



ECLC 2.0 GOVERNING CHARTER

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP COMMISSION

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Colorado Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) was established in 2010 through SB 10-195 to “promote the coordination of policies and procedures that affect the health and well-being of Colorado children.” The ECLC was reauthorized in 2013 for a period of five years through HB 13-1117 with an added focus on pregnant women; and the number of members was reduced from thirty-five to twenty, with no members from the state legislature. HB 13-1117 also moved the ECLC from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor to the Colorado Department of Human Services. The ECLC serves as Colorado’s state advisory council for early childhood, per the federal Head Start Act.

In its first three years, the ECLC spearheaded several initiