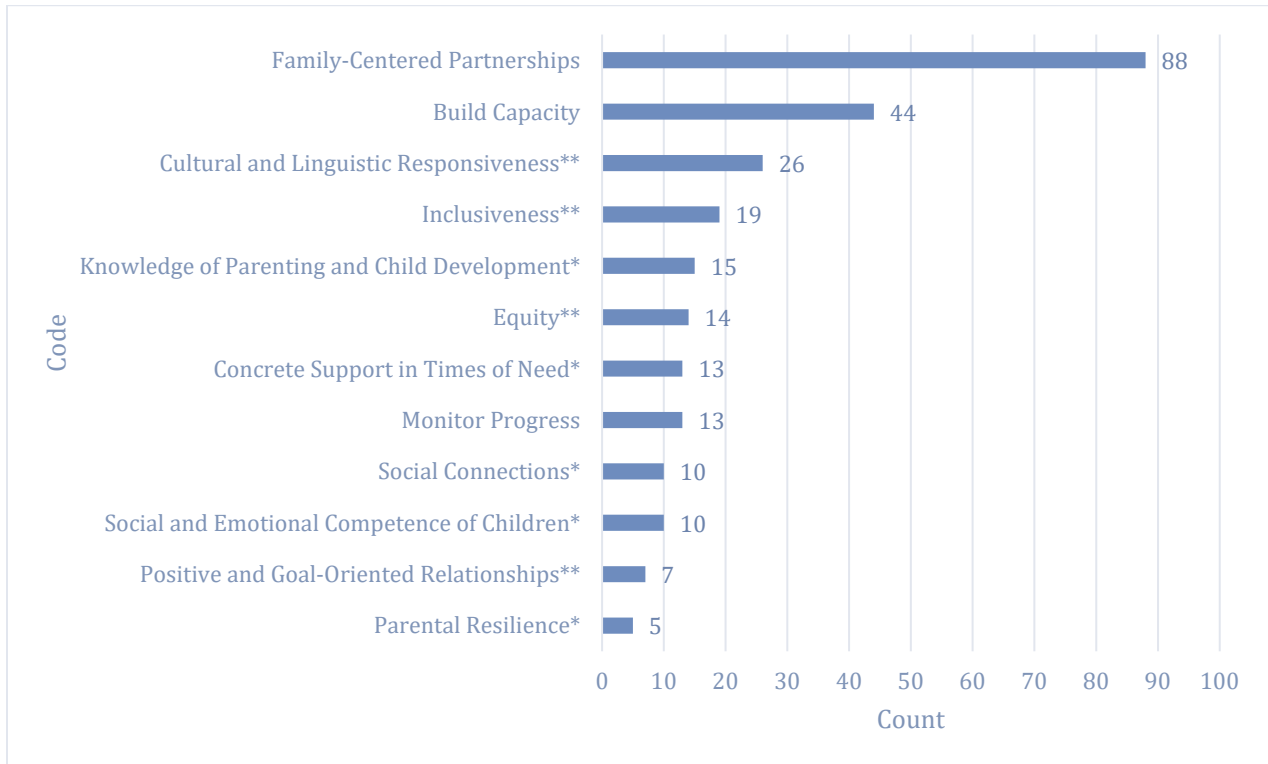


Figure B1. Frequency of Family Engagement Codes

\*Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework

\*\*Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework

### Framework Organization

Frameworks may be organized in different configurations depending on the audience and purpose. The resources coded in the following analysis were organized in very different ways, each with unique components. To provide recommendations for how Colorado should organize its Family Engagement Framework, we reviewed the organizing structure of the final 59 coded documents. Figure B2 provides the frequencies of terms used to describe the major components of family engagement across the 59 resources.

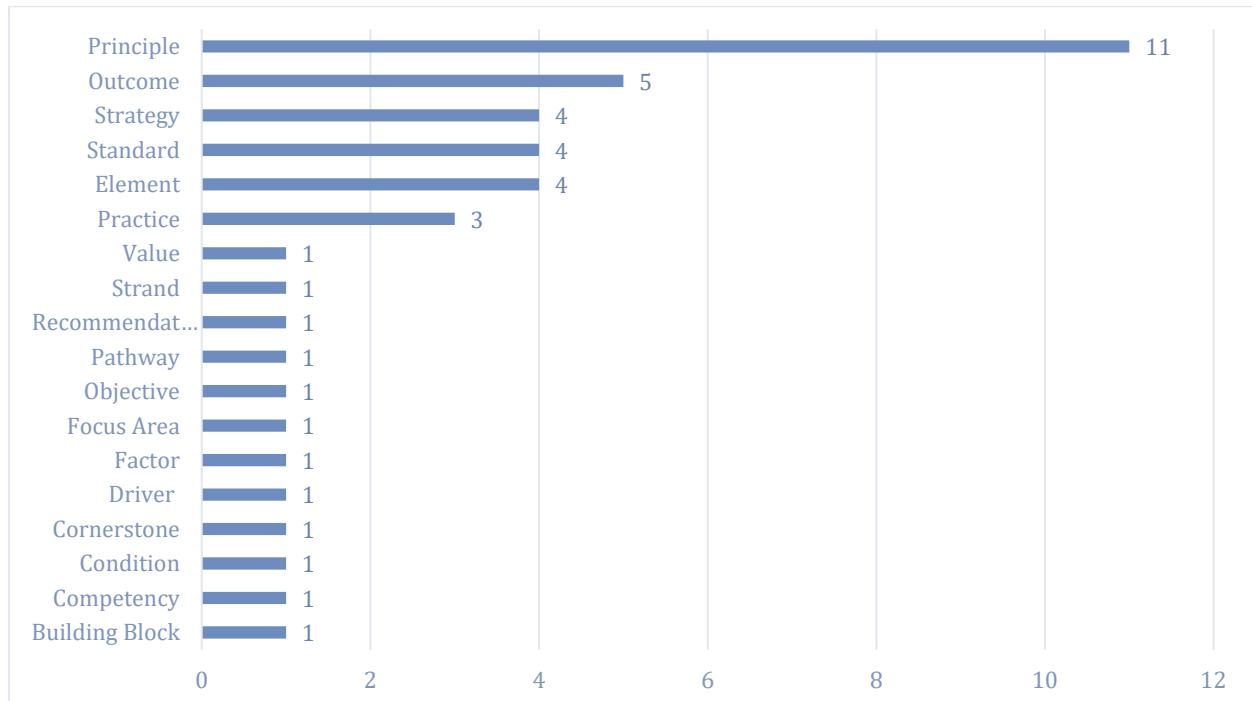


Figure 2B. Terms used to describe framework components in the final 59 coded resources.

Based on the review of resources included in the current analysis, it is recommended that the Colorado Family Engagement Framework include the following four organizing components. Table B4 presents the family engagement codes and how they could be used within the following organizational structure.

1. **Mission/vision** should provide a purpose statement for the framework. This could be the Early Childhood Colorado Framework vision that “all children are valued, healthy, and thriving” or the new Early Childhood Department vision that “all Colorado children, families, and early childhood professionals are valued, healthy, and thriving.”
2. **Principles** represent the Birth–5 system partners’ collective agreement around the primary strategies to support family engagement (“North Stars”).
3. **Actions** provide a consistent voice around how we engage with families to support the results. Besides just listing the one word/phrase for these, we could have a few callout boxes for “strategies in practice or action.” The DPS road map has some nice examples.
4. **Results** represent the outcomes we intend to achieve if we put the strategies into place. Could consider the “child” and “relationships” results from the EC CO Framework.

Table B4. Proposed Colorado Family Engagement Framework

Component	Code
<b>Principles</b>	Family-centered partnerships
	Equity
	Cultural and linguistic responsiveness
	Inclusiveness
<b>Actions</b>	Knowledge of parenting and child development
	Concrete support in times of need
	Build capacity
	Monitor progress
	Social connections
<b>Results (options culled from document review)</b>	Healthy and thriving children
	Positive and goal-oriented relationships
	Parent resilience
	Strengthened families
	Families as advocates and leaders
	Responsive parenting

## Appendix C: Stakeholder Input

The potential Framework principles and outcomes were shared with stakeholder groups for additional input. In September 2021, Marzano Research and OEC staff provided an overview of the Framework draft to the PQA Subcommittee, which works to improve the quality and alignment of supports and services offered to young children. Participants were asked to provide input on what strengthened families look like, think and feel, see, and hear and say. Participants noted that strengthened families are empowered to support their children. Participants were also asked to provide input on the drafted principles, actions, and results. Participants highlighted the importance of doing actions *with* families instead of *to* families. See Appendix C Groupmaps 1–4 for the full list of participants' input.

In October 2021, Marzano Research and OEC staff provided an overview of the Framework draft to the Family Voice Council, which is made up of parents and caregivers around the state who provide input on system changes. Participants were asked to provide input on the draft framework. Participants emphasized the importance of identifying who is developing the standard for the principles and results. Additionally, participants noted that they would have liked to see international resources included in the framework. See Appendix C Groupmap 5 for the full list of participants' input.

In November 2021, Marzano Research and OEC staff provided an overview of the Framework draft to the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE), which reviews practices and makes recommendations for strategies to enhance family involvement in education. Participants were asked to provide input on what strengthened families look like, think and feel, see, and hear and say. Participants noted that strengthened families are welcomed and heard, feel assured, and are flexible. Additionally, participants noted that language barriers may be an obstacle to engaging with families. Participants were also asked to provide input on what the draft principles look like in their work. Participants then voted on which ideas they thought were the most important. Engaging families in the design phase was the top-rated idea, followed by hiring a diverse staff. See Appendix C Groupmaps 6 and 7 for the full list of participants' input.

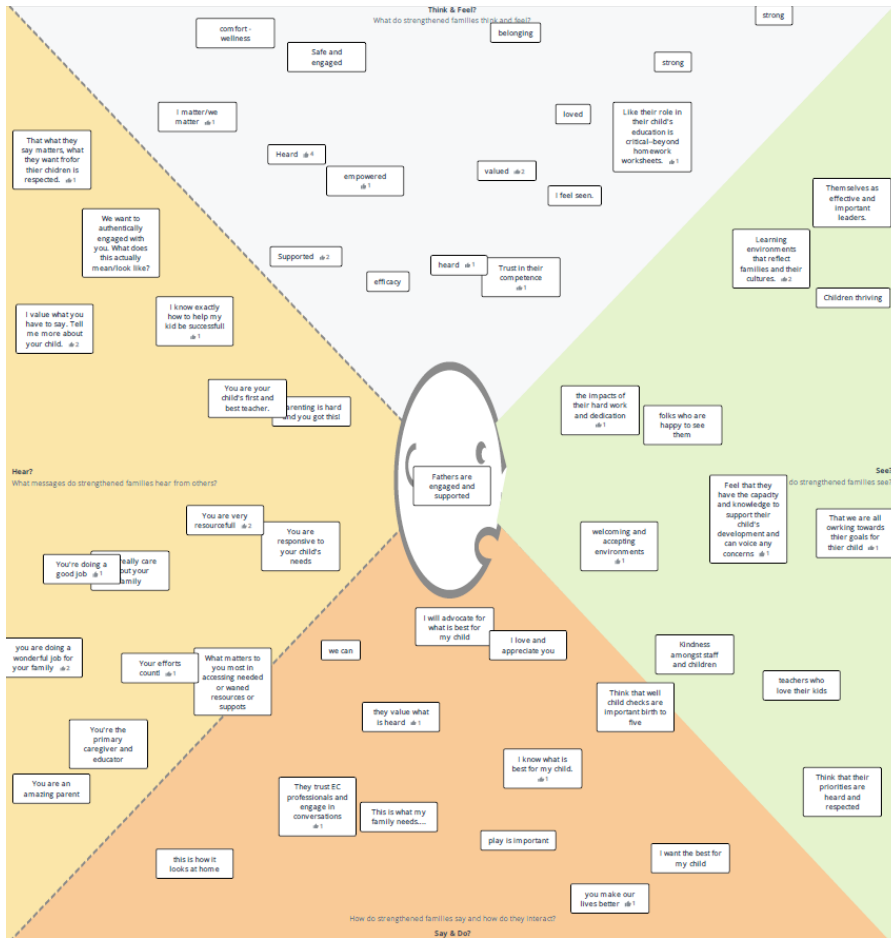
In November 2021, Marzano Research and OEC staff met with CDHS's director of equity, diversity, and inclusion to provide an overview of the Framework draft and gather input from an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens. The director noted that the Framework is a valuable contribution to the early childhood field. Additionally, she recommended revising the narrative associated with parent resilience and responsive parenting to ensure the descriptions resonate with families.

In January 2022, Marzano Research and OEC staff provided an overview of the Framework draft to the PQA Subcommittee. Participants were asked to provide input on what the drafted principles look like in their work. Participants then voted on which ideas they thought were the most important. Creating parent boards and offering activities that support parent–child relationships and child development were the top-rated ideas. Additionally, participants were asked to brainstorm ideas to support the use and dissemination of the Framework. The top-ranked ideas

included a one-page document with the Framework graphic and key words, a companion document to share with families, and a workshop. See Appendix C Groupmaps 8 and 9 for the full list of participants' input.

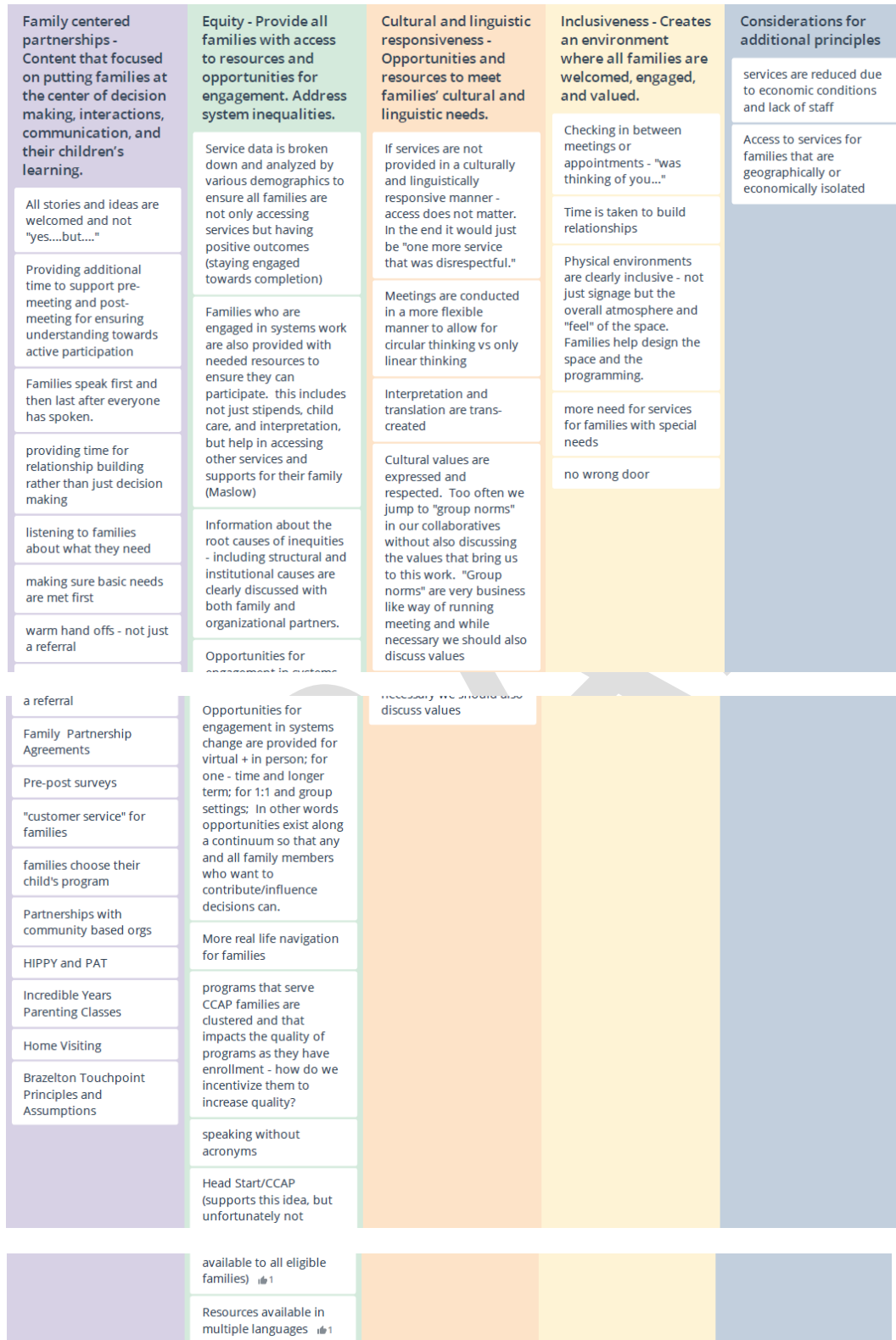
### Stakeholder Input Groupmaps

#### Groupmap 1. PQA Strengthened Families



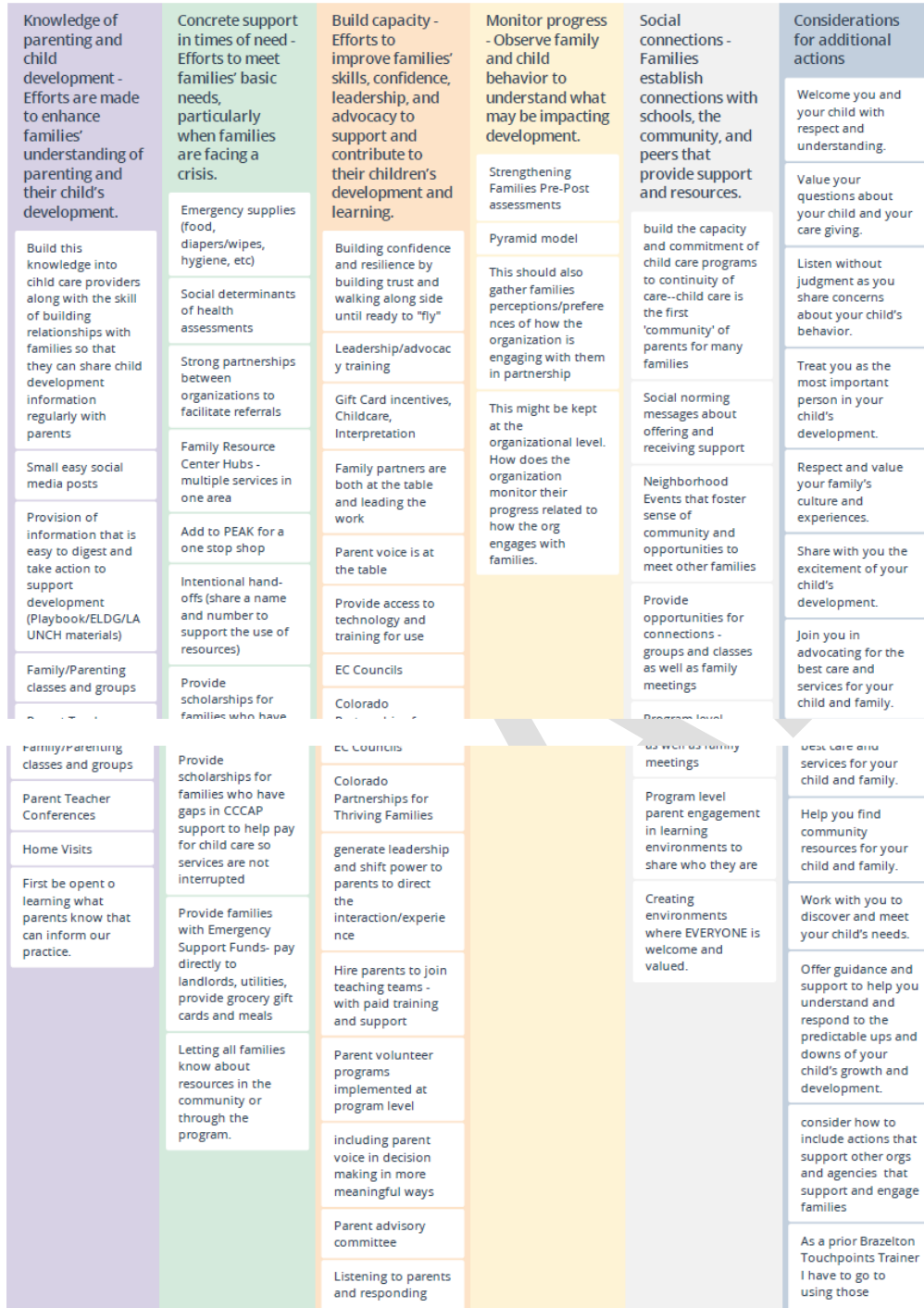
- How else will we know our actions have strengthened families?
- Fathers are engaged and supported to be involved
  - F
  - Families can make "informed" decision based on their priorities, values and culture 👍 1
  - More families speak up on behalf of their family publicly and in policy 👍 1
  - When families show us they have reached their goal 👍 1
  - They will be serving in leadership positions in the early childhood field

## Groupmap 2. PQA Principles



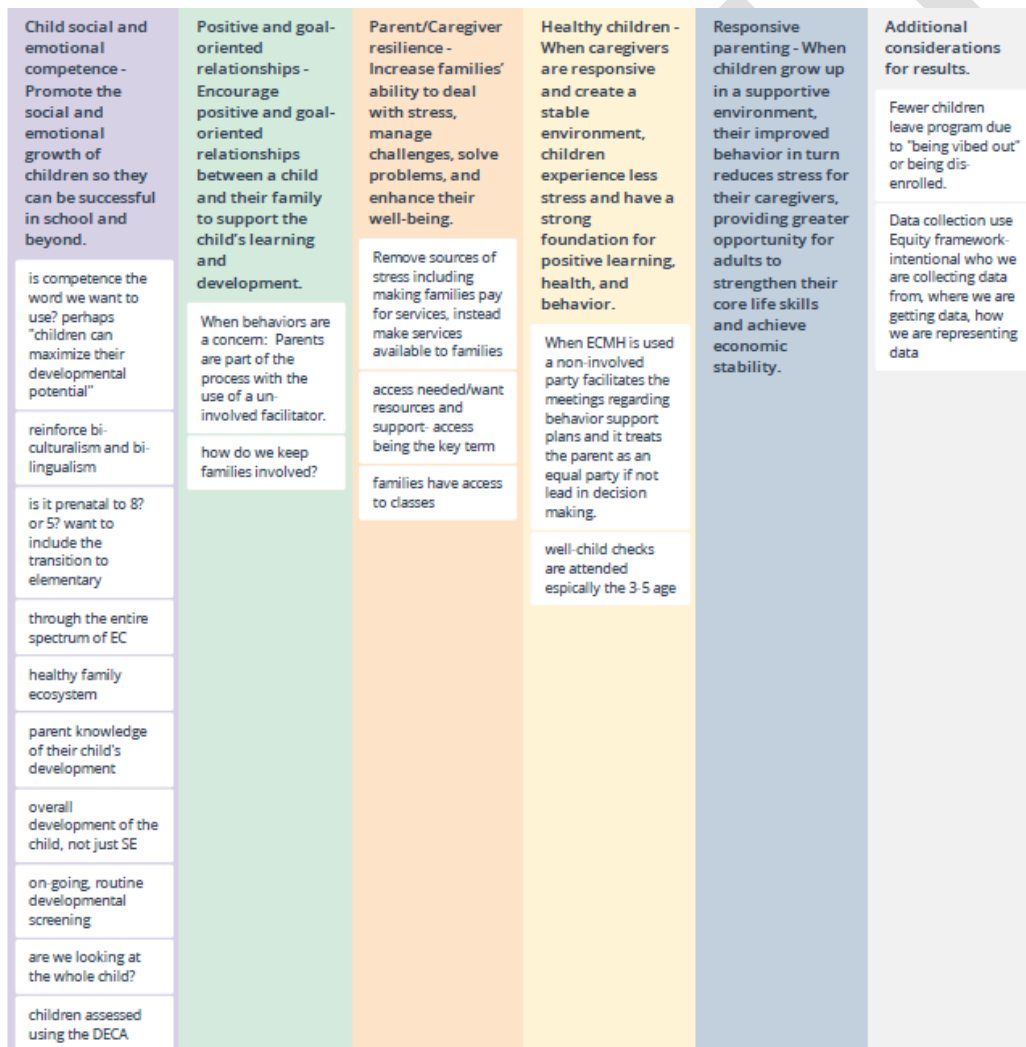


### Groupmap 3. PQA Actions

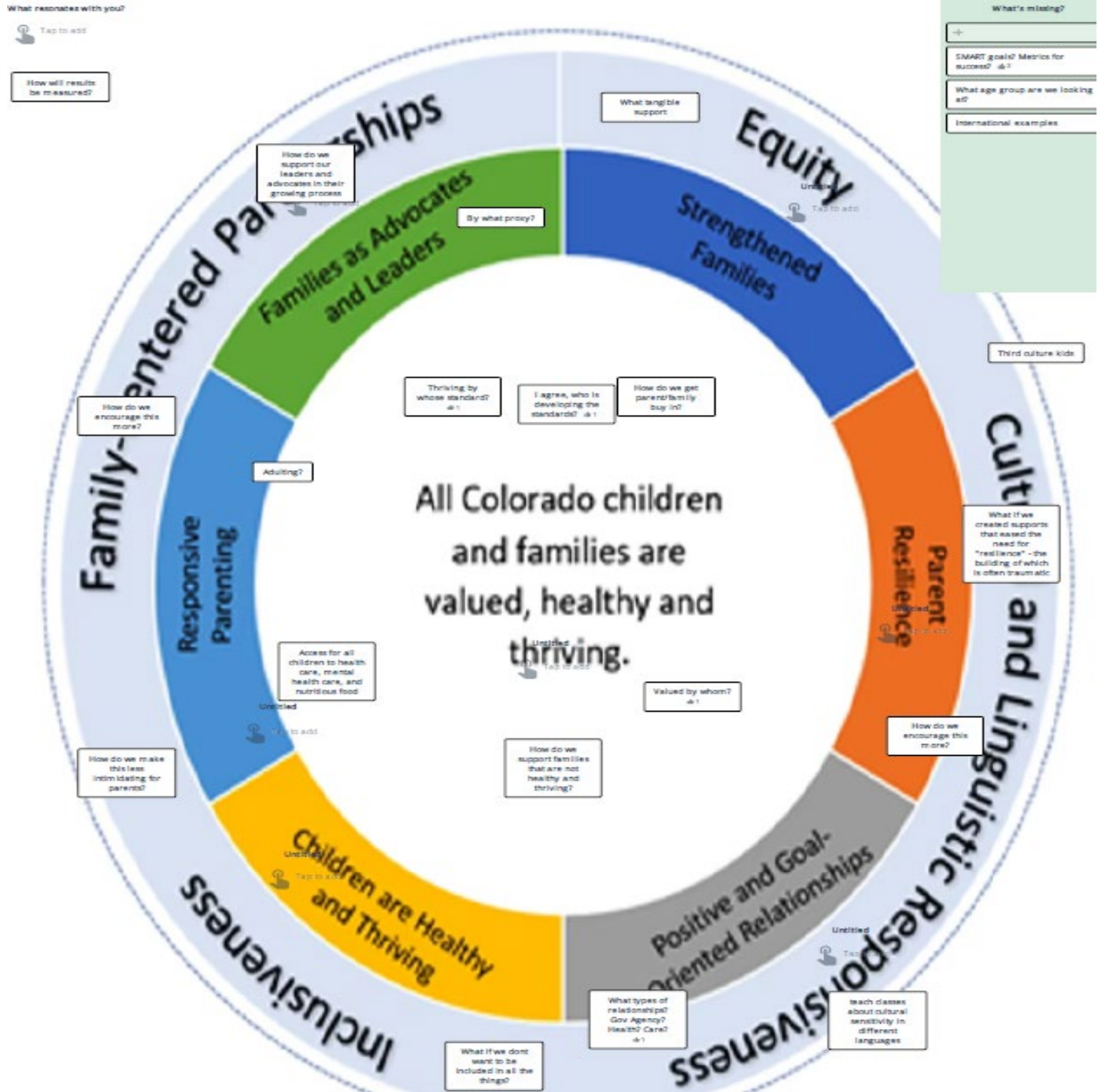




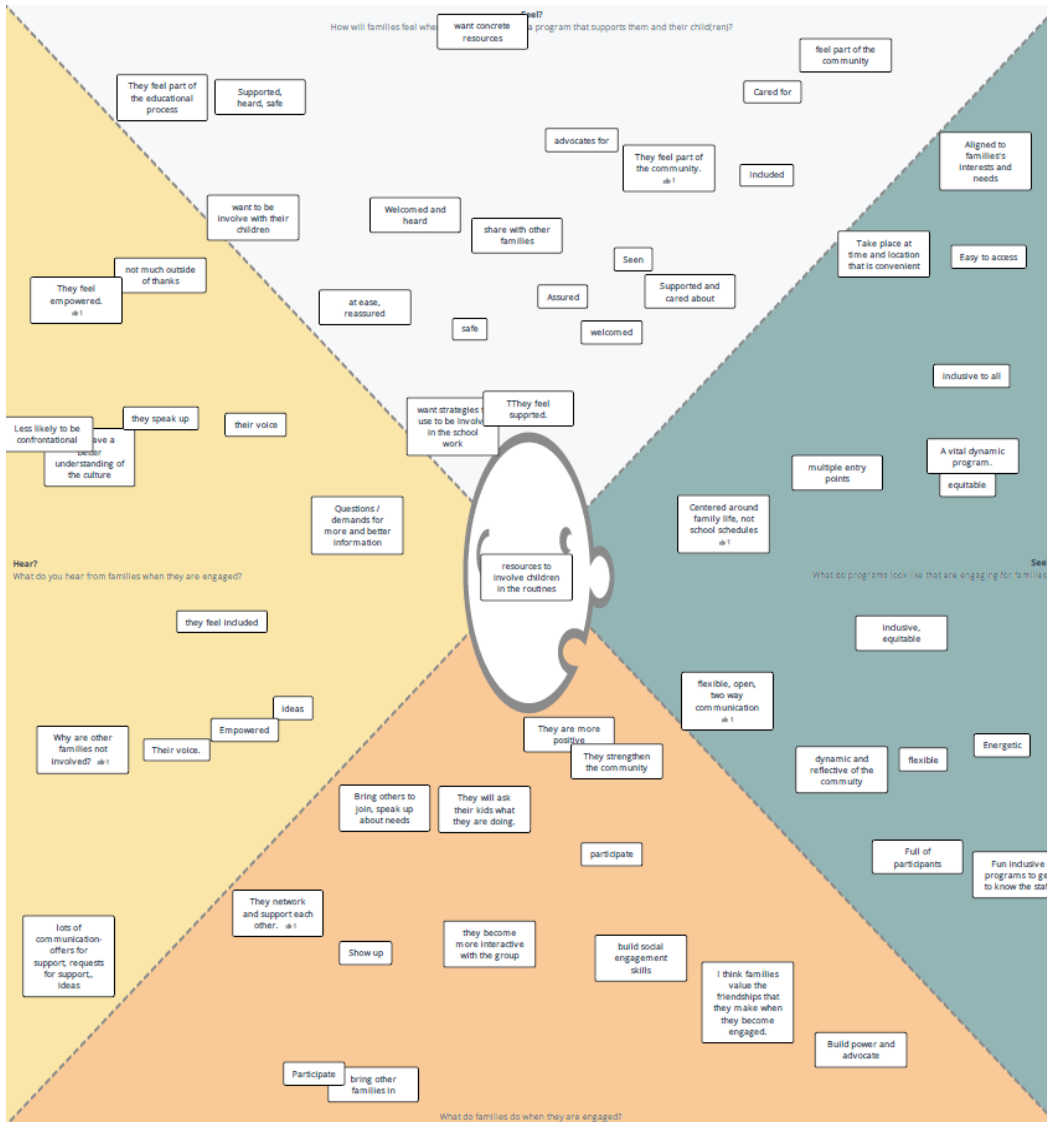
Groupmap 4. PQA Results



### Groupmap 5. Family Voice Council



### Groupmap 6. SACPIE Strengthened Families



- Getting families to care about greater engagement if things are "good enough"
- Mindsets of staff and leadership
- Controversy over masks can make it challenging for in-person engagement
- Outside organizations may not be able to do in-person programming at schools
- Language Barriers
- Language barriers

## Groupmap 7. SACPIE Principles

Principles - Family centered partnerships, Equity, Culturally and linguistically responsive, Inclusive	
Engaging families in the design stage to be able to co-create the resources/materials/facilitation (as opposed to just bringing them in after the ideas have been fully baked and you're just looking for a stamp of approval) 🍌1	9
We provide other resources they may need, such as food, vaccines information and education, mental health services, etc.	5
Hiring a diverse staff	4
Poll the community to find how how and when they want to be engaged. 🍌1	4
communicate in multiple venues (phone, email, social media, internet, etc) and in multiple languages	4
Provide in person and remote options	3
Focus on the family interest	3
reaching out to where to where they are-home, resturants,	3
Designing materials and facilitation that is accessible to everyone and consistently implementing these types of systems	3
We include members on our board who can help us to connect with specific under-represented groups, much like SACPIE!	3
Provide time to meet at different times	2
we engage in multiple ways (electronic, text, social media, website, telephone, snail mail) 🍌1	2
We discuss topics of interest to them.	2
We have regular trainings on equity and inclusion to make sure that we are able to honor culturally diverse communities.	2
Talk about the family needs strenths	2
Engage in different ways so that lots of different interests are represented	2
We ensure they have a safe space to talk.	2
We hold board training on how to be inclusive with focuses on under-represented populations	2
Have to be flexible with the term family and be inclusive of the various people who care for the children 🍌1	2
We meet them where they are.	2
Reciprocity - acknowledging and in many ways compensating for the expertise that families bring	2
We review data with them about academic achievement. 🍌1	1
Starting off by asking, "what is most important for you to take away from this time/activity/engagement?"	1
we have a diversity calendar to be more inclusive when planning events	1
offering trainings and webinars in Spanish	1
Help them understand the culture that you are trying to create.	1
Offer all documents in in at least two languages	1
Send new teachers out that understand and live the principles.	1
Directly engage with parent chair/co-chairs of SACs; building capacity, emphasize importance of their input, set up opportunities to share promising/successful practices	1
Family center classes-painting, cooking, sewing, taught by families	1
Giving them information to make the best choices for their families	1
When starting meeting with families - asking for preferred names and pronouns	1

We use human centered design to ensure that our programming and resources are responsive and inclusive	<input type="radio"/>
We meet with them on weekends.	<input type="radio"/>
We practice language including using appropriate pronouns and sharing our own	<input type="radio"/>
Offer translators at district meetings	<input type="radio"/>
We provide childcare, food and interpretation services.	<input type="radio"/>
Join with the family during the first hello. Provide Multiple ways to communicate	<input type="radio"/>
Usually engage through parent facing organizations.	<input type="radio"/>

### Groupmap 8. PQA Principles

Family centered partnerships	Equity	Culturally and linguistically responsive	Inclusive
<p>■ Families are at the center of relationship building, decision making, interactions, communications, and children's learning. Family engagement practices recognize that families are their child's first teacher and caregiver and this is the cornerstone of developing strong partnerships with families.</p> <p>Creation of parent-boards, Hosting meetings to engage parent/family engagement</p> <p>Head Start performance standards focus on a family partnership agreement and the activities to support family well-being, including family safety, health, and economic stability, to support child learning and development, to provide services and supports for children with disabilities, and to foster parental confidence and skills that promote the early learning and development of their children.</p> <p>Libraries provide access to information and resources based on families' stated interests, desires or needs.</p> <p>Clayton Community Ambassador Program, Family Leadership Council, and our Head Start Policy Council - (Christina Walker or Kayla Frawley at Clayton Early Learning)</p> <p>Member engagement committee</p>	<p>■ Family engagement must be equitable. All families are provided with access to resources and opportunities for engagement, with the goal of positive outcomes for all families. Engagement opportunities are available and accessible regardless of families' level of or approach to engagement.</p> <p>Respect - we treat each other with respect and honor one another as whole individuals</p> <p>Libraries are open and freely available to all, and many libraries have eliminated fines &amp; fees on children's materials to reduce barriers to using the library.</p> <p>Spring Institute provides civic engagement and advocacy capacity building to immigrant/refugee parents to help them engage directly in ECE initiatives that impact them. We also have a community-based Policy Advisory Committee to inform the organization's own advocacy goals.</p> <p>In 2021, we expanded our ambassador program to include both parents and staff. In 2021-22 school year, we combined the programs into one unique Clayton Community Ambassador program, with stipends available to all participants who want to be involved. This program engages our community members in leadership activities, skill building, trainings, and advocacy opportunities to ensure that community voice is elevated within the policy sphere.</p> <p>In 2021, we expanded our ambassador program to include both parents and staff. In 2021-22 school year, we combined the programs into one unique Clayton Community Ambassador program, with stipends available to all participants who want to be involved. This program engages our community members in leadership activities, skill building, trainings, and advocacy opportunities to ensure that community voice is elevated within the policy sphere.</p> <p>We value and are humble to the diversity in experiences and perspectives of colleagues and members</p> <p>Just be kind to everyone.</p>	<p>■ Opportunities and resources for family engagement must meet families' cultural and linguistic needs. Children's lives are rooted in their families and communities, so valuing centering families in the context of their culture, language, home, and community is paramount in building strong connections with children and their families. Acknowledging and accepting the need to engage all families also recognizes the strengths that come from their diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Offering activities that support parent-child relationships and child development including language, dual language, literacy, and bi-literacy development as appropriate:</p> <p>(3) For dual language learners, information and resources for parents about the benefits of bilingualism and biliteracy.</p> <p>(2) Providing parents with information about the importance of their child's regular attendance, and partner with them, as necessary, to promote consistent attendance; and</p> <p>Sharing responsibility with parents for children's early learning and development, and implement family engagement strategies that are designed to foster parental confidence and skills in promoting children's learning and development.</p> <p>Librarians collections and other resources present the community they serve and have materials available in multiple languages.</p> <p>All of our Ambassador meetings are simultaneously translated in English and Spanish using the translation feature on Zoom. We strive to get all materials translated into Spanish ahead of meetings as well. We are still working towards our commitment to language justice, but have ensured that we have a proper budget to support it and staff time to engage in it.</p> <p>Spring Institute provides home visiting to families in five home languages: Somali, Swahili, Burmese, Karen, Dari, and Pashto to ensure that as many families are able to benefit from the program as we are able to serve.</p>	<p>■ This principle recognizes the importance of respecting diversity in terms of ability, language, values, customs, traditions, expectations, and attitudes is essential for family engagement. Engagement is a collaborative process, shared by families and community partnerships to optimize children's growth, development, and learning. Partnerships that are inclusive are intentional about creating environments where all families are welcomed, engaged, and valued.</p> <p>Hiring community members and providing them with capacity/training is a really important way to promote and practice inclusivity-Spring Institute.</p> <p>including families in curriculum and assessment discussions</p> <p>We have created a ladders to leadership model so folks can engage in more leadership opportunities as they grow and enhance their skill sets or as their passions/interests take shape. We contract with a Parent Alum to help support program implementation as well.</p> <p>Including families as leaders and decision makers on program policies</p> <p>Honoring and living by Olmstead, IDEA and ADA</p> <p>Including families as leaders and decision makers on program policies</p> <p>Honoring and living by Olmstead, IDEA and ADA</p>

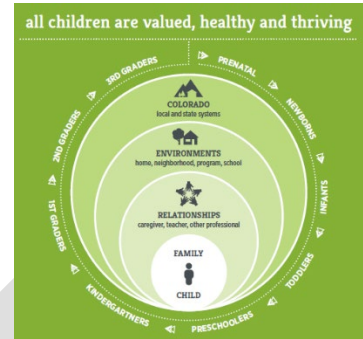
### Groupmap 9. PQA Use and Dissemination of the Framework

<b>Brainstorm a list of ideas to support use and dissemination of the Framework.</b>
a decal/emblem for orgs to display in windows or on website so show families that they utilize this framework
T/TA or someone I can connect with to ask questions and be a thought partner as we implement activities
documentation not dependent on internet access or computer literacy
more parent/caregiver/family ambassadors
video library of what engagement looks like in practice
web page with resources on family engagement aligned with the framework
workshop
one-pager with Framework graphic and key words
companion document to share with families



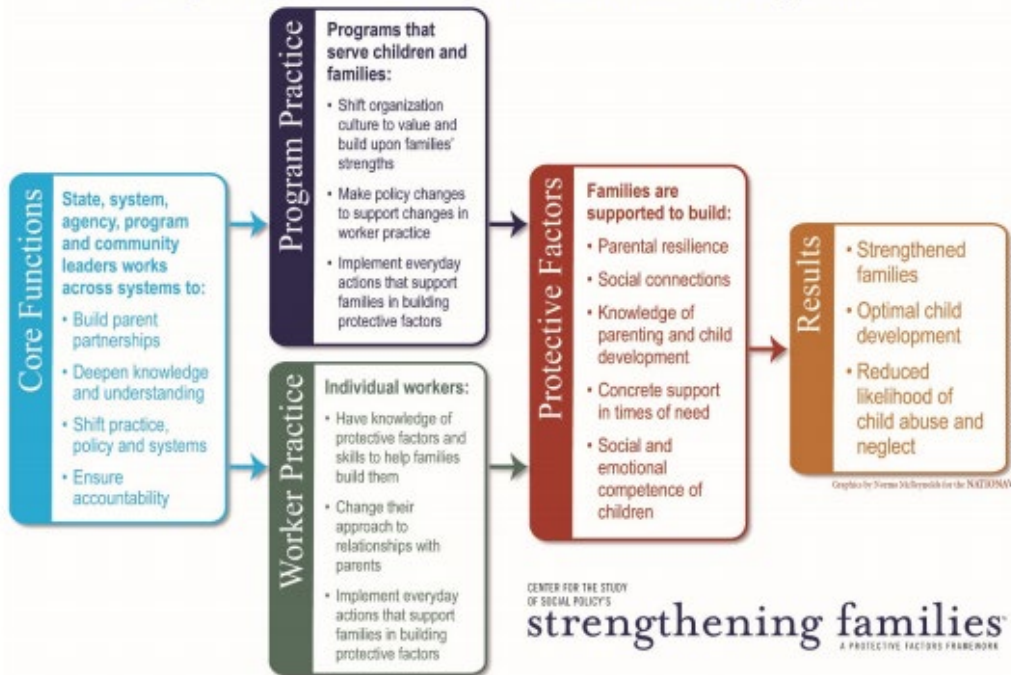
## Appendix D: Layout Options

Below we present several layout examples for design consideration: a “logic model” and a “graphic” approach. These may be more appropriate for the design company hired for this, but it could be useful to get PQA and stakeholder group feedback on. Additionally, we might consider how to incorporate elements of the CO EC Framework; for example, should we include the EC CO vision and the ecosystem circles? We could consider blowing out the innermost circle of “family and child” to connect the Family engagement framework in a very direct way of supporting the EC CO Framework.

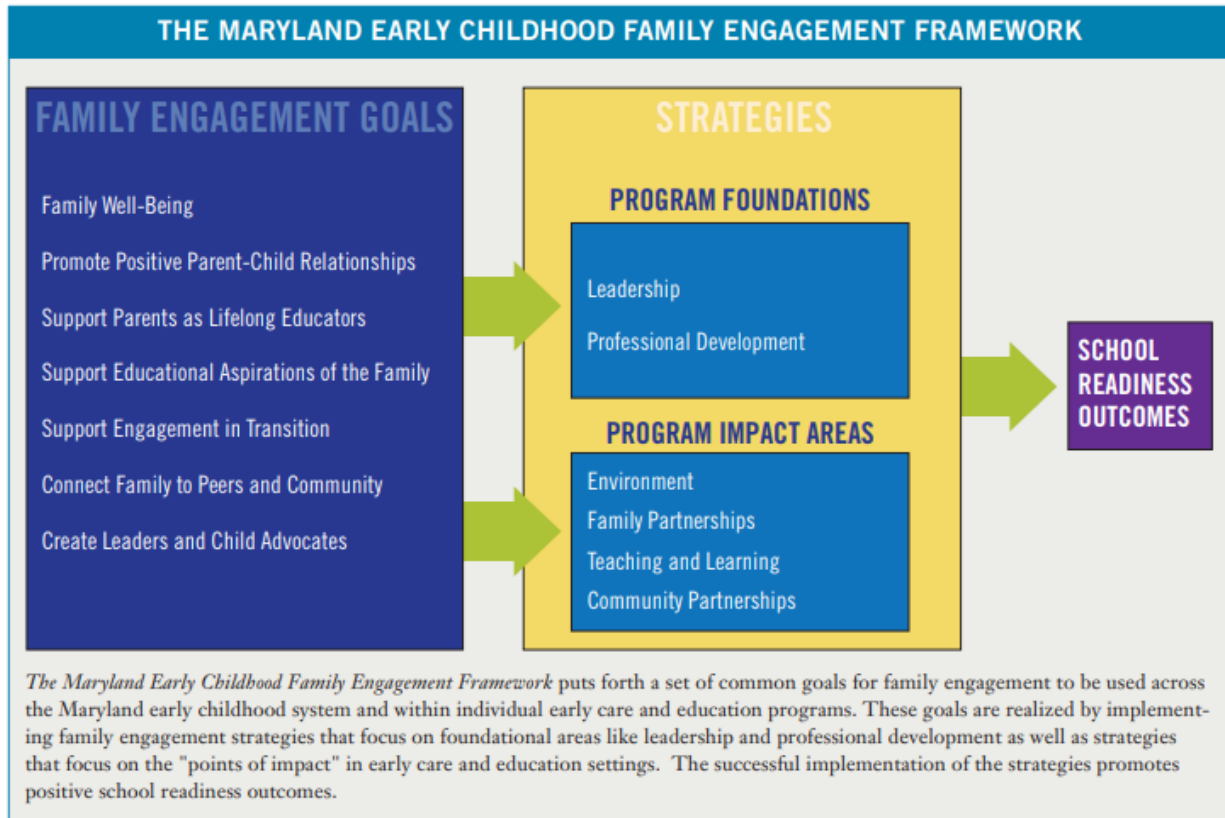


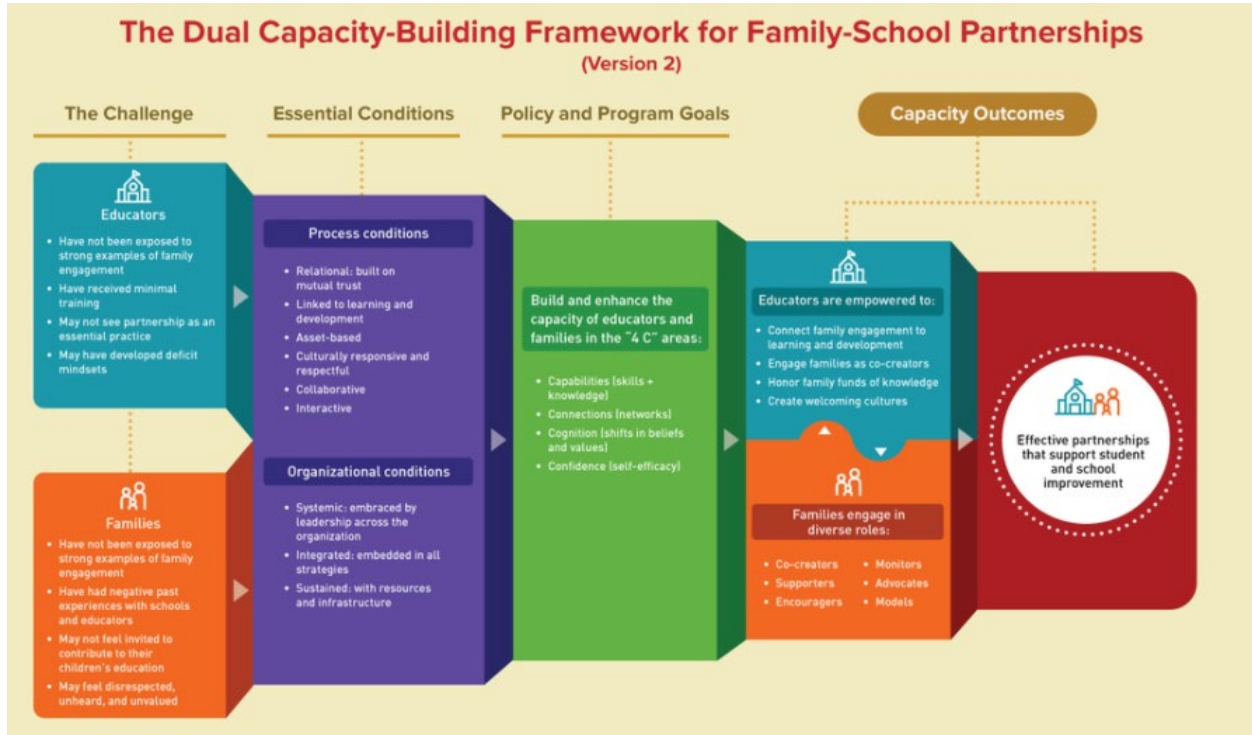
### The Logic Model Approach

#### The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework Logic Model







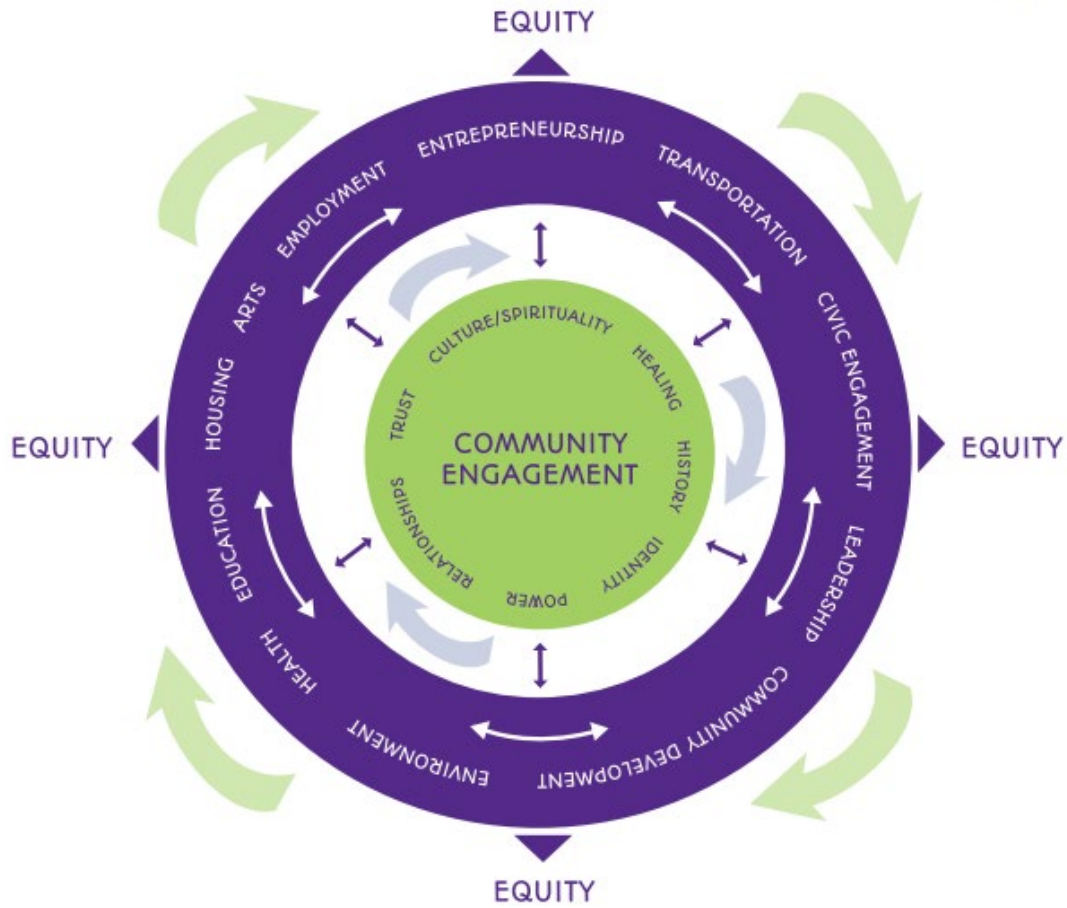


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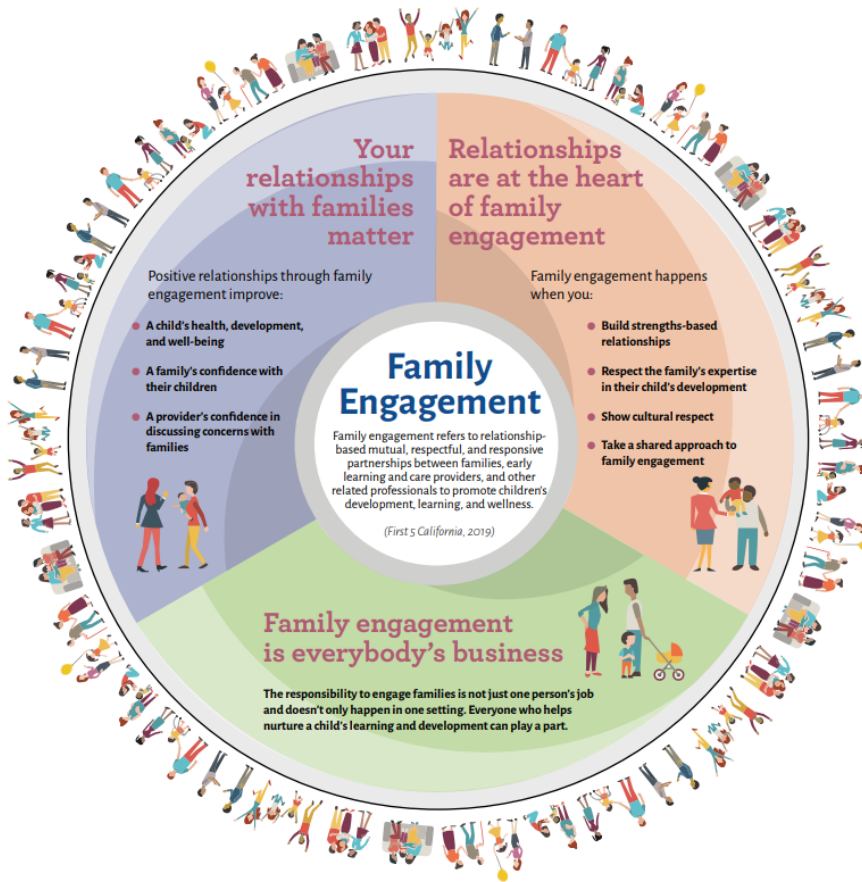
Graphic Visual Approach

IMPACTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL

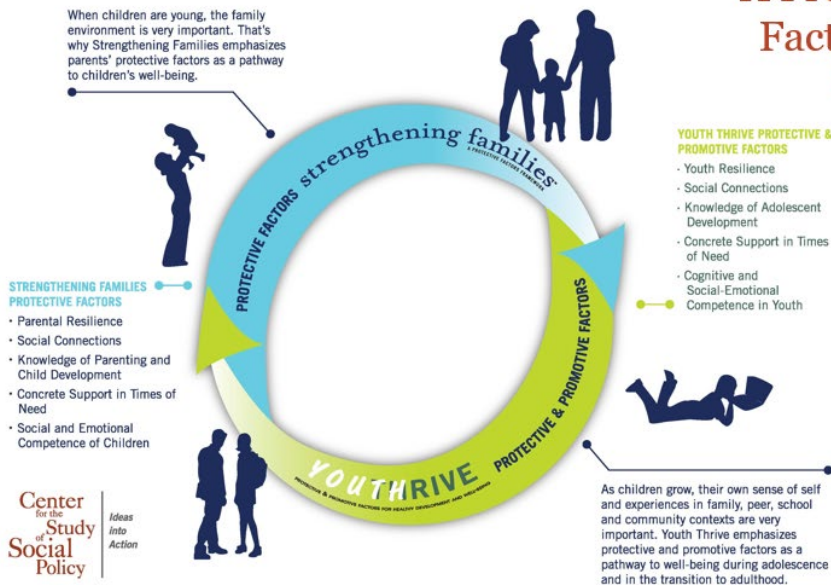
As of May 29, 2018



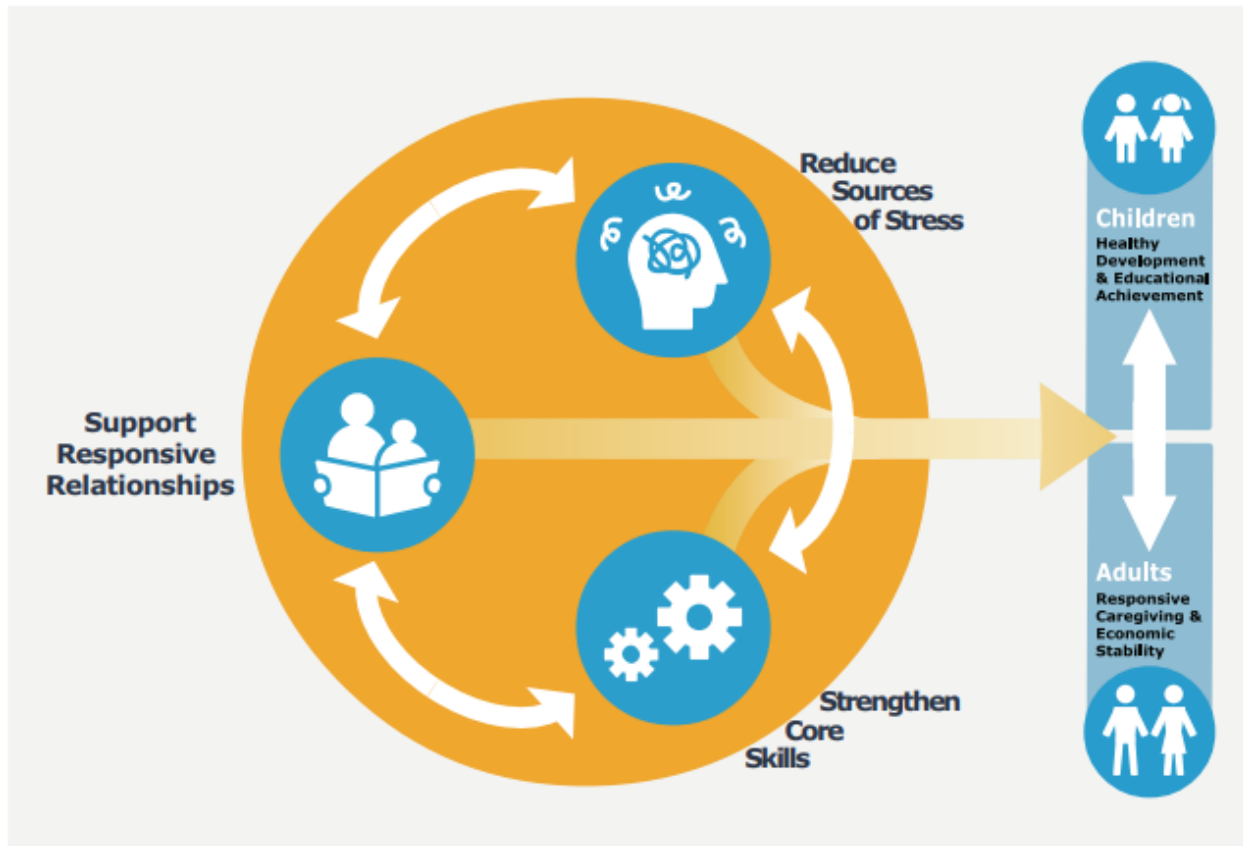
The Nexus Community Partners Framework for Community Engagement, [https://www.nexuscp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ImpactsofCEModel\\_2020.pdf](https://www.nexuscp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ImpactsofCEModel_2020.pdf)



## A Protective/Promotive Factors Frame Across Development



Center on the Developing Child – 3 Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families



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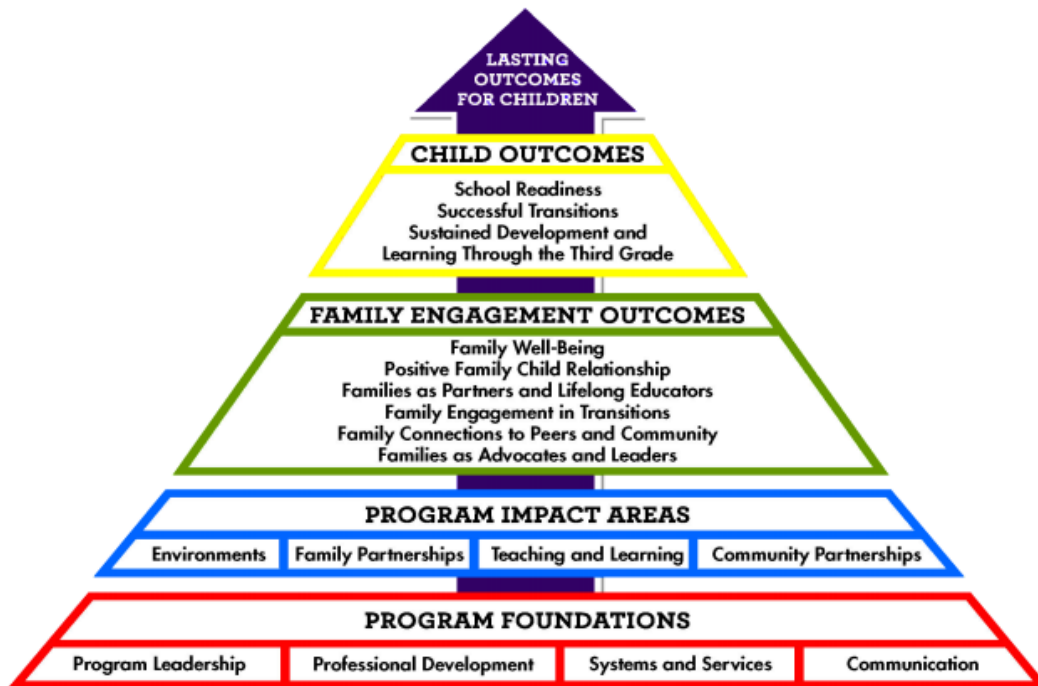
## Circles of Support: A family engagement framework

to articulate DYCD's perspective and promote an approach to engaging, supporting, and developing mutually beneficial relationships between families and providers.



**Vision:** Families feel supported and flourish, with all family members enjoying physical, social, and emotional well being. Families are resilient and family relationships are robust.

*The Arkansas Guide for Promoting Family Engagement*



NORTH CAROLINA EARLY CHILDHOOD

# Family Engagement and Leadership: System-Level Implementation

OUTER CIRCLE = **Conditions for Success**

INNER CIRCLE = **System Components**



Adapted From: *Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework for Early Childhood Systems*, National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement, 2018

Indiana Early Childhood Family Engagement Toolkit

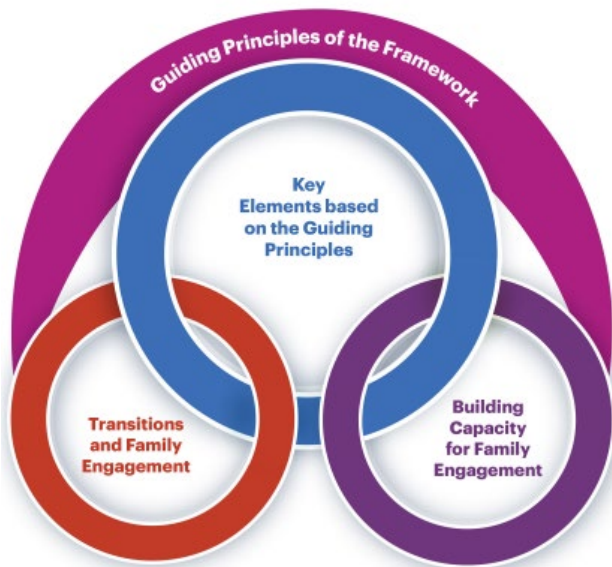


## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT FOCUS AREAS

Children learn and have success in school when Indiana's early educators build strong relationships with families. The following practices can serve as a guide:



*Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts*



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# Transitions to Kindergarten in Colorado:

## A ROADMAP



This work is funded by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0054, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

*Transitions to Kindergarten in Colorado: A Roadmap*, published in December 2021, is the final deliverable of a multi-faceted scope of work implemented between 2020 and 2021 by the National P-3 Center at University of Colorado Denver. Colorado’s Office of Early Childhood (OEC) in the Department of Human Services, as well as the Preschool through 3rd Grade (P-3) and Migrant Education Offices at Colorado Department of Education, served as project advisors throughout.

**Suggested Citation:**

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# Introduction

This Roadmap provides a system-level vision for the state of Colorado to plan and provide support to families, early care and education (ECE) providers, PreK-12 educators, and other professionals to ensure all children experience successful transitions to kindergarten. This Roadmap addresses multiple priorities identified by Colorado leaders and highlighted in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* and the *Colorado Shines Brighter Birth through Five Strategic Plan 2020-2025*, while also looking to the future as Colorado establishes a new Department of Early Childhood and Universal Preschool.

In 2019, Colorado was awarded a three-year Preschool Development Grant (PDG) B-5 Renewal Grant, designed to implement strategies identified in the 2018 comprehensive needs assessment completed for the PDG Planning Grant. That needs assessment revealed that Colorado lacks a system-level approach to supporting children, families, ECE and K-12 educators, and communities to experience successful transitions. To address this, *Colorado Shines Brighter Birth through Five Strategic Plan 2020-25* included Strategy 1.3.2 focused on transitions:

The Office of Early Childhood and the Preschool through Third Grade Office will develop a birth through five transitions roadmap and identify the needed local training and tools for implementation. The roadmap will encompass support for children, including those with special health or developmental needs, their families, and early care and education and K-3 professionals, as well as home visitors, early intervention, child health, and early childhood mental health professionals.

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission and the Office of Early Childhood in the Colorado Department of Human Services annually review the *Colorado Shines Brighter* goals and strategies, resulting in recommendations for improvements and additions. The 2020 update recommended





New Strategy 1.2.7 focused exclusively on the kindergarten transition to “support school district implementation of systemic coordination with community based ECE programs to improve children’s transition to kindergarten (and early elementary grades).”

This Roadmap is intended to address both state and local opportunities to improve cross-sector (ECE and K-12) collaboration that supports children and families as they transition from preschool experiences, both formal and informal, and enter kindergarten.

As with any roadwork, some of the work to be done is structural, requiring changes to the infrastructure. In this report, we identify policy changes that could re-contour the infrastructure that supports transitions to kindergarten. Roadwork also includes aesthetic work, including signage and landscaping, that support people to find their way and to enjoy the journey. In this report, we identify relational or professional learning changes that could support families, teachers, administrators, and, most importantly, children, to feel supported and engaged throughout the transition.



## Transition to Kindergarten Defined

---

In this document, the *transition to kindergarten* is defined not as a single point in time, but as a continuum of time, experiences, and practices that support children’s introduction to, entrance into, and success in kindergarten. This transition requires meaningful engagement of both the early care and education system (ECE), or *sending* side, and the K-12 system, or *receiving* side. The sending side includes the formal or informal programs or settings where children are in the year prior to kindergarten. The receiving side includes kindergarten classrooms and elementary schools that are part of K-12 or PreK-12 school districts.<sup>1</sup> Strategies that support transitions to kindergarten may occur at the state, community, school district, elementary school, ECE program/setting, teacher/educator, classroom, or individual family/child level.

## Why Focus on Transitions to Kindergarten?

---

Effective transitions from preschool to kindergarten are important for children and their families, and, from a policy perspective, represent one of the most complex transition points because of the cross-agency and cross-system collaboration required. Transition practices that support positive relationships between children, families, and educators can substantively impact child outcomes (Ahtola et al., 2011; Cook & Coley, 2017). The transition to kindergarten represents an important shift in children’s and families’ education experiences as the goals, demands, and classroom structures in kindergarten are often different than those in preschool and child care settings (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000; Vitiello, Pianta, et al., 2020). And, effective transitions to kindergarten call for state and local agencies and programs to align their efforts in ways that are sustainable and culturally-preserving for families and educators alike.

<sup>1</sup> Of note, in Colorado 176 out of 179 school districts offer state-funded preschool (CPP; Colorado Preschool Program Legislative Report 2021), and all districts must provide federally mandated special education services to 3- and 4-year olds.





## RECENT RESEARCH ON TRANSITIONS TO KINDERGARTEN

A review of recent research on transitions to kindergarten (Kauerz & Schaper, 2021) highlights:

- Families and children have varying needs and access to transition supports.
  - Boys, children with IEPs, and children living in low-income homes are more likely to experience transition challenges (Jiang et al., 2021).
  - Children in African American, Hispanic, and immigrant families, as well as those living in urban areas, experience fewer transition practices than their peers (Iruka et al., 2020).
  - Rural families have less access to high quality ECE programs (Iruka et al., 2020) and communicate less with educators during the kindergarten transition (Sheridan et al., 2020).

- Transition strategies that engage families are the most influential (Cook & Coley, 2017; Sheridan et al., 2020). Family engagement is multi-faceted, including not only engaging in learning activities at home, but also engaging in activities at school. Families' own expectations for their child's transition are also important.
- Implementing a well-rounded combination of transition practices can have a positive influence on children and families. Effective implementation of transition strategies requires joint buy-in and collaboration between ECE and K-12 systems that often have widely variable approaches to support kindergarten transitions (Ehrlich et al., 2021).

## Why Focus on Systems that Support Transitions to Kindergarten?

Many reports and resources exist that provide extensive and creative ideas about the variety of transition *activities* that can support children and families. These activities, however, will only be universally, sustainably, and equitably delivered when there is a *system* of policies and strategies enacted across state and local agencies and organizations. Successful transitions from ECE settings to kindergarten require many parts working together. This report addresses efforts that support families, children, educators, ECE programs, elementary schools, school districts, and community partners – Ready Families, Ready Children, Ready ECE Programs and Elementary Schools, and Ready Systems. Systems that support transition to kindergarten strategies provide essential infrastructure (e.g., human and fiscal resources; policy guidance) that ensure *all* children and families, not just some in some communities, have successful, culturally- and linguistically-sustaining, and effective transition experiences. Although the focus of this report is on transitions to kindergarten,

these systemic issues are representative of other cross-agency transition efforts at other timepoints along the B-5 continuum.

## Colorado's Current Opportunity

Colorado is at a profound moment in time, providing unprecedented opportunities to strengthen transitions to kindergarten. In addition to the federal PDG grants that create capacity for the state to engage in comprehensive, long-term planning for an early childhood system, the state enjoys strong gubernatorial and legislative leadership for early childhood. The recent timeline of early childhood advances in Colorado highlights the importance and urgency of these issues:

- 2018: Governor Jared Polis elected, naming early childhood as one of his administration's priorities.
- 2019: Colorado's legislature funded full-day kindergarten for all students. Nearly 12,000 more children experienced full-day kindergarten in 2019-20, the first year of implementation, compared to the prior school year (see call-out box on next page).

- 2020: Colorado voters passed Prop EE, providing a dedicated funding source for a new Universal Preschool Program that will serve all children in a mixed-delivery system in the year prior to kindergarten.
- 2021: Governor Polis signed into law House Bill 21-1304, creating a new state agency, the Department of Early Childhood (DEC).

These recent accomplishments build on decades of effort to build programs, services, and systems that support young children and their families. Across Colorado, children transition into kindergarten from a variety of both formal and informal ECE experiences (see call-out box). Some of these ECE settings work closely with local schools, but many, for various reasons, do not. Looking to the future, DEC and CDE will be the primary state agency hubs that support kindergarten transitions, and other agencies and state-level non-governmental partners will continue to also have responsibilities. With this shifting policy landscape, the opportunity becomes clear for greater and more intentional alignment, guidance, support, and investment to improve the state’s systems and strategies for transitions to kindergarten.

## Conceptual Anchors to the Roadmap

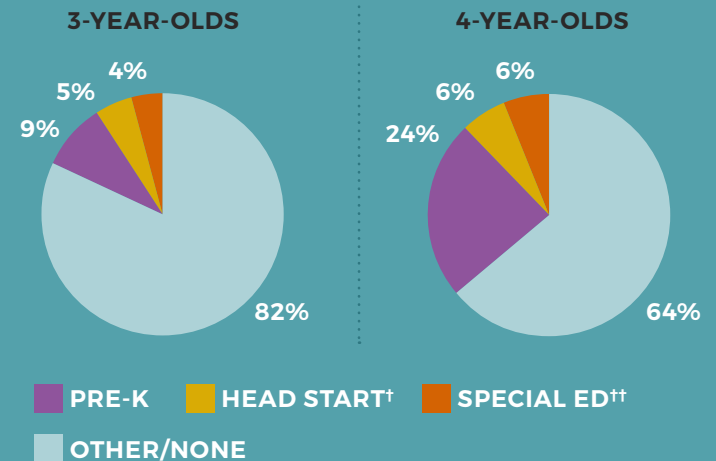
Throughout this Roadmap, four concepts anchor the statewide vision for supporting the transition to kindergarten:

1. **The transition to kindergarten is two-sided.** There are both sending (ECE) and receiving (kindergarten) sides that need to be engaged in supporting transitions to kindergarten. As demonstrated in the call-out box on ECE in Colorado, the sending side is comprised of a variety of both formal programs and informal settings. On the receiving side are kindergarten classrooms in elementary schools. While kindergarten attendance is not mandatory in Colorado, over 99% of children attend kindergarten (M. Rogers, personal communication, December 2, 2021).

## WHERE ARE COLORADO'S CHILDREN IN THE YEAR PRIOR TO KINDERGARTEN?

(National Institute for Early Education Research, 2021)

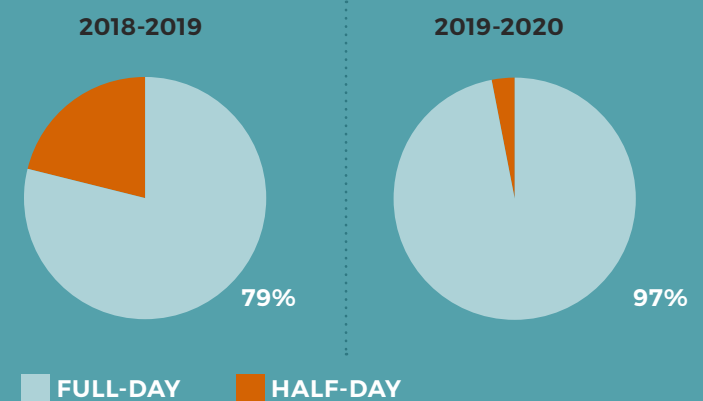
PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE IN 2019-2020



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K  
 †† Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start

## WHAT PERCENT OF COLORADO'S CHILDREN ATTEND FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN? (CDE, 2020A, 2020B)¹

PERCENT OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN KINDERGARTEN



¹ The percent of children attending full-day kindergarten in 2018-19 and 2019-20 was calculated by dividing full-day enrollment counts published in a CDE press release (2020a) by the total number of children enrolled in kindergarten (CDE, 2020b).



2. Because the kindergarten transition is by nature two-sided, strategies for supporting **kindergarten transitions require inter-agency coordination and collaboration**. The mix of formal programs on the sending side are governed by a variety of agencies – Head Start by the federal government; Preschool Special Education and Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) by CDE; and, by 2023, Universal Preschool, and child care by the new DEC. Kindergarten is governed by CDE and the state’s 179 local school districts. To establish smooth transitions to kindergarten, agencies and programs need to work together. Simple as this sounds on paper, the reality in communities is much more complex...
3. ...and this complexity requires attention to the **interplay of state policy and local implementation**. For example, at the implementation level, children from one ECE program may transition into multiple elementary schools in multiple school districts for kindergarten. Similarly, kindergarten classrooms receive children from many formal

ECE programs and informal family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) settings. While state policy can establish guidelines and processes that apply broadly, local-level efforts are needed to ensure that every child, no matter what their ECE experience and no matter which elementary school they enter, experiences a smooth and joyful transition to kindergarten.

4. Although we emphasize policy at state and local levels, children and families are the most important beneficiaries of effective transition strategies. And yet, sub-populations of children have **inequitable opportunities to experience smooth transitions**. To mitigate this, state and local entities need to center equity in all of their work. Transition practices should be respectful of and responsive to the diversity of families across the state. Policies and strategies must emphasize the importance of promoting inclusive practices for culturally and linguistically diverse children and families, and children with exceptional learning needs.



# Who and What Informed this Roadmap?

This Roadmap was informed by a combination of policy review and community input. Policy guidance and support was provided by staff from OEC in the Department of Human Services, and from the P-3 Office and Migrant Education Office in CDE. The community input process engaged voices from both sides of the transition (i.e., ECE and PreK-12), as well as from a diversity of communities across the state. The COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing impacts on ECE and elementary school settings prevented gathering information from a fully representative sample of Colorado educators. Despite this limitation, the mix of methods and engagement of a diverse array of practitioners and leaders provided a well-rounded set of perspectives and experiences. Specifically, the following activities informed this Roadmap:

- A policy scan and synthesis of current federal and state policies that contain relevant attention to the transition to kindergarten.
- Role-alike and community convenings that brought together leaders from both ECE and PreK-12 who provide services for specific groups including children and families: living in migrant and seasonal communities, receiving special education support and services, experiencing homelessness, and living in Tribal and Native American communities.
- Focus groups with school district personnel, representing both CPP/Preschool Special Education (sending side) and Kindergarten (receiving side).
- Key informant interviews with leaders in state agencies and non-governmental organizations that focus on ECE policies and supports, PreK-12 policies and supports, or both.

- Review of other states' and national organizations' transition-related efforts.

Additional details on each of these can be found in Appendices A-E. Across these methods, local and state leaders alike highlighted a need for more unified messages and mechanisms to support the kindergarten transition. All held a similar vision for more consistent, high-quality, and effective transition experiences for children and families across Colorado. The remainder of this report focuses on strategies to achieve that vision.



# Glossary of Key Terms and Acronyms

## FEDERAL AND STATE POLICY ACRONYMS

KEY TERM OR ACRONYM	DEFINITION
CAP4K	Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids
CCDBG	Child Care Development Block Grant
CDE	Colorado Department of Education
CO ESSA Plan	Colorado's Every Student Succeeds Act Plan
CO Shines/QRIS	Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System
CPP	Colorado Preschool Program
DEC	Colorado Department of Early Childhood (to launch in 2022)
ECIDS	Early Childhood Integrated Data System
ELDG	Early Learning and Development Guidelines
ELOF	Head Start's Early Learning Outcomes Framework
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (also known as Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA)
HSA	Head Start Act
HSPPS	Head Start Program Performance Standards
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
ISRP	Individual School Readiness Plans
OEC	Office of Early Childhood in Colorado Department of Human Services
READ Act	Colorado's Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act
SB 17-103	Colorado Senate Bill 17-103, Early Learning Strategies in Education Accountability
SBE	State Board of Education, the governing board for CDE
UPP	Universal Preschool Program (to launch in 2023)



KEY TERMS	
KEY TERM OR ACRONYM	DEFINITION
ECE	Early care and education programs and settings that children may experience before kindergarten. ECE includes formal and informal settings including state- and locally-funded Pre-K, Head Start, Preschool Special Education, child care, family child care, and family/friend/neighbor care. ECE settings may be school- or community-based.
FFN	Family, friend, and neighbor care is informal ECE provided in the child's or a caregiver's home by a parent, relative, friend, neighbor, babysitter, or nanny. These settings are typically exempt from licensing or regulations. They may not be required to meet health, safety, and training standards unless they care for children who receive government financial assistance.
Formal ECE	ECE provided in licensed settings that may be partially or fully subsidized by state and federal funding. These settings are governed by rules and regulations established by federal or state policy. Formal programs include Colorado Preschool Program (CPP), Preschool Special Education, Head Start, licensed child care centers and homes, and, beginning in 2023, Universal Preschool.
Informal ECE	Paid or unpaid child care in a child's home or elsewhere that is not regulated by licensing and policy, and typically not supported by public funds. Informal care is often referred to as Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care.
K-12	A generic term for school districts and the public education system, reflecting the provision of grades kindergarten through grade 12.
PreK-12	School districts that provide pre-kindergarten through grade 12. While most Colorado school districts offer Pre-K programs and services, not all embrace the PreK-12 terminology.
Receiving Side	Kindergarten classrooms, elementary schools, and school districts in which children enroll for kindergarten.
School/Kindergarten Readiness	In Colorado, the SBE defines school readiness as both the preparedness of a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences, and the ability of a school to meet the needs of all students enrolled in publicly funded preschool or kindergarten. School readiness is enhanced when schools, families, and community service providers work collaboratively to ensure that every child is ready for higher levels of learning in academic content.
Sending Side	The full array of formal and informal, school- and community-based, ECE programs and settings that children experience in the year prior to kindergarten.



# Improving Transitions to Kindergarten in Colorado: Strategies

The remainder of this report details specific strategies that could strengthen and systematize Colorado’s approach to transitions to kindergarten. To anchor the recommendations in Colorado’s current context, we identified eight strategies from the review of federal and state policies and practices in Colorado and in other states:

1. Engage Families as Essential Partners
2. Child-level Standards
3. Child-level Learning Plans
4. Standards for Ready Schools and ECE Programs
5. Curriculum and Instruction
6. Readiness Assessments
7. Site- and Systems-level Plans
8. Data Systems

These eight strategies reflect a recognition that systemic attention to supporting transitions to kindergarten must include focus on Ready Families (Strategy 1), Ready Children (Strategies 2 and 3), Ready Schools and ECE Programs (Strategies 4, 5, and 6), and Ready Systems (Strategies 7 and 8). This organization emphasizes the importance of supporting the adults, programs, institutions, and systems that influence children’s transitions to kindergarten – not placing the sole burden of “readiness” on children. The content of each strategy includes:

- **Strategy Definition:** Brief description of the purpose of each strategy and how it relates to the transition to kindergarten.
- **Why This Matters:** Rationale from both research and practice that reinforce why the strategy is important.
- **Relevant Federal and State Policies:** Federal and Colorado policies that explicitly influence the defined strategy. These indicate where there might be duplication or gaps in policies related to transitions to kindergarten.
- **Colorado Perspectives:** A high-level summary of what was learned about the implementation of transition strategies in Colorado during the community feedback opportunities conducted in 2020 and 2021.
- **Examples of the Transition Strategy in Action:** Practical, real-world examples of effective, systemic efforts that support transitions to kindergarten, related to the strategy, drawn from Colorado or other states.





Each strategy then provides recommendations – or, in keeping with the Roadmap theme, “roadwork” – that can be enacted at state and/or local levels:

- **Recommendations for State Roadwork:** Policy levers that can be enacted by state system and agency personnel, state-level non-governmental partners, and others with statewide responsibility for or influence on transitions to kindergarten.
- **Recommendations for Local Roadwork:** Policy levers or strategies that can be enacted by local leaders, ECE and PreK-12 administrators, elementary school principals, and other professionals in ECE programs, school districts, or community-based organizations.

Within each strategy, opportunities for collaborative, cross-sector work (ECE and PreK-12, together) are provided; these suggest ways to coordinate and align efforts *across* systems. In addition, each strategy includes opportunities specific to the sending/ ECE side and to the receiving/kindergarten side. Of note, given the imminent creation of a new Department of Early Childhood that consolidates most programs and funding streams that provide preschool services, the ECE recommendations are not program-specific but, rather, intended to encompass all preschool programs and settings, formal and informal. Those involved in improving transitions to kindergarten in any context – state or local, urban or rural, ECE or school district, formal or informal programs – will be able to identify strategies and components that best match their roles and priorities.

# Engage Families as Essential Partners

## STRATEGY DEFINITION

Children's transitions to kindergarten cannot be separated from the experiences that their families have during the transition. Whether or not children attend a formal ECE program, ensuring that families are full partners in the transition is essential. Meaningful engagement of families requires attention to policies and practices that support parents and other primary caregivers as their children's first and most important teachers. It also requires that transition strategies are culturally sustaining and differentiated according to ethnicity, race, culture, home language, socio-economic status, and immigration status.

### *Why This Matters*

Families are the most important and effective supporters of their children's transition and educators' relationships with families shape those experiences. For many families, inclusive of those whose children had formal or informal ECE experiences, the transition to kindergarten requires navigating new schedules, relationships, and expectations. Family engagement during the transition to kindergarten is multifaceted, requiring strategies to involve families in activities at home, at school, and in community settings. Transition practices that support positive relationships between children, families, and educators can increase parent involvement in schools and positively impact child outcomes (Cook & Coley, 2017; Sheridan et al., 2020).

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- ECE and school district leaders emphasize that building relationships is a key ingredient for successful transitions, particularly for families and children with unique needs such as those receiving special education services or experiencing homelessness.
- School districts report providing information to families through various mechanisms such as kindergarten roundups and orientations. Fewer districts encourage the use of transition practices that promote relationship-building between educators and families.
- According to state-level key informants, organizations that have built strong relationships with families and strengthened community ties are the best messengers to share information with families about transitions to kindergarten. Trust is the essential ingredient.
- At a local level, community organizations and public spaces, such as libraries, where families feel comfortable and familiar can provide trusted messages about the kindergarten transition.
- During the pandemic, many school districts used virtual technology to meet with families as part of transition supports. Use of virtual meeting tools addressed some of the challenges traditionally faced by schools (e.g., providing accessible, convenient space and time for educators and families to form productive partnerships).

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- Colorado’s *Transition to Kindergarten: Timeline and Checklist* provides ECE and K-12 leaders with a month-to-month menu of transition activities to engage with families that can help ensure information and supports are provided in timely, useful, culturally-sustaining ways.
- Colorado’s *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* and Head Start’s *Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center* both provide an array of resources and videos to engage families throughout the transition to kindergarten.

## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

Policies on the “sending” side explicitly highlight family engagement strategies during the kindergarten transition. While many K-12 policies emphasize the importance of families, policies do not explicitly reference family engagement as it relates to the transition to kindergarten.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	HSA, HSPPS	--
COLORADO	CO Shines/QRIS	--

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Collaborate across state agencies to develop aligned strategies and resources for family engagement, emphasizing that all families bring strengths and are their child’s first and most important advocate.
- Develop and disseminate common resources to families, demonstrating that both ECE and PreK-12 agencies and organizations prioritize families.
- Ensure information for families is accessible, in multiple formats, in their preferred language.
- Support legislation, rules, and regulations that direct local communities to include families as essential partners in the development and implementation of transition plans and strategies.
- Identify funding sources that can be blended or braided to support locally offered summer programs that engage families and children transitioning from both formal and informal ECE settings into kindergarten.
- Provide guidance on ways to elevate family engagement in child-, site-, and system-level planning documents. This could include sample sections of plans for family engagement practices such as meetings with ECE and K-12 educators, sharing information and data with families, and other action statements that prioritize families’ engagement during their child’s transition.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Ensure professional development offerings provided to both formal ECE programs and informal care providers include explicit attention to transitions to kindergarten and ways in which families can be centered and supported.
- Include families of preschool age children in the development of transition policies.
- Use feedback from families who have gone through the transition process to make improvements to policies, rules, regulations, and plans.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Encourage school districts to include family engagement strategies *specific to* the transition to kindergarten in their Early Childhood Needs Assessments required by SB17-103.
- Bolster messaging and guidance that the PreK-12 systems’ efforts to build relationships and support families during the transition to kindergarten is critical not only for children who attend district-based Pre-K, but also for children attending community-based ECE and those in informal settings.
- Provide guidance for, and examples of, district websites that effectively link families with kindergarten registration timelines and processes, and transitions events and resources.



## SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Identify innovative outreach strategies designed to reach children and their families who are not served by formal ECE programs, those with unique needs, and those living in rural and remote locations.
- Provide families with information on what learning and child development looks like in preschool and kindergarten. Include information on what can be done at home to support children’s learning, and provide resources regarding kindergarten readiness.
- Include families as a key partner at all stages of the development and implementation of transition plans and strategies.
- Ensure communications with families are in their preferred language and provided through multiple modalities (e.g., in-person and virtual; oral and written).
- Connect with pediatric health service providers to share transition-related information and documents with families during wellness check appointments or in waiting rooms.
- Reduce the barriers that may prevent historically underserved families, such as those experiencing homelessness, from enrolling in ECE programs and kindergarten. For example, limit the amount of paperwork needed and/or provide a staff member to assist with completing the necessary paperwork.
- Coordinate a streamlined registration process for Migrant Education program staff and ECE staff to support families with completing registration forms, transferring relevant documents previously collected, and provide interpreters and translators for families as needed.

## SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Ensure public and private, formal and informal, ECE programs understand and use common definitions for unique circumstances, such as homelessness, to determine families’ eligibility for support.
- Engage families in conversations about the transition process early and often.
- Support families with tools to advocate for their child’s specific needs.
- Regularly provide opportunities for families in migrant and seasonal communities enrolled in formal ECE programs, as well as those utilizing informal/FFN care, to receive support with tools and activities that reinforce their child’s kindergarten readiness skills.

## SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide relevant and timely information throughout the transition process, including:
  - A transparent kindergarten enrollment process to increase families’ understanding of requirements, rights, responsibilities, and options to best fit their needs.
  - Inviting families to meet with teachers and observe classrooms to build relationships and empower families throughout the transition to kindergarten. Provide an interpreter as needed.
  - Providing clear communication to families in their preferred language about the services and supports the district offers (e.g., transportation, free/reduced lunch program, special education services, child care services).
- Develop partnerships between families with similar experiences (e.g., living in migrant and seasonal communities) focused on creating avenues for families to share their strengths, skills, and identities with each other, the communities in which they live, as well as with the schools and programs they attend.
- Identify local services or programs available for children and families experiencing homelessness through a school district liaison.
- Designate a family liaison to support coordination between families, formal ECE programs, informal care providers, and the school or district.
- Prioritize hiring staff who are bilingual and racially/culturally representative of elementary populations to serve as liaisons to children and families in migrant and seasonal communities.
- Identify strategies that support children with limited access to formal ECE programs.

## STRATEGY DEFINITION

Child-level standards refer to learning and development guidelines that define what children should know and be able to do. For transitions to kindergarten, these are often defined as “school readiness” standards.

### *Why This Matters*

The ECE and PreK-12 systems have different sets of child-level standards or guidelines. Decades of research show that several interrelated domains of development are important for children’s success – physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language and literacy development, and cognition/general knowledge. As children transition from ECE to kindergarten, child-level standards often shift from being organized by domains of development into being organized by academic content areas. While the emphasis on academic standards has grown over the past few decades, teachers and families emphasize that developmental skills such as self-regulation and social interaction may be the most important skills for children transitioning to kindergarten (Bassok et al., 2016; Vitiello, 2020).

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- Community ECE and PreK-12 personnel report that varying definitions of school readiness create misaligned understandings about which skills, knowledge, and dispositions are most important to nurture in young children.
- District leaders report that misalignment between ECE and kindergarten standards inhibit teachers’ ability to meaningfully share information about children and their families. For example, kindergarten teachers may receive information from ECE educators about children’s development and learning, but much of this information cannot be readily utilized because it does not align to kindergarten academic standards.

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- The 2019 crosswalk of Colorado’s ELDGs with the Head Start ELOF and Colorado’s Academic Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten provides a visual example of aligned child-level standards within the ECE/sending side, as well as across ECE and Kindergarten.
- Minnesota Department of Education’s definition of school readiness includes a clear and explicit description of child readiness, linking the developmental domains and academic content areas that matter most for kindergarten entry.





## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

There are two definitions for children’s school readiness defined in policy:

- One in state policy, approved by the Colorado SBE as authorized by CAP4K, refers to readiness as it relates to a child’s preparedness to engage and benefit from educational experiences. This definition does not reference specific skills and/or abilities.
- One in federal policy, documented within the HSPPS, that focuses on child-level academic and non-academic skills and abilities.

Multiple child-level standards exist in Colorado:

- As required by CCDBG, Colorado developed *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* (ELDGs) that describe the trajectory of children’s learning and development, across multiple developmental domains, from birth to age 8.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	CCDBG, HSPPS	--
COLORADO	CAP4K	CAP4K

- The *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF): Ages Birth to Five* presents five broad areas of early learning and shows the continuum of learning for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.
- Colorado’s 2020 Academic Standards, approved by the SBE, define grade-level expectations for both Preschool and Kindergarten across multiple content areas. These define end-of-year expectations. School districts are required to adopt these standards.

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Collaboratively revise a statewide definition of school readiness that embraces multiple domains of development and academic content, and that recognizes and sustains cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Provide explicit guidance that there is no singular benchmark for school readiness, but that children enter Kindergarten with varying experiences and skills, and at varying stages of development.
- Widely disseminate resources and tools – through DEC, CDE, and other statewide organizations – that support understanding of the school readiness definition across ECE and PreK-12 educators.
- Develop and disseminate examples of individual school readiness plans that explicitly align with both the ELDGs and Colorado’s Academic Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten. To increase alignment with the ELDGs, the Colorado Academic Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten could explicitly pull out social and emotional development as a priority content area.
- Align ECE and PreK-12 professional development systems and supports to ensure the multiple sets of child-level standards are recognized and to provide opportunity for ECE and kindergarten teachers to discuss key standards related to the transition and their similarities and differences.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Highlight key standards from the ELDGs and Head Start ELOF that are critical for kindergarten teachers and administrators to know and use to inform the transition from preschool settings into kindergarten classrooms.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Highlight key kindergarten Colorado Academic Standards that are critical for ECE teachers and administrators to know, particularly as they relate to school readiness.
- Provide links to the ELDGs on CDE’s Colorado Academic Standards webpage.

## SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Actively disseminate resources and guidance about how to use the comprehensive crosswalk of Colorado's ELDGs, Head Start's ELOF, and Colorado's Academic Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten. Ensure these dissemination strategies originate from both ECE and PreK-12 agencies and organizations.
- Provide guidance on setting goals in individual school readiness plans that align with ELDGs and Colorado's Academic Standards for Kindergarten and create a trajectory for children's readiness at the end of preschool to ensure success in kindergarten.
- Collaborate across ECE and PreK-12 organizations to design and deliver professional learning to educators and families that addresses the multiple sets of child-level standards. Facilitate discussions about similarities and differences among the standards, and ways to ensure meaningful attention to all domains of children's learning and development.

## SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide professional learning and supports to ECE programs and teachers, in both formal and informal settings, that includes examples of learning activities that are developmentally appropriate and standards based.

## SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide professional learning and supports to school-based PreK and kindergarten teachers, as well as elementary administrators, on standards-based instructional practices that address multiple domains of children's development.



# Child-level Learning Plans

## STRATEGY DEFINITION

Both ECE and kindergarten teachers invest time to understand each child's developmental progress and, often, document ways in which families and educators, together, can boost learning and development. These documents, or child-level learning plans, especially when shared across ECE and kindergarten contexts can support the continuity of learning experiences and services for individual children and families.

### *Why This Matters*

Developing learning plans is a particularly important process for subgroups of children who may experience more challenges during the transition to kindergarten, such as those with IEPs (Jiang et al., 2021). The process of developing child-level learning plans provides an opportunity to equitably differentiate supports by building relationships between ECE and kindergarten educators and families. Aligning families' and educators' expectations and goals increases the probability that children experience a smooth transition. It is especially important to intentionally improve a shared approach, as evidence suggests that kindergarten teachers often do not use child-level learning plans developed by ECE providers (Cook et al, 2019; Purtell et al., 2020).

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- ECE programs and school districts reported that child-level transition plans are often created for specific groups of children including those with IEPs and those with behavior support plans.
- Some communities in Colorado have developed standardized transition forms and portfolios across ECE settings and have supported kindergarten educators' understanding and use of the common forms.
- Several attendees of the Building Bridges Transition Summit, a state-sponsored event focused on building community-level cross-sector coordination to support kindergarten transitions, intend to implement strategies to support transition plans for all children, but these efforts have been placed on hold because of the pandemic.
- Special education providers reported that, for children with IEPs, communication and coordination with elementary school staff can be streamlined because the same provider sometimes is able to serve the same child in both preschool and kindergarten.

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- Head Start guidance makes clear that transition plans for children eligible for IDEA services are developed in collaboration with the receiving school system and families.
- Washington State created a voluntary Transition Summary Form that provides opportunity for families, ECE providers, and children themselves to share observations on children's developmental progress and their hopes for kindergarten.

## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

Policy requirements for child-level learning plans vary in relation to which children are required to have plans. For example, CAP4K and CPP require that programs and schools develop learning plans for all children served. Alternatively, IDEA and the HSPPS include requirements specific to children eligible for special education services. Beginning in kindergarten, the READ Act requires schools and districts to identify children at-risk for a significant reading deficiency.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	HSPPS, IDEA	IDEA
COLORADO	CAP4K, CO Shines/QRIS, CPP	CAP4K, READ Act

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Ensure that all policy, rules, regulations, and guidance related to transitions to kindergarten explicitly name the importance of both ECE and kindergarten educators', as well as families', engagement in developing child-level plans.
- Collaborate to catalogue and examine all existing child-level planning requirements with the goal of streamlining, simplifying, and reducing duplication of plans required by different policies.
- Collaborate to develop and provide guidance and support for the use of a common kindergarten transition form.
- Develop the state-level infrastructure and supports that would ensure that child-level learning plans developed by ECE providers are consistently transmitted to schools, districts, and kindergarten teachers.
- Provide guidance for setting goals in child-level learning plans that align with Colorado's ELDGs and Academic Standards, in addition to requirements in IDEA and the HSPPS. Specifically, ensure that goals recognize and support multiple domains of learning and are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- Provide guidance to educators on how to examine data from state assessments to identify and rectify disparities between groups of children based on home language, race/ethnicity, ability status, gender, and educational setting.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide examples of, or templates for, child-level learning plans that ECE programs and families can easily share with kindergarten teachers and elementary schools.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Expand current guidance provided on CDE website about individual school readiness plans (ISRPs) to include specific strategies to engage a child's ECE provider, whether community- or school-based, in contributing to the plans.
- Provide explicit guidance on ways to focus on children's strengths, not deficiencies, in plans, especially those that address language and literacy development.





## LOCAL-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Develop templates for transition plans in collaboration with families, ECE providers, kindergarten teachers, and elementary principals.
- Within transition plan templates, center families' priorities for their children's learning, so that plans are congruent with children's history, culture, values, and home language.
- Review information from child-level learning plans to help guide policy decisions and inform improvement plans.
- Develop a process for sending and receiving staff to share/review child-level learning plans and other data.
- Provide suggestions for ways to incorporate goals in child-level learning plans that align with Colorado's ELDGs and Academic Standards.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Develop transition portfolios that include health or immunization records and child assessment information for families to take to their next location if they move to a new school or community.
- Provide guidance to ECE programs and teachers on ways to meaningfully include families' voice, vision, and priorities in the development of learning plans.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide opportunities for kindergarten special service providers to observe incoming students in their ECE environments, both formal and informal, to gain insight into their strengths, skills, and needs.
- Establish a process to review and adjust learning plans often to reflect a child's growth and development.
- Support families and kindergarten teachers with establishing a plan for ongoing communication about their child's adjustment to a new school.



# Standards for Ready Schools and ECE Programs

## STRATEGY DEFINITION

ECE program and elementary school standards outline expectations for the quality of the formal settings in which children engage in learning. Within the construct of school readiness, these are often called “Ready School” expectations. Primary characteristics of Ready Schools include high standards that are implemented consistently across classrooms; qualified teachers, ongoing professional learning, and adequate compensation; and strong leadership from administrators.

### Why This Matters

Wide variation in children’s learning experiences create wide variation in the range of skills that children gain and develop. On the ECE side, variable programmatic quality influences the range of skills with which children enter kindergarten. On the kindergarten side, variable school quality influences the extent to which children’s skills are built upon once they enter kindergarten. Ready Schools and ECE programs ensure that the responsibility of “readiness” is not carried by children. The variability of transition strategies implemented from school to school often comes down to differences in school leadership (Vitiello, Basuel, et al., 2020). School districts with committed leadership tend to implement more consistent and intentional transition practices across multiple elementary schools (Purtell et al., 2020).

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- A 2017 validation study of Colorado Shines/QRIS shows that about half (48%) of all licensed programs were participating in Colorado Shines at a Level 2 or higher. According to the 2021 CPP Legislative Report, approximately 50% of programs serving CPP-funded children are rated at the bottom two levels of Colorado Shines.
- School district leaders reported a lack of clear guidance or messaging about what ‘ready schools’ means in practice or how it aligns with QRIS expectations.

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- The Minnesota Department of Education provides a clear definition of “Ready School” as one that can meet the needs of children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse communities who have a variety of formal and informal ECE experiences prior to kindergarten.
- Ohio’s Department of Education, in collaboration with the state Association of Elementary School Administrators produced *Strong Beginnings, Smooth Transitions, Continuous Learning: A Ready School Resource Guide for Elementary School Leadership*. This guide provides a framework for elementary principals to build and support systems that support young students.

## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

CAP4K’s school readiness definition, approved by the Colorado SBE, includes a definition of “ready school” as “the ability of a school to meet the needs of all students enrolled in publicly funded preschool or kindergarten.” Both CO Shines/QRIS legislation and the HSPPS include requirements for monitoring implementation and quality of programs for preparing children for kindergarten. CCDBG authorizes use of quality improvement funds for professional development and training activities aimed at improving outcomes related to children’s entry into kindergarten.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	CCDBG, HSPPS	--
COLORADO	CAP4K, CO Shines/QRIS	CAP4K

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Continue to elevate in all state-level policy documents, including updates to *Colorado Shines Brighter* strategic plan, the important roles and responsibilities of both ECE service providers and PreK-12 school districts supporting transitions to kindergarten.
- Convene a workgroup to consider a “Ready Schools and ECE Programs” definition that articulates specific strategies focused on transitions to kindergarten (e.g., offer menu of transition activities; engage ECE and kindergarten teachers in shared professional learning).
- Provide examples of what programs and schools look like when they are designed to meet the needs of all children during the transition.
- Develop and support both ECE and elementary school leaders to become more knowledgeable about early development and learning and to intentionally build connections between the ECE and PreK-12 systems. One example of this would be to enact the provision in Colorado’s ESSA plan to create and support a P-3 leadership cadre.
- Partner with the Early Childhood Councils, Family Resource Centers, and other community organizations to expand access to resources that improve the quality of informal and FFN settings.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Continue to prioritize resources that can be used to improve ECE programs’ ratings through Colorado Shines.
- Embed transition to kindergarten strategies as key aspects of high-quality ECE programs.
- Include information on successful transition practices in materials and training available to all licensed child care sites.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Within a “Ready Schools” definition, examine how the early grades (K-2) can be elevated within school and district accountability. If the quality of K-2 classrooms is included in the accountability system, transitions may become more important for elementary leaders and teachers.
- Provide guidance for districts and schools on how to best support principals and teachers in relation to the transition to kindergarten.

## SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Engage local organizations like the Early Childhood Council, Family Resource Center, institutions of higher education, and others to design and deliver shared professional learning opportunities for ECE and PreK-12 administrators and leaders.
- Support personnel from both ECE programs and PreK-12 systems to visit one another's sites. Engage in shared discussion about the similarities and differences in settings and ways to align what children and families experience as they transition to kindergarten.

## SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide professional learning to ECE program administrators that is focused on transitions to kindergarten and guiding them to better understand ways to collaborate with public schools.
- Invite kindergarten teachers and school administrators to visit ECE programs with high Colorado Shines ratings.

## SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide professional learning to ensure elementary school administrators have an understanding of foundational best practices in early childhood.
- Provide time and resources for administrators and teachers to visit ECE programs with high Colorado Shines ratings to better understand children's experiences in these settings.
- Invite ECE administrators and educators, from both formal and informal settings, to visit elementary schools and kindergarten classrooms.





## STRATEGY DEFINITION

Curriculum and instruction influence children's day-to-day classroom experiences. Creating and supporting ways for early childhood educators in both formal and informal settings, kindergarten teachers, and families to align their instructional strategies creates continuity for children and families.

### *Why This Matters*

The transition to kindergarten often means that children leave familiar, caring environments – in both formal and informal ECE settings – that are play-based and allow for more independent choice than the school environments they are entering. The transition to kindergarten means that children must adapt to new classroom that often have greater academic expectations and different daily routines. Research consistently demonstrates a lack of alignment between what children experience in classrooms in the year prior to kindergarten and in kindergarten (Vitiello, Pianta, et al., 2020). Creating smooth transitions to kindergarten requires attention to the classroom experiences – including both what is taught and how it is taught – and ensuring alignment across ECE and kindergarten.

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- District and ECE leaders identified curriculum alignment across ECE and elementary schools as a useful transition strategy.
- Some communities have developed transition toolkits that include instructional recommendations for supporting children with transitions, and ways teachers can share curricula and learning expectations with families of new kindergartners.
- ECE and PreK-12 educators report the value of lessons and instructional time for familiarizing children with elementary school environments, especially those that may be new for children such as school buses and cafeterias.
- With Colorado's expansion of full-day kindergarten, some communities expressed concern that more children may be moving from part-day, play-based settings into kindergarten classrooms that, due to accountability pressures, incorporate curriculum and instruction used in 1st grade classrooms 20 years ago. National research affirms this (Bassok et al., 2016).
- Colorado's READ Act has a significant impact on reading curriculum and instruction children experience upon entering kindergarten. In kindergarten, the READ Act requires schools to use scientifically and evidence-based literacy skill instruction.

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- The Minnesota Department of Education developed a video focused on how to support the kindergarten transition in classrooms including recommendations for how to be responsive to individual children's needs.
- While not required for other types of ECE programs or elementary schools, the curriculum and instruction approaches referenced in the HSPPS can help promote school readiness, children's initial adjustment to elementary school, and family's comfort and engagement with the transition process.

## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

The HSPPS include requirements for Head Start programs to use curriculum and instructional approaches that can promote a positive kindergarten transition experience for children and families. Using curriculum and instruction to support transitions is not referenced in K-12 policies or Colorado-specific policies.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	HSPPS	--
COLORADO	--	--

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Provide resources and tools to help ECE and kindergarten educators align curricula.
- Ensure recommended curricular programs, such as those on state advisory lists, complement children’s development.
- Provide guidance on best practices for planning meetings between ECE and kindergarten teachers that focus on curriculum and instructional practices.
- Provide recommendations for implementing culturally relevant curricula and instruction.
- Provide guidance on best practices for using transition-specific child-level records, transition plans, and assessment data to inform instruction.
- Provide guidance on using multiple sources of data – assessment data, informal and formal observations, and other evidence – to support differentiating transition supports for individual children.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide guidance on curricula available for ECE settings.
- Provide guidance on instructional practices appropriate for 3- and 4-year olds.
- Compile information that can be shared as examples of what quality curriculum and instruction look like in a variety of settings.
- Provide a guide that ECE settings can use to assess how their curriculum and instruction practices support successful transitions.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide professional learning and supports to kindergarten teachers and administrators that encourage play-based learning in kindergarten.
- To supplement existing recommendations for literacy, provide guidance and lists of evidence-based instructional and professional development programs for other elementary subjects and instructional approaches for kindergarten teachers.
- Provide resources for elementary principals on evidence-based curriculum and instructional approaches that align with children’s developmental needs in kindergarten.
- Develop resources to inform and educate ECE teachers and administrators about what literacy curriculum and instruction are like in kindergarten, and provide recommendations on developmentally and age-appropriate practices ECE educators can use to support children’s literacy skills prior to entering kindergarten.
- Develop a resource for school district administrators that outlines how Title II funds can be used to support joint professional learning between ECE and kindergarten teachers to collaborate on aligning instruction.





## LOCAL-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Align ECE and kindergarten curricula with state ELDGs and Academic Standards. Include opportunities for ECE and kindergarten teachers to observe each other's classrooms as part of alignment processes.
- Ensure ECE programs and elementary schools provide protected time for shared or aligned professional learning for educators in formal and informal ECE settings and kindergarten teachers to discuss implementing play-based instructional practices that scaffold depth of learning in content areas.
- Support the development and use of culturally and linguistically appropriate curricula and instructional practices that build on children's prior knowledge, individual learning styles, and incorporate oral traditions.
- Identify and curate resources for families on activities and materials they can use at home to support the transition process.
- Support principals and other school leaders, in collaboration with ECE programs, to develop multilingual and multicultural learning environments that embrace the assets families possess.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide resources and training on the use of formal and informal observational assessments to inform curriculum and instruction to support children's success in elementary school.
- Invite kindergarten teachers and elementary administrators to observe ECE settings that utilize the learning environment for developmentally informed instruction.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Ensure kindergarten educators are supported to implement aligned, developmentally appropriate, play-based, child-directed practices in kindergarten and early elementary.
- Provide teachers and staff with professional development around trauma-informed practices, and how to recognize and reduce bias.
- Ensure curricula includes a focus on children's social-emotional development.
- Ensure that curriculum and instructional plans support children who do not experience formal schooling prior to kindergarten. For example, ensure plans incorporate opportunities to learn foundational skills that children may not have been exposed to prior to kindergarten.

# Readiness Assessments – Children AND Schools/Programs

## STRATEGY DEFINITION

This strategy, in alignment with the earlier strategies related to standards, emphasizes the need for assessments of *both* children's learning and development *and* of elementary schools and ECE programs. Assessments are formal and informal measures that contribute to a deeper understanding of relative strengths and areas for growth. This strategy links the notion of Ready Children with Ready Schools and ECE Programs.

### *Why This Matters*

To understand the effectiveness of transition to kindergarten strategies, it is important to have data about *both* how children fare before, during, and after the transition *and* the quality of the learning opportunities and transition strategies provided by ECE programs and elementary schools. This combination of information will provide information that families, teachers, and administrators can use to provide individualized supports to children, as well as to continuously improve the organizational contexts that influence the transition to kindergarten.

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- ECE and K-12 leaders asked if more could be done at the state level to develop shared language around assessment and school readiness to create a foundation for the alignment of what the expectations are for children to be ready for kindergarten.
- School district leaders and state-level personnel highlighted that Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments included in Colorado's K-12 school accountability system begin in third grade, which may downplay the importance of quality of K-2 experiences and the kindergarten transition.
- School districts often use whole child assessments (e.g., TS GOLD) during ECE and at the beginning of kindergarten (Kindergarten School Readiness Assessment), then transition to academically focused assessments for the remainder of kindergarten.
- School district and ECE leaders expressed concerns about the validity of kindergarten readiness assessment results because children may not be comfortable in testing environments at the beginning of kindergarten and teachers may not have received proper training on test administration and data use.

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- Washington's Kindergarten Readiness System (WA-KIDS) does not isolate child assessment as the only metric. The system includes three components: an assessment of children's development; a requirement that preschool and kindergarten teachers meet together; and a family engagement strategy.

## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

At the state level, Colorado’s CAP4K policy requires the use of school readiness assessments aligned to elementary and secondary standards, and the READ Act requires schools to assess early literacy skills during the first 90 days of kindergarten. The HSPPS include technical assessment administration requirements for child-level assessments used in Head Start settings. CDE administers Results Matter, a statewide program that promotes the use of ongoing, observation-based assessment in ECE settings. OEC administers Colorado Shines, the state’s Quality Rating and Improvement System, which rates the quality of ECE programs.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	HSPPS	--
COLORADO	CAP4K, CO Shines/QRIS	CAP4K, READ Act

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

#### Ready Child Assessments:

- Provide guidance to better inform kindergarten educators on the assessment information they receive from ECE programs. This should include details that explain how kindergarten teachers can use assessment results to inform instruction and learning and how understanding developmental data can help guide learning in elementary settings.
- Identify appropriate assessment systems and methods, and provide resources for educators and families on how to understand and use assessment results. Review all assessments to ensure the tools and practices build upon children’s culture, language, learning styles, and individual strengths.
- Provide guidance on how to interpret assessment data for historically underserved populations, including

Colorado’s Native American population and multi-lingual learners, to eliminate potential bias and inaccurate identification of disabilities or special supports.

- Crosswalk commonly used ECE and kindergarten entry assessments such as TS GOLD with the Colorado Academic Standards for kindergarten and ELDGs.

#### Ready School Assessments:

- Design and implement Ready School and Ready ECE Program assessments to provide balance to the readiness equation. These assessments would examine the qualities of learning environments, teacher collaboration, engagement with families, across both ECE and PreK-12.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide suggestions on how to align assessments for ECE programs working with numerous schools and school districts who use different assessment products.
- Provide examples of how to share the results of a variety of assessment measures with kindergarten teachers.
- Provide guidance on how families can gather assessment information to share with their child’s kindergarten teacher.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide guidance on the connection between child-level records and information provided by ECE programs and kindergarten school readiness assessments.
- Provide supports and funds to engage PreK-12 administrators in learning about and reflecting on the readiness of their schools to support the learning and development of all young children.



## SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Ensure families are aware of what assessment data are being collected and how they will be used as part of the transition process.
- Provide opportunities for ECE and kindergarten teachers to participate in coordinated professional learning around best practices for assessment administration and designate an agreed upon process for collaborative data discussions.
- Provide teachers with professional learning on how to use data from formative, observation-based, and authentic assessments to guide instruction, curricula, planning, and professional learning.
- Engage ECE staff and kindergarten teachers in the development of individual school readiness and READ plans.

## SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide teachers with a process for documenting the results of the variety of formal and informal assessments routinely used that can be shared with kindergarten teachers.
- Incorporate families' observations of their children's development and learning in understanding assessment results. Communicate families' perspectives to kindergarten teachers.

## SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide professional supports for teachers to use the assessment information provided by the ECE program to inform next steps for each student.
- Provide kindergarten teachers with time to review assessment data with ECE partners.
- Provide guidance on how to use end of year assessment data provided by the ECE program as part of a school readiness assessment process.



# Site- and Systems-level Plans

## STRATEGY DEFINITION

Site- and systems-level plans are strategic, improvement, and coordination plans developed by ECE programs, elementary schools, school districts, local communities, and/or states that include explicit attention to transitions to kindergarten and provide practical, meaningful benchmarks for collaboration between sending and receiving sides. Related to transitions to kindergarten, a defining feature of these plans is their co-construction that includes both sending/ECE and receiving/K-12 sides.

### Why This Matters

Written, co-constructed plans can provide the mechanism to develop shared understanding, language, and buy-in from both ECE and K-12. Policy levers such as requirements for formal agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between ECE and K-12 providers may not routinely result in meaningful collaboration (Cook et al., 2019). To address this, regulations that require evidence of collaboration (such as MOUs) should be coupled with explicit strategies and supports that engage ECE and kindergarten teachers and administrators in regular, face-to-face interactions to discuss, design, implement and continuously improve collaboration practices. When frequent coordination and communication exist between preschool personnel and elementary school personnel, it was because of conscious decision-making (Purtell et al., 2020).

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- Colorado ECE and PreK-12 leaders report limited coordination and collaboration between ECE programs and elementary schools. Many district personnel are unaware of formal agreements or plans between ECE providers and school districts. Additionally, school district personnel report challenges coordinating with community-based providers.
- As a federal program, Head Start has a clear focus on transition, partnering with families, and sharing information with elementary schools. Local success often hinges on the extent to which school districts are receptive to these efforts.
- Legislation requires some ECE programs to collaborate with school districts (e.g., HSA, CPP), however state agencies do not emphasize that school districts engage with ECE programs. The overwhelming perception from state-level key informants was that the PreK-12 system is not required to engage with community providers.
- State-level interviewees highlighted policy barriers to supporting transitions included a lack of consistency across policies, existing inequities such as not reaching underserved communities, bureaucratic hurdles, lack of resources, and accountability systems.

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- The National Head Start Association and Council of Chief State School Officers created a toolkit that provides information and resources for state agencies, school districts, Head Start, and other ECE programs to establish shared system-level plans.
- The Illinois State Board of Education provides a list of suggested transition plan elements for programs to implement over the course of the entire year prior to kindergarten.
- The New York State Education Department provides a self-assessment tool for school districts to identify strengths, challenges, and next steps with transition plans and strategies.



## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

Inter-agency, collaborative plans are one of the most frequently required transition strategies in Colorado and federal policies. The HSA requires Head Start agencies to coordinate transition practices and other services with any school districts into which children transition. To strengthen this, ESSA requires school districts receiving Title I funds to develop agreements with Head Start and other ECE programs to increase coordination around transitions.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	HSA, HSPPS	ESSA
COLORADO	CO Shines/QRIS, CPP	Colorado's ESSA Plan, SB 17-103

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Ensure that all state-level policy documents and strategic plans explicitly name the important roles and responsibilities of both ECE providers and PreK-12 school districts in supporting transitions to kindergarten.
- Provide guidance on how to engage families in the development of MOUs and other cross-sector plans.
- Ensure that sub-populations of children are explicitly addressed in plans. For example, ensure Migrant Education staff in both local ECE programs and PreK-12 school districts are engaged in developing plans.
- Provide resources, funds, technical assistance, and other incentives for community-based teams of ECE programs and PreK-12 systems to develop site- and systems-level plans. Ensure elementary principals and district leaders are part of these efforts.
- Highlight exemplar communities that have engaged in cross-program and cross-agency planning efforts.
- Using the policy inventory in this report, state agencies responsible for sending and receiving systems could collaborate to examine all existing planning requirements with the goal of streamlining, simplifying, and aligning.
- Support local EC Councils or other local entities with funds and supports to engage in cross-sector planning.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- As DEC works to align different ECE programs and funding streams, effort should be invested in establishing a unified approach to transitions to kindergarten, and be embedded in policies related to Universal Preschool, CCDBG, Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. Collaborating with CDE to ensure alignment with Preschool Special Education will also be important.
- Provide guidance on how to use public funds (e.g., Universal Preschool, CCDBG, Head Start, IDEA, ESSA's Title I and II) to support collaborative planning between ECE programs/teachers and elementary schools/kindergarten teachers to support transitions.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide guidance, resources, funds, and other incentives for school districts to embed collaborative transitions to kindergarten strategies that engage ECE programs in their district and school improvement plans.
- Encourage school districts to identify supports they need to improve transition practices as part of early learning needs assessments and improvement plans.
- Consider data on access gaps for ECE services, particularly for children with unique developmental and learning needs, when identifying school districts with the greatest need for improvement funds.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE (CONT'D)

- Identify strategies that will encourage and support ECE programs to proactively engage in collaboration and coordination with elementary schools.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE (CONT'D)

- Develop guidance and example MOUs to support school district compliance with ESSA and effectively plan and coordinate relationship-based collaborations with Head Start and other ECE programs to support the kindergarten transition.

## LOCAL-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Include community-based agencies and groups, such as EC Councils and Family Resource Centers, in the development and implementation of plans. This can be particularly helpful in supporting families that have been historically underserved by the education system.
- Build awareness of the importance of kindergarten transition for elementary school leaders, teachers, and staff by emphasizing the goals, purpose, and/or vision articulated in site- and systems-level plans.
- Develop an MOU between ECE programs and school districts to support collaboration across sectors.
- Establish primary points of contact within both ECE programs and elementary schools/districts to develop plans for supporting the transition to kindergarten.
- Create a process to routinely review and revise transition plans with collaborative teams of stakeholders.
- Recognize and develop a system for outreach to informal and FFN care providers to inform them of transition-related activities throughout the year.
- Include a communication timeline in planning documents that specifies what transition information will be shared, who is responsible for sharing it, when the information will be shared with families.
- Promote collaboration and coordination between ECE programs, particularly community-based programs, and elementary schools. Joint professional development is one way to do this.
- Make shared work time and space a priority for ECE, district, and school and leaders, and teachers. Protect release time and ensure substitute teachers are available.
- In planning documents, prioritize hiring teachers and leaders from the communities served. For example, include priorities for hiring early education teachers who speak children's home languages and share cultural backgrounds.
- Highlight the roles local EC Councils can play in supporting and implementing kindergarten transition practices, forming meaningful cross-sector relationships, and developing plans.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Prioritize outreach and enrollment practices for children from historically underserved populations, including children from families experiencing homelessness.
- Identify differentiated strategies for formal and informal, community- and school-based, and urban and rural ECE programs that will enhance each program's relationships with elementary schools.
- Identify and connect with the lead transition coordinator within the school district and elementary schools children will attend.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Designate school district personnel to coordinate on-going meetings with Migrant Education, Head Start, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start personnel focused on how they can work together to support children and families in migrant and seasonal communities with the transition to kindergarten process.
- Include information about the federal guidelines for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and contact information for school district liaisons on all district and school kindergarten registration forms.





## STRATEGY DEFINITION

Systematic procedures for sharing data and information about children and families is a key mechanism for communicating children's progress and readiness as they transition into kindergarten. While individual ECE programs and elementary schools may engage in data-sharing practices, a statewide Ready System would establish integrated data systems that link assessment data from ECE to elementary data. An early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS) collects, integrates, maintains, stores, and reports information from early childhood programs across multiple agencies within a state that serve children and families from birth to age 8.

### *Why This Matters*

The broad purpose of an ECIDS is to provide integrated, cross-program data that inform decisions about early childhood policies, services, and education. An ECIDS may or may not be part of a state's broader statewide longitudinal data system. Alignment efforts that include sharing data and information between ECE programs and kindergarten can help to inform instruction, organizational improvement efforts, and an overall understanding of how the state supports young children as they transition across programs and services.

## COLORADO PERSPECTIVES

- ECE programs use many data systems, which often vary by program type (e.g., Head Start, CPP), and these data are infrequently shared with elementary schools. In addition, elementary educators often do not utilize the data that ECE programs share.
- Colorado's PDG B-5 Needs Assessment highlighted the need for greater data sharing and integration both within the ECE system (among different programs) and across ECE and PreK-12.
- Except for ECE programs administered by CDE, Colorado currently lacks a common student identifier that facilitates a longitudinal data system. As the state transitions to a new DEC and Universal Preschool, the state will need to examine how to link data across DEC and CDE.
- Assessments used by ECE (e.g., Results Matter) and elementary educators (e.g., Kindergarten School Readiness) are sometimes, but not always, the same. No matter which assessment tools are used, elementary educators often cannot access children's preschool records unless someone physically hands them over.
- ECE and school district leaders identified the important role EC Councils can play in facilitating information sharing between the B-5 and PreK-12 systems.

## EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION STRATEGY IN ACTION

- As part of planning for the new Department of Early Childhood, Colorado convened a Transition Advisory Group on Data, Innovation, Technology, and Accountability subgroup. This work builds on that of ECLC's Data subcommittee. Among the resources emerging from these efforts are recommendations focused on an ECIDS (LeBoeuf, 2021).



## RELEVANT FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

Aligned requirements in HSA and ESSA mandate that Head Start agencies and LEAs accepting Title I funds create comprehensive transition plans, commonly called MOUs, that include data sharing and records transfer plans. HSPPS include provisions for using data to refine school readiness goals. Specific to the receiving side, Colorado’s CAP4K requires elementary schools to report readiness assessment data that is warehoused by the state. Although not part of the policy review for this project, HB08-1364 put in place legislative language related to cross-departmental data interoperability.

	ECE	K-12
FEDERAL	HSA, HSPPS	ESSA
COLORADO	CAP4K	CAP4K

## STATE-LEVEL ROADWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

### SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Ensure that data-sharing that supports transitions to kindergarten is included as the state considers “what do we need to know, what knowledge are we missing, and who needs it?”
- As data systems are designed, ensure that the unique characteristics of children and families (e.g., home language, culture) can be captured in order to ensure equitable access to services.
- Develop an ECIDS that effectively links child-level data between ECE programs and PreK-12 school districts.
- Identify ways to collect information consistently and thoughtfully on the housing status of children and families.<sup>1</sup>
- Provide ECE and kindergarten educators with a system and professional supports for sharing child assessment and other data.

### SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide suggestions on how ECE programs that transition children into multiple elementary schools or districts can align and share data efficiently and effectively.
- Provide ECE programs and families information on how to identify and share data they have that will improve the transition process.
- Provide information to ECE providers on how to find data on the kindergarten(s) their children will attend.

### SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Provide guidance for elementary schools and districts on how to align assessment and data collection systems with ECE programs.
- Provide guidance on the connection between data provided by ECE programs and school readiness assessments and early literacy measures.

<sup>1</sup> CDE is unable to support recommendations not aligned to SBE positions on data collection and use.

## SHARED/CROSS-SECTOR

- Formalize data sharing agreements between ECE providers and school districts to help ensure data are shared for all children.
- Create simple and easily accessible methods for sending and receiving teams to document information, data, and meetings throughout the transition process.
- Use shared data to understand how families are utilizing community services and where more targeted outreach and advocacy is needed.
- Gather feedback from teachers, administrators, and families to determine how best to share information and data with an emphasis on whole child development.

## SPECIFIC TO ECE/SENDING SIDE

- Provide information to families on the different kinds of assessments children will experience in kindergarten and support families to actively engage with kindergarten teachers about these data.
- Work with kindergarten teachers and administrators to learn which data they most want to see and show them the types of data collected by ECE programs.

## SPECIFIC TO K-12/RECEIVING SIDE

- Collect data on the number of children experiencing homelessness in the district and potential barriers that are preventing families from accessing services and support.
- Use data transmitted from ECE providers to begin or continue intervention services as soon as possible.
- Use a common database for data transmitted from ECE providers and provide professional supports for kindergarten teachers and administrators on how to use this data.
- Include the Colorado Migrant Occupational survey in the general kindergarten registration process and share information with Migrant Education Program staff at CDE to identify children eligible for Migrant Education support and services.



# Overall Recommendations and Conclusion

With Colorado's recent historic investments in both Universal Preschool and Full-Day Kindergarten, as well as the creation of a new Department of Early Childhood, the opportunity to elevate the importance of, and create systemic supports for, transitions to kindergarten has never been greater. Informed by systematic engagement with Colorado's ECE, PreK-12, and community leaders at state and local levels, in addition to reviews of policies and practices, this Roadmap provides multiple paths to strengthen transitions to kindergarten in the state.

Notably, this Roadmap emphasizes that effective transitions require attention to Ready Families, Ready Children, Ready Schools and ECE Programs, and Ready Systems. This Roadmap provides recommendations both big and small, at state and local levels, and with implications for policy and practice. The rich array of perspectives and policy contexts presented in this Roadmap point to several high-level conclusions:

1. By improving policies and providing resources on best practices, state leaders can promote stronger engagement with families as essential partners in the transition to kindergarten.
2. Alignment of policies and practices across different types of ECE programs (e.g., Head Start, CPP, Preschool Special Education, the yet-to-be-launched Universal Preschool Program, and FFN care) can simplify transition to kindergarten plans, processes, and practices, especially for elementary schools and districts.
3. Aligned policies and practices between ECE ("sending") and PreK-12 ("receiving") systems can promote smoother experiences for children and families, as well as teachers and administrators responsible for implementing transition plans.
4. State agencies and non-governmental partners can play a pivotal role in supporting meaningful cross-sector systems building efforts focused on the kindergarten transition through collaboration, coordination, and engagement in alignment activities.
5. By highlighting the important roles of the ECE and PreK-12 systems in the kindergarten transition, leaders at state and local levels can better understand their role in influencing and enacting strategies to support the kindergarten transition.
6. Strong partnerships between state and local entities can make the transition to kindergarten effective in all communities across the state, while also ensuring they are culturally and linguistically responsive to local contexts.

# References and Appendices

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# Appendix A: Federal and State Transition-related Policy Synthesis

Based on a comprehensive document review, this synthesis organizes the strategies, personnel supports, and outcomes referenced in federal and state policies relating to the transition to kindergarten. Three main questions frame this summary:

What transition to kindergarten practices exist in state and federal policy? Are the transition practices intended to be implemented by sending or receiving systems, or both?

What personnel supports, and organizational and system building strategies do transition-related policies reference? What referenced personnel supports and strategies are intended to be implemented by sending and receiving systems?

What family and caregiver, and child-level, outcomes are referenced in transition policies? What outcomes are referenced in ECE policies (sending)? What outcomes are referenced in K-12 policies (receiving)?

### Step 1 Federal and State Policy Scans:

Federal and state policies were scanned for references to the transition to kindergarten. We searched policies listed below for the terms ‘transition,’ ‘school readiness,’ ‘kindergarten

readiness,’ and other related terms. Policy references were retained if they aligned with the definition of transition to kindergarten highlighted in this document.

**Step 2 Policy Coding:** Policy references captured in Step 1 were categorized based on references to transition-related strategies, personnel supports, organizational and systems strategies, and outcomes. Each reference was also coded as *sending*, *receiving*, or *both* depending on which system was intended to implement the policy.

**Step 3 Policy Synthesis:** The final step synthesized transition to kindergarten policy references in Table A2 to address the three framing questions. Transition to kindergarten practices are highlighted in the top row. The checkmarks cross-reference the policy language with strategies and related outcomes. Further, each checkmark is color-coded to allow the reader to match checkmarks to specific policies which are listed in the bottom row. For example, transition-related assessment practices are referenced in the fifth column and the color-coded checkmarks relate to CAP4K and the HSPPS. The last column permits the reader to cross-reference policies with transition to kindergarten strategies and outcomes.

**TABLE A1. POLICIES INCLUDED IN FEDERAL AND STATE SYNTHESIS**

FEDERAL POLICIES SCANNED	COLORADO POLICIES SCANNED
Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) Head Start Act (HSA) Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Colorado’s Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K) Colorado’s ESSA Plan Colorado Preschool Program Policy Documents (CPP; Handbook, Rules, CO Revised Statutes 22-28-109) Colorado Senate Bill 17-103 (SB 17-103) Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System (CO Shines/QRIS; Rating Criteria, CO Revised Statutes 26-6.5-106)
* We also searched the General Rules and Regulations for Non-Home Child Care Providers and found no specific references to the transition to kindergarten in this licensure policy. * The Results Matter Handbook was also scanned. It was not included in this policy synthesis because it is an initiative authorized by policy (IDEA and CPP), not a state policy in the traditional sense.	

**TABLE A2. DOCUMENT SYNTHESIS OF COLORADO AND FEDERAL POLICIES RELATED TO TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN**

Transition to Kindergarten Practices	Site- and Systems-level Plans	Standards	Curriculum & Instruction	Assessments	Child-level Learning Plans	Additional Child & Family Services	
Personnel Supports, Organizational Strategies, Systems Building Strategies							Policies w/ Support References
Personnel Supports (e.g., professional learning, coaching)	PP	PP	P	P	P	P	CAP4K <sup>B</sup> , CO ESSA Plan <sup>B</sup> , CCDBG <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>
Within Organizational Strategies (e.g., QRIS, governance, operations)	P	PP				P	CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>
Cross-Sector Systems Building Strategies (e.g., MOUs, joint PD, data sharing agreements)	PPPPP				PPP		CO ESSA Plan <sup>B</sup> , CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , CPP <sup>SB</sup> , ESSA <sup>RB</sup> , HSA <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup> , IDEA <sup>B</sup>
Outcomes							Policies w/ Outcome References
Family Comfort w/ Transition Processes and Logistics	PPP		P			PP	CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , ESSA <sup>R</sup> , HSA <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>
Family Collaboration w/ Educators	PPP				PP		CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , ESSA <sup>R</sup> , HSA <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>
Family Involvement with Programs and Schools						PP	HSA <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>
Child Initial School Adjustment	PPP	P	P			PP	CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , ESSA <sup>R</sup> , CCDBG <sup>S</sup> , HSA <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>
Child Outcomes (not school readiness)	PP	P			PPP		CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , CPP <sup>SB</sup> , SB 17-103 <sup>R</sup> , CCDBG <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup> , IDEA <sup>B</sup>
School Readiness (Child, Program, and School Outcomes)	PP	PP	P	PP	P	P	CAP4K <sup>B</sup> , CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>
<b>Policies w/ Transition Practice References</b>	CO ESSA Plan <sup>B</sup> , CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , CPP <sup>SB</sup> , SB 17-103 <sup>R</sup> , ESSA <sup>RB</sup> , HSA <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>	CAP4K <sup>B</sup> , CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , CCDBG <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>	HSPPS <sup>S</sup>	CAP4K <sup>B</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>	CAP4K <sup>B</sup> , CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , CPP <sup>SB</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup> , IDEA <sup>B</sup>	CO Shines/QRIS <sup>S</sup> , HSA <sup>S</sup> , HSPPS <sup>S</sup>	

*Notes.* Ps indicate # of policies that reference strategy and outcome. <sup>S</sup> = Sending agency responsible for policy implementation. <sup>R</sup> = Receiving agency responsible for policy implementation. <sup>B</sup> = Both sending and receiving agencies responsible for policy implementation. See Step 3 for an explanation of this table.

## Appendix B: Role-alike and Community Convenings

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**Role-Alike Convenings:** The purpose of the role-alike convenings was to provide an opportunity for individuals with similar roles or responsibilities from various agencies or programs serving similar populations of children and families to engage in open dialogue about issues, solutions, and resources needed to support effective and equitable transitions to kindergarten. The convenings gathered specific perspectives of professionals who primarily support “special populations” or sub-groups of children in Colorado who have been historically marginalized. Organizations that serve these specific populations were invited to participate in a series of four role-alike convenings that were hosted virtually between the end of September through the end of October 2020.

**Community Convenings:** In February 2020, the OEC hosted the *Building Bridges Transition Summit* in partnership with the CDE’s P-3 Office. Following a competitive application process, eight community-based teams from across the state were invited to participate in this two-day event. The purpose of the Summit was “to bring together inclusive community teams who are representative of sending and receiving programs, services and learning environments to better equip them to support children and families through transition.” Because of COVID-19, there had been no explicit follow-up with teams who participated in the Summit. However, as the National P-3 Center began outreach to the field in September 2020, these communities were a logical starting point to engage in deeper discussion about their successes and challenges related to community-wide transition plans. Subsequently, six community convenings were held between November 2020 and January 2021.

## Appendix C: District Focus Groups

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The National P-3 Center hosted focus groups with school districts across the state to learn more about the opportunities, needs, and challenges related to the transition to kindergarten. School district representatives were targeted because of their under-representation in Community Convenings hosted from November 2020 – January 2021. Three focus groups were held on March 30 and April 1, 2021 using a facilitation protocol co-developed with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and approved by the Educational Data Advisory Committee (EDAC). CDE supported recruitment and the final set of participants were from seven school

districts located in five regions in Colorado (there are a total of eight regions in the state). District contexts varied with participants from urban-suburban areas, outlying cities and towns, and remote communities. Districts also varied in size with participants from small districts (< 1,000 students), a participant from a district with roughly 2,000 children, and participants from medium to large sized districts ranging from 16,000 to over 60,000 students. Participants had a variety of job titles including early childhood administrators or directors, elementary principals, readiness coordinator, and literacy director.



## Appendix D: Interviews with State Agency and Non-Governmental Partner Key Informants

The National P-3 Center contracted The Evaluation Center at the University of Colorado Denver to conduct interviews with key informants from state agencies and nongovernmental organizations engaged in supporting transitions to kindergarten for children and families across the state of Colorado. In collaboration with OEC and CDE representatives, a list of 40 potential interviewees were sent an initial invite, and 36 completed interviews between August and September 2021. The agencies and

organizations represented by the interviewees are highlighted in Table D1. Interview notes were coded for key themes including interviewees roles in relation to the transition to kindergarten, who they believed were the effective messengers for kindergarten transitions, perception of current policies and policy barriers, and their ideas on an optimal system for supporting kindergarten transition strategies.

**TABLE D1. STATE AGENCY AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED BY INTERVIEWEES**

STATE AGENCIES	NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Office of Early Childhood (OEC) within the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Governor’s Office	Early Childhood Councils Leadership Alliance Early Childhood Leadership Commission Early Connections Learning Centers Early Milestones Colorado Family Resource Center Association Invest in Kids Mile High Early Learning Parent Possible

## Appendix E: Review of Other States’ and National Organizations’ Transition-Related Efforts

Over the course of 2020 and 2021, the National P-3 Center reviewed the guidance on transition to kindergarten from over 30 states, the District of Columbia and national organizations (e.g., Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, Council of Chief State School Officers). Staff reviewed websites, documents, videos, and tools. Content, as well as examples of presentation and distribution of information on successful policies and strategies, were analyzed and summarized based on the questions:

- What is in transition plans?
- How was the plan developed?
- What does success look like for children, families, schools, and community partners? What supports are necessary at the state and local level?
- What policies did they identify as supports or barriers to successful transitions?

Information from this review is embedded in examples and recommendations throughout this document.

Thank you for joining! We will begin shortly.

# ECLC

*Early Childhood Leadership Commission*

February 24, 2022

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

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](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/eclc-meeting-information) ●

# Meeting Objectives

- Approve the January 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Discuss Department of Early Childhood & Universal Preschool Implementation Updates
- Provide feedback on Preschool Development Grant Progress
- Consider endorsements of the Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework and the Transitions to Kindergarten Roadmap
- Remind stakeholders about the *Our Voice* newsletter and opportunities to share information
- Evaluate recent and upcoming work of ECLC Subcommittees
- Learn about State Agency Legislative Updates
- Hear comments from the Early Childhood Community

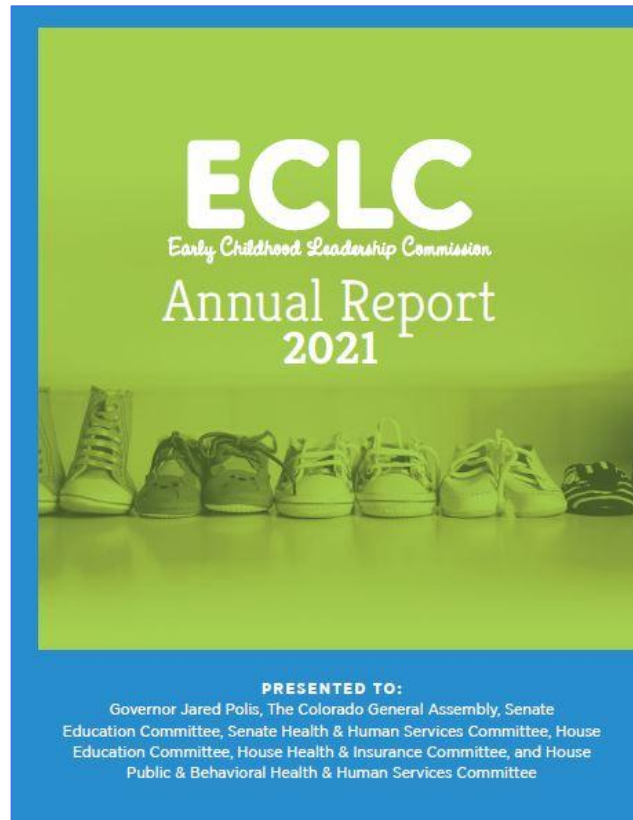


# Welcome, Introductions and Approve Minutes

Pamela Harris



# Business Meeting



## 2021 ECLC Annual Report

### Message from Governor Polis



Department of Early Childhood &  
Universal Preschool Implementation Updates  
Michael Cooke & Tova Cohen



**COLORADO**

**Department of Early Childhood**

# **Department of Early Childhood Updates from the Transition Team**

February 2022

# Actualizing the CDEC and UPK recommendations

**Stakeholder  
Meetings**

**Interagency  
Working Groups**

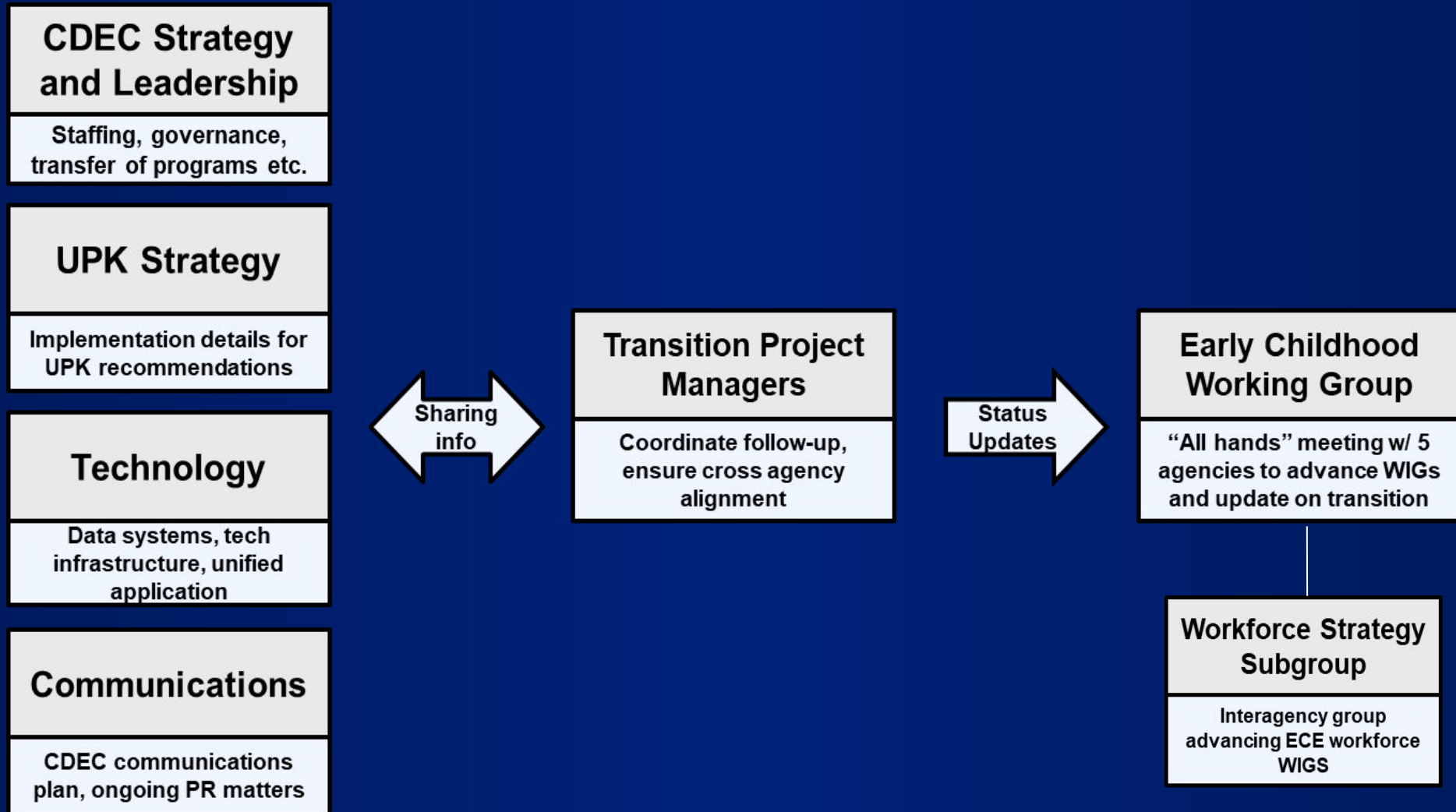
**Upcoming  
Legislation**



**July 1, 2022: Launch of the Department of Early Childhood**



# Interagency Working Groups



## HB22-1197

Moves procedural launch date\*

Funds 6 CDEC positions beginning April 1

Funds common application build

## THE BIG BILL



Operationalizes CDEC



Implements Universal Preschool



Aligns funding streams

*\*The transition to CDEC and launch of its programs and services will begin July 1, 2022, as initially planned*

# Local Coordinators for Universal Preschool



## CO's Department of Early Childhood Launches Soon!

The Transition Team wants to hear from YOU

[CLICK TO REQUEST A MEETING](#)

Does your organization or community have questions or thoughts about the transition to the Department of Early Childhood? Click to request a session on any of the following topics:

- Updates on the transition process to CDEC and UPK
- Provide feedback on the transition
- Legislative updates (as available)



**COLORADO**  
Department of Early Childhood





[View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Revisions](#) [Clone](#) [Usage](#)

The Department of Early Childhood will launch July 1, 2022. This page serves as a resource for information related to the transition to the new Department in advance of the launch. Until the Department of Early Childhood opens, please continue to use the [Office of Early Childhood Website](#) for early childhood related services and the [CDE Preschool through 3rd grade website](#) for early childhood and preschool related services.

[Office of Early Childhood](#)

[Dept. of Education P-3](#)

## Mission

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood ensures the delivery of a comprehensive, community-informed, data-driven, 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.

# THANK YOU!

Keep in touch!

[m.michael.cooke@state.co.us](mailto:m.michael.cooke@state.co.us)

[tova.cohen@state.co.us](mailto:tova.cohen@state.co.us)



## Legislative Updates

Bill Jaeger - Colorado Children's Campaign



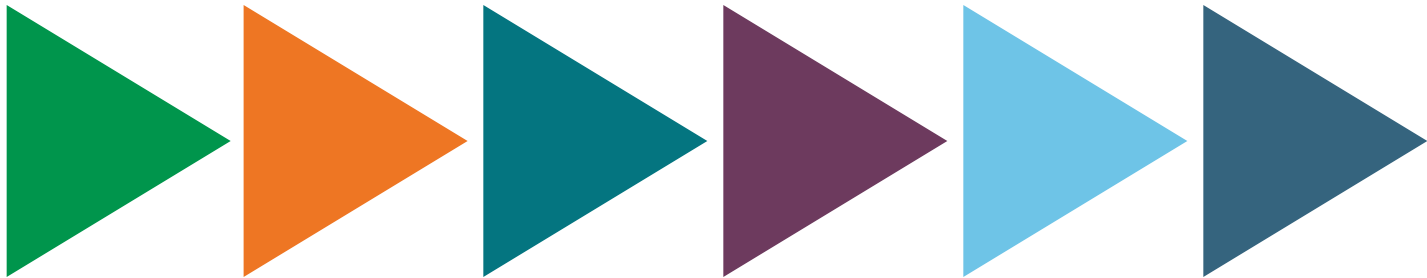
# Preschool Development Grant Progress Update

Lindsey Dorneman

# COLORADO SHINES BRIGHTER

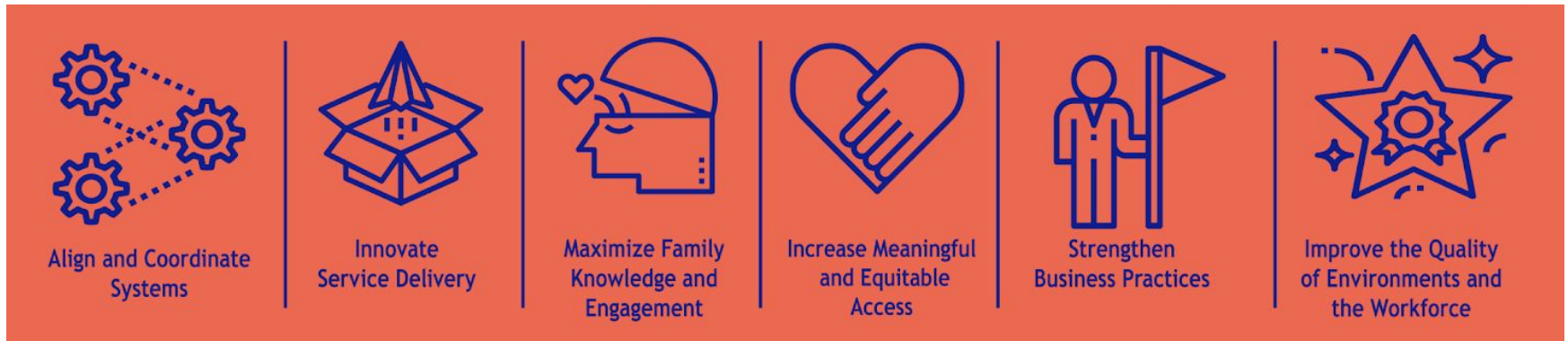
Ensuring all Colorado children  
are ready for school when  
entering kindergarten

*February 24, 2022*





# PDG B-5 Goals and Outcomes



- ✓ Colorado families have access to quality formal early care and education settings of their choosing which best meet the need of their child and family, especially those who are vulnerable and infants and toddlers.
- ✓ Informal early care and education environments are enhanced to enrich and support children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- ✓ Colorado's birth through five early childhood state system is coordinated and aligned to enhance the resources available to families and to improve the quality of relationships among families, caregivers and children.



# Project Resources

- Strategic Plan ([2021 Updates](#))
  - At-A-Glance in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- [2021 Evaluation Report](#)
  - Implementation Progress (through Q3)
  - Partnerships (System Alignment)
  - 2020 Cost Evaluation
- [Mid-project Infographic \(August 2021\)](#)



# PDG B-5 Progress Summary

## Colorado Shines Brighter Birth Through Five Strategic Plan 2020-2025

### ► Preschool Development Grant Strategy Progress Updated February 2022

The Colorado Shines Brighter Birth through Five Strategic Plan goals and objectives are aligned with the Early Childhood Colorado Framework. This alignment is indicated by the following Framework system icons:



State and Local Systems



Environment



Relationships

Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five grantees are expected to sustain key elements of the grant project which have been effective in improving practices and outcomes. The following icons identify strategies that will be maintained or expanded beyond the PDG B-5 project period through other funding sources and strategies that align with Department of Early Childhood and Universal Preschool Program recommendations:



Sustainability





Aligned with Department of Early Childhood and Universal PreK Recommendations

## Goal 1: ALIGN AND COORDINATE SYSTEMS



### OBJECTIVE 1.1: Make Data Informed Decisions

STRATEGY	2020 MILESTONES	2021 MILESTONES	2022 ACTIVITIES
<p>1.1.1 <b>IT Solutions Roadmap.</b> Implement the Office of Early Childhood's <a href="#">Information Technology Solutions Roadmap</a> through a multi-phase plan that: supports collaboration and communication; standardizes design for accessibility and usability; and provides transparency and security for publicly available data.</p>  	<p>The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Division of Early Care and Learning completed the Salesforce Lightning Migration project and launched updates to the Child Care Provider Portal. The OEC Division of Community and Family Support systems completed a series of enhancements including changes to the early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) database and the development of a new, online ECMHC referral form.</p>	<p>The OEC completed enhancements to the ECE provider portal, rebuilt and launched the new Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System in English and Spanish, modified CHATS to support the implementation of slot contracts, and updated the ECMH database. Work was initiated on enhancements to the child care licensing system (CCCLS) as well as improved offline and mobile functionality for Division of Community &amp; Family Support systems.</p>	<p>Finish enhancements initiated in 2021 and complete an update to the Early Intervention data system to improve Medicaid billing functionality. Engage a vendor to develop a 2022 Information Technology Solutions Roadmap, updating the 2019 Roadmap and reflecting new business needs resulting from the creation of the Department of Early Childhood.</p>

# 2022 Focus

- Align work to the new Department of Early Childhood and universal preschool program
  - Maintain or Expand PDG B-5 Investments
    - State Policy & Budget
      - Department of Early Childhood
      - Universal Preschool Program
    - Federal Funding
      - Stimulus, new grants
      - Ongoing federal funding (e.g., CCDF)
- \*\*Not all strategies require sustained resources*



# Questions? Future Presentations?

Thank you!

Lindsey Dorneman  
*Preschool Development Grant B-5 Director*  
*Office of Early Childhood, CDHS*  
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[Sign up for our newsletter!](#)

This project is supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative, Grant Number 90TP0054, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.





# Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework

Amanda Culbertson & Carrie Germeroth





February 24, 2022

# Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework

Early Childhood  
Leadership Commission

*“This project was made possible by grant number 90TP0054. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.”*

# Purpose

**3.3.1 Parent & Stakeholder Engagement. The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) will continue to engage with the CDHS Family Voice Council, Head Start Collaboration Office, Colorado Head Start Association, and state and local family and caregiver networks to support ongoing family engagement and leadership.**

- Colorado Shines Brighter Needs Assessment:
  - Provide more equitable and relevant care
  - Centralize and increase parent and caregiver access to early childhood information
- Develop a framework through a collaborative effort to combine research and best practices to provide resources integrating family engagement into early childhood systems and programs
- The purpose of the Family Engagement Framework is to define, align and identify important family engagement concepts to be applied across early childhood sectors and agencies
- The framework is intended for agencies and organizations across the early childhood sectors

# Key Activities

Collect international, national, and local family engagement frameworks

Analyze frameworks for alignment with Early Childhood Colorado Framework and literature review on best practices to identify commonalities and gaps

Collect stakeholder input and feedback on draft Framework

Conduct a literature review and review of national best practices

Develop family engagement framework based on analysis

Finalize Framework for design and translation

# Family Engagement Resources

## Examples

- 102 resources were reviewed for alignment with the purpose and intent of the family engagement framework.
- 59 resources from 49 different organizations were coded and analyzed to inform the development of the framework.

### International

- **Ontario, Canada** (Quality Standard for Family Engagement)
- **Queensland, Australia** (Advancing Partnerships – Parent and Community Engagement Framework)
- **South Australia** (Parent Engagement Framework: Building Strong Parent-School Partnerships to Support Learning Outcomes for Children and Young People)

### National

- **Head Start** (Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework)
- **Center for the Study of Social Policy** (Protective Factors Framework)
- **National Center for Cultural Competence** (A Guide for Advancing Family-Centered and Culturally and Linguistically Competent Care)

### State

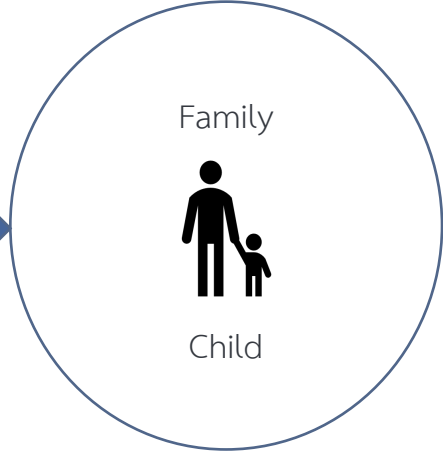
- **Colorado** (Family School and Community Partnerships (FSCP) P-12 Framework)
- **California** (Family Engagement Toolkit: Continuous Improvement through an Equity Lens)
- **Michigan** (MiFamily: Michigan's Family Engagement Framework)

### Local or Regional

- **Adams County (CO)** (Family Engagement and Leadership Framework)
- **Alameda County (CA)** (Family Engagement Toolkit for Providers and Program Leaders)
- **Pacific Region** (Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners)



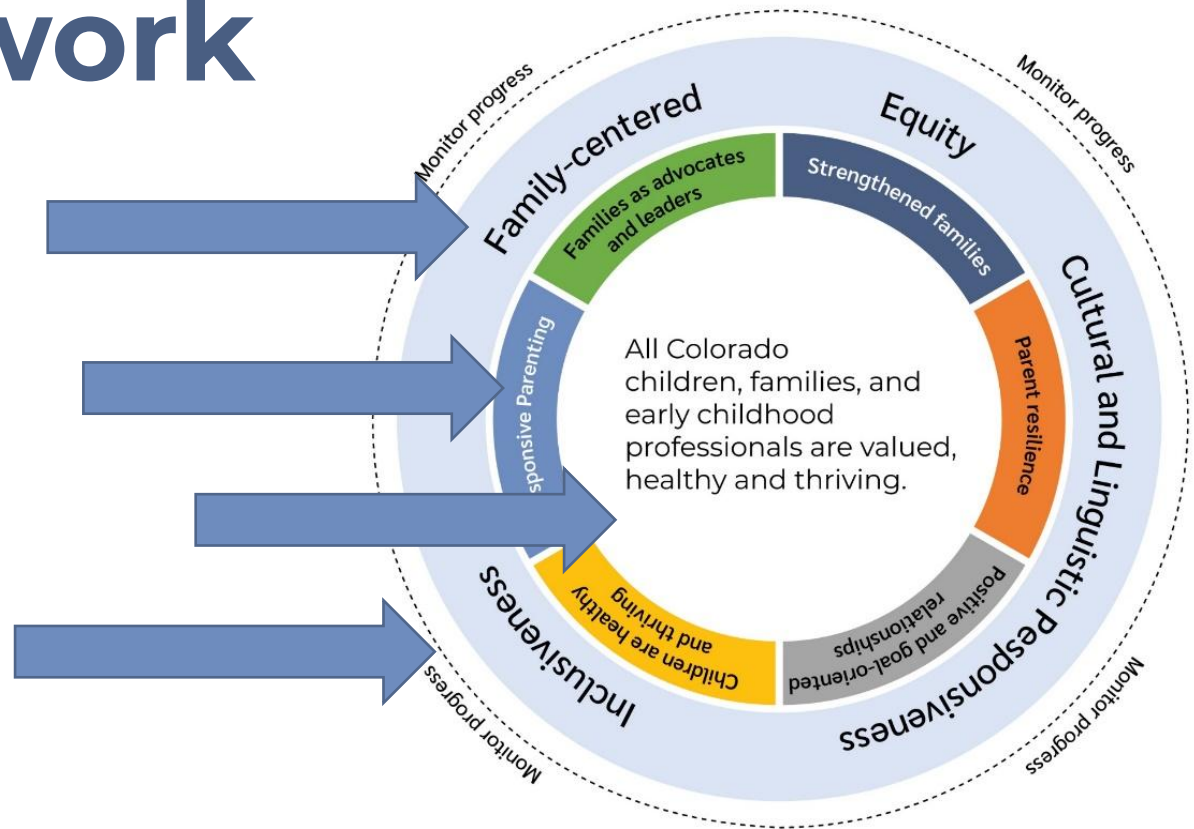
# Alignment with CO Early Childhood Framework



# CO EC Family Engagement Framework

Not actual design

- Designed Framework collateral will include narrative introducing the Framework
- Descriptions and examples for the Principles, Outcomes, and Principles in action



# Next steps

- Preparing for graphic design
- Planning Spanish translation of materials
- Upcoming dissemination events
  - Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Conference virtual presentation
    - March 4, 9-10am
  - Parent Possible Home Visiting Conference (in-person)
    - April 7, 9-10:15am Spanish and 2-3:15pm English

# Consider Endorsement of Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework

# Thank you!

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# Thank You

Please visit our website and follow us on twitter for more information about our research and access to our many free resources.

Or contact us

@MarzanoResearch

[www.MarzanoResearch.com](http://www.MarzanoResearch.com)

720.463.3600



# Transitions to Kindergarten Roadmap

Kristie Kauerz


# Transitions to Kindergarten in Colorado:

## A ROADMAP



# www.nationalp-3center.org



WHO WE ARE  WHAT WE DO P-3 FRAMEWORK P-3 MAP RESOURCES NEWS

## Bridging ECE and PreK-12 Systems

We work to improve the education continuum children experience from birth (Pre-school) through 3rd grade. We believe that gaps in children's opportunities and learning outcomes demand organization and system level reform in states, districts, and communities.

[Learn More !\[\]\(c694a3ff3b077d76910920a6a1593ab4\_img.jpg\)](#)





Goal 1:

# ALIGN AND COORDINATE SYSTEMS

Colorado's birth through five early childhood system is coordinated and aligned to enhance resources available to families and to improve the quality of relationships between families and providers.

*Framework:*





# Our Approach

- Leverage current federal and state policy context
- Two-sided engagement
- Systems instead of practices
- State and local systems
- Formal and informal ECE

# Federal Level



U.S. Department of Education

Head Start Policy & Regulations

Search within Policy

Student Loans | Grants

## Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Home » Head Start Act

### Head Start Act

Sec. 635 Short Title

SEC. 635. SHORT TITLE.

### Sec. 642A Head Start Transition and Alignment With K-12 Education

SEC. 642A. [42 U.S.C. 9837a]

## New Early Childhood Coordination Requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

# State Level



JANUARY 2022

## COLORADO UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS



...to Elephants to a class of kindergartners at Beattie  
Library. Courtesy of the Colorado Governor's Office

### POLITICS

## Colorado Legislature Passes Bill Funding Full- Day Kindergarten

# Our Approach

- Leverage current federal and state policy context
- Two-sided engagement
- Systems instead of practices
- State and local systems
- Formal and informal ECE

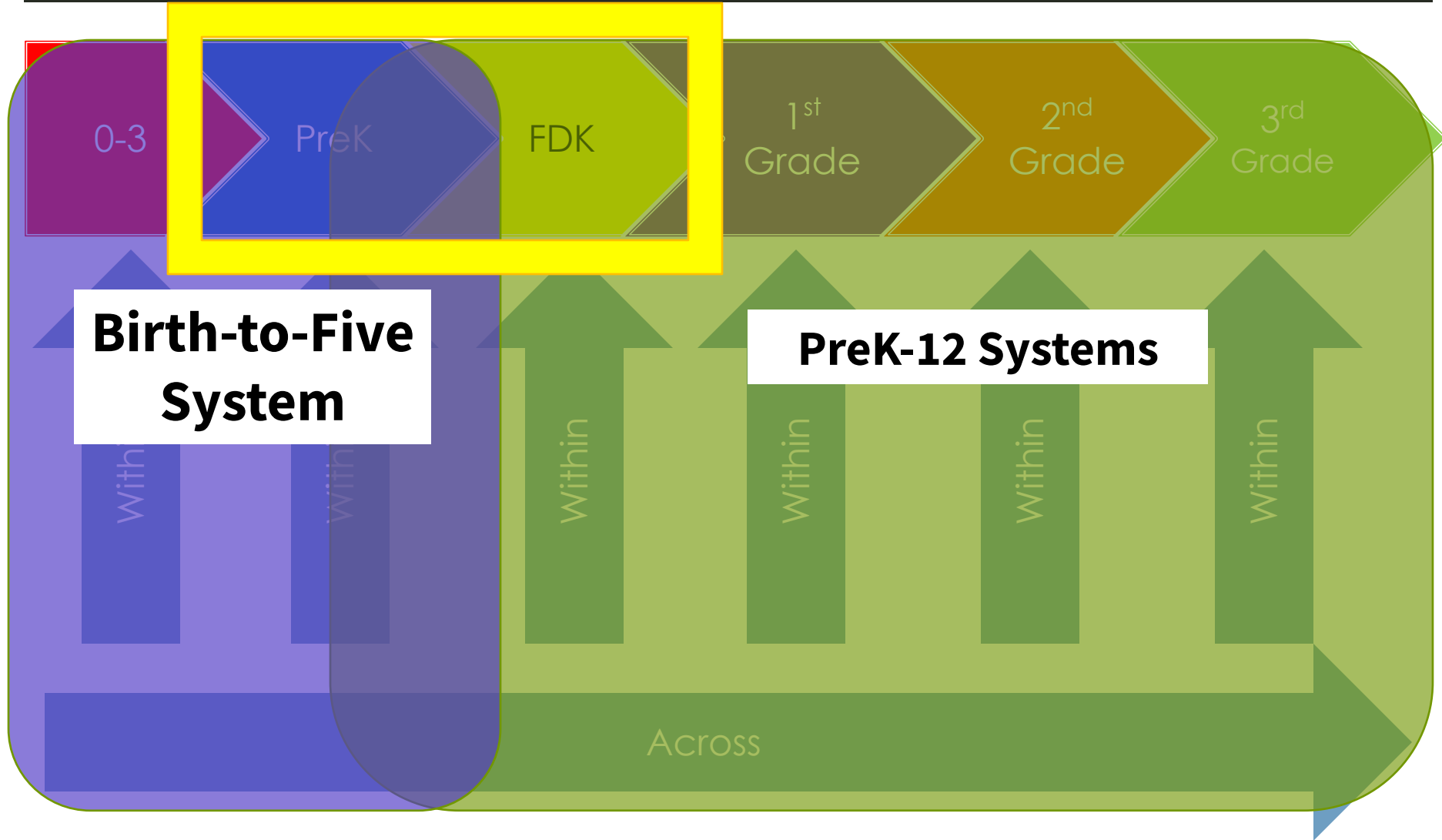




# Our Approach

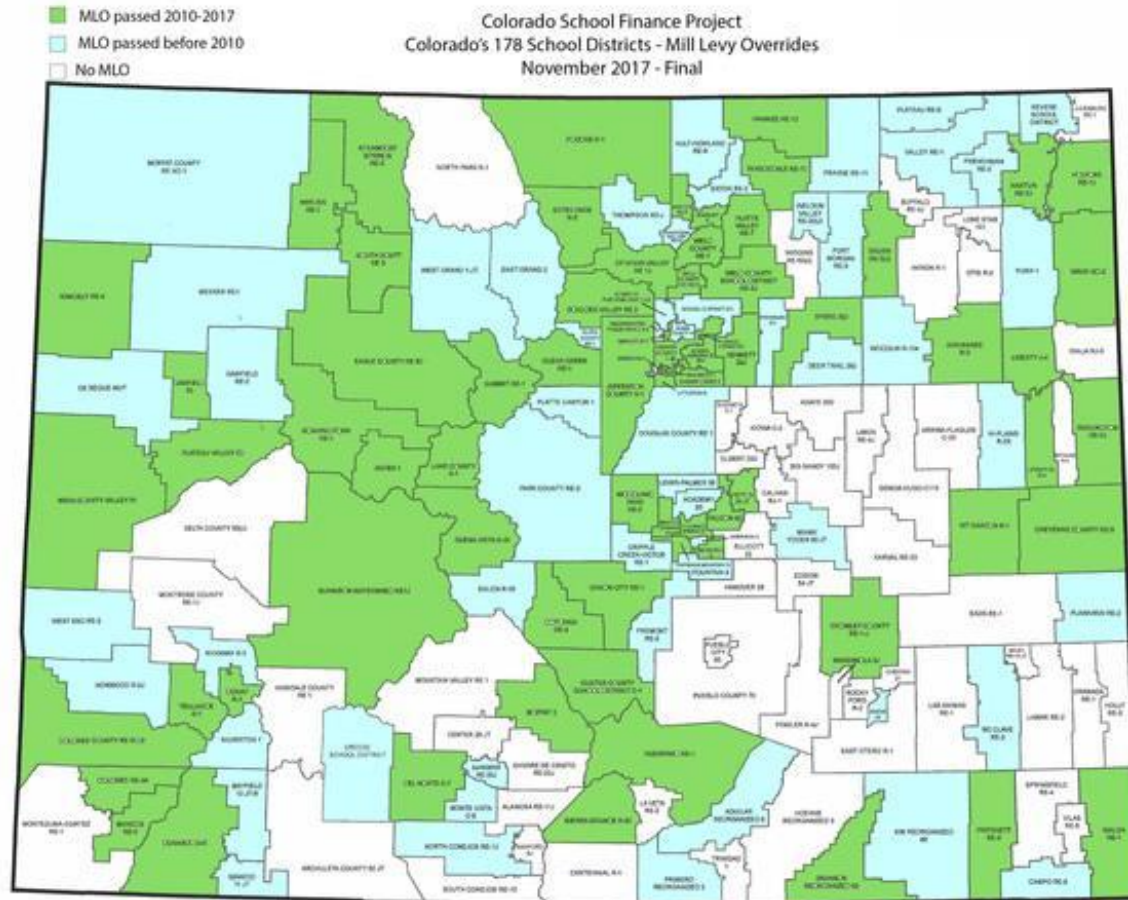
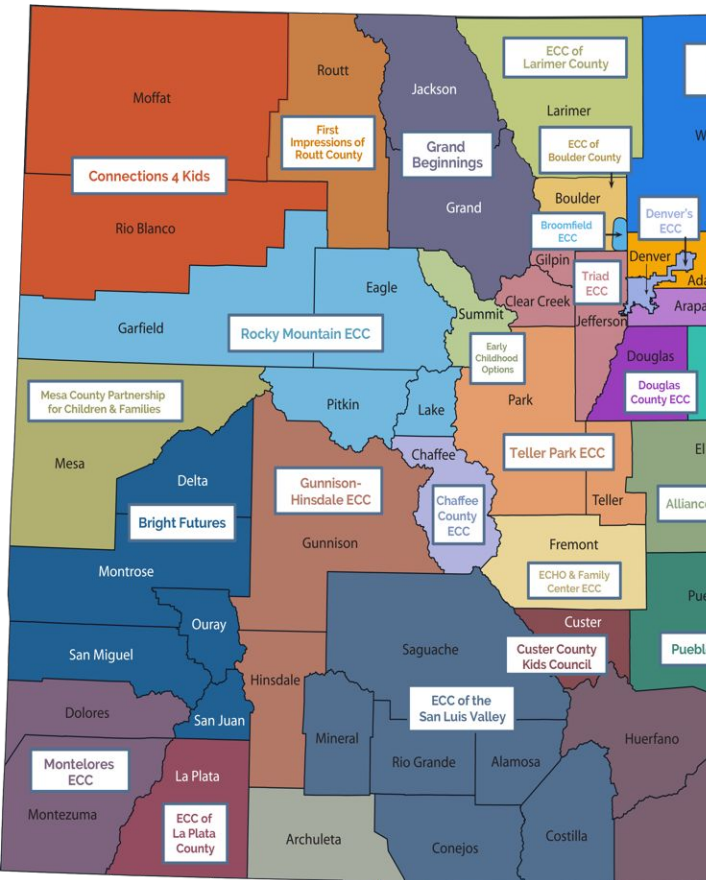
- Leverage current federal and state policy context
- Two-sided engagement
- Systems instead of practices
- State and local systems
- Formal and informal ECE

# Systems Alignment



# Our Approach

- Leverage current federal and state policy context
- Two-sided engagement
- Systems instead of practices
- State and local systems
- Formal and informal ECE



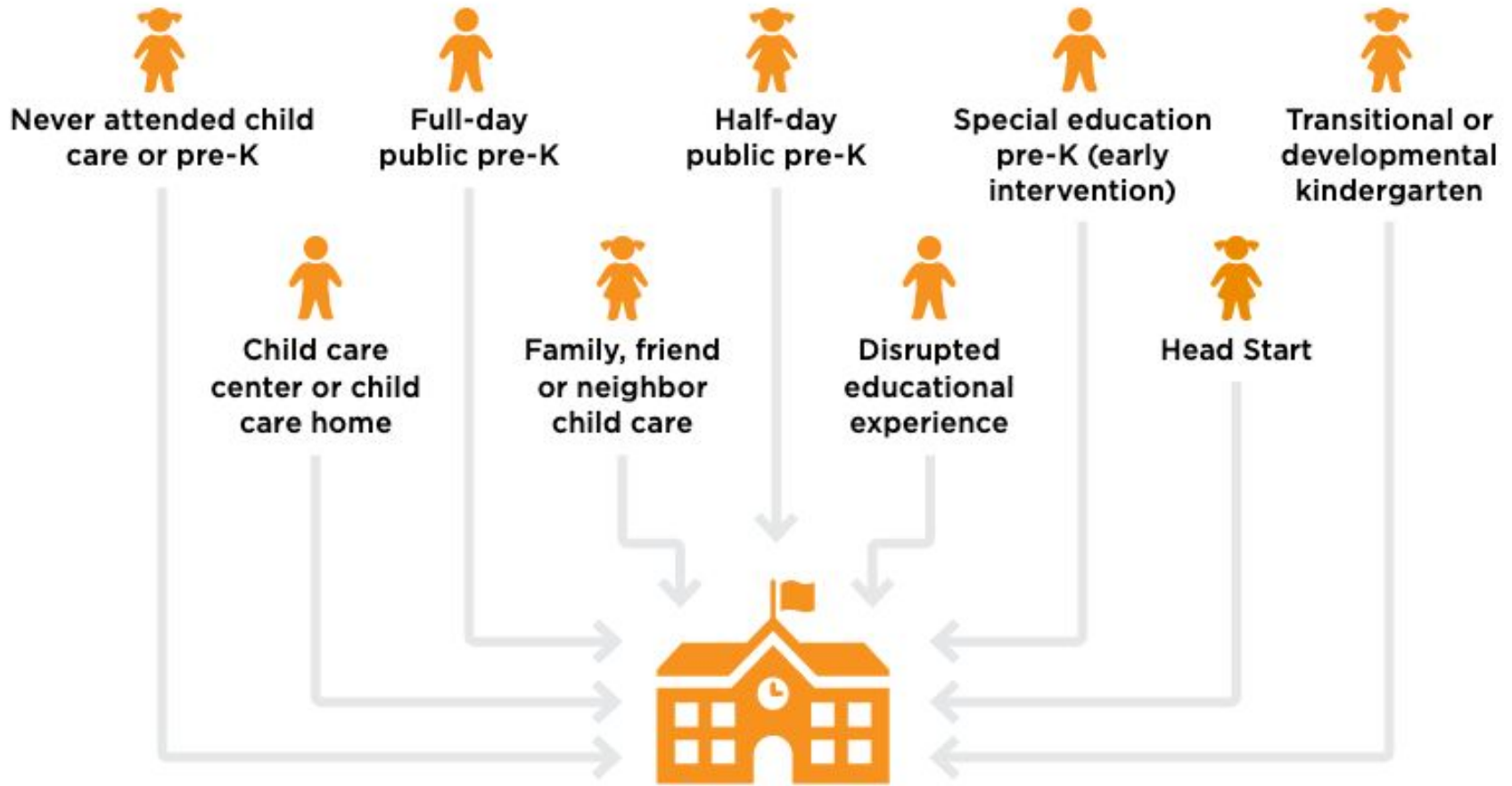
Data: CDE & Secretary of State  
 Chart: Colorado School Finance Project

1547 Gaylord Street | Denver, CO 80206  
 303-860-9136 | @COSFP | cosfp.org

# Our Approach

- Leverage current federal and state policy context
- Two-sided engagement
- Systems instead of practices
- State and local systems
- Formal and informal ECE





Not all formal child care and pre-K programs are **accessible and high quality**, and not all children enter kindergarten with **experience in a formal setting**.

# Our Process

- Policy scan (federal & state)
- Role-alike and community convenings (cross-sector)
- Focus groups (school districts)
- Key informant interviews (state partners)
- Review of other states' transition efforts

# 4. Improving Transitions to Kindergarten in Colorado: Strategies

- Strategy 1: Engage Families as Essential Partners .....
- Strategy 2: Child-level Standards .....
- Strategy 3: Child-level Learning Plans.....
- Strategy 4: Standards for Ready Schools and ECE Programs .....
- Strategy 5: Curriculum and Instruction .....
- Strategy 6: Readiness Assessments – Children AND Schools/Programs.....
- Strategy 7: Site-and Systems-level Plans.....
- Strategy 8: Data Systems .....

# Recommendations

1. Promote **stronger engagement with families**
2. **Align the mixed delivery ECE system**, including formal and informal providers, to simplify transition process for elementary schools
3. **Align ECE and PreK-12** to smooth experiences for children and families
4. **Align state agencies' and non-governmental partners' efforts**
5. Highlight roles for both ECE and PreK-12
6. State and local partnerships will ensure effective **transitions are scaled, while also being culturally and linguistically responsive**





# Transitions to Kindergarten in Colorado:

## A ROADMAP





Break



# 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.



*Our Voice* Newsletter  
Tom Massey



# Our Voice Newsletter

- Monthly communication managed and distributed by the ECLC
- Purpose:
  - Share early childhood partner updates, resources and ideas
  - Highlight the work of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission
  - Elevate the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* and website
- Audience: Close to 1,500 early childhood stakeholders
  - Early Childhood Councils, family support service providers, nonprofits, early childhood education providers, foundations, state and county representatives, and many more!
- [Subscribe to Our Voice](#) to continue to receive early childhood transition updates as well as other announcements, resources and opportunities from Colorado's early childhood community
- Please share this communication resource with your networks and encourage people to [submit content](#)!





# ECLC Subcommittee Updates

## Subcommittee Co-Chairs

# ECLC Subcommittee Updates

- Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee
  - Home Visiting Investment Strategy Working Group
  - Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Working Group
- Data Subcommittee
- Communications Subcommittee
- Early Childhood Workforce Development Subcommittee



# State Agency Legislative Updates

## State Agency Representatives

# State Agency Legislative Updates

- Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing
- Colorado Department of Higher Education
- Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
- Colorado Department of Education
- Colorado Department of Human Services
  - Office of Early Childhood



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



# Early Childhood Transition Planning Monthly Town Hall

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

5:30 pm

[Register Today!](#)

\*Spanish language interpretation will be provided!

# ECLC

*Early Childhood Leadership Commission*

Next Meeting:

April 28, 2022

9:30 am - 12:30 pm



Thank you!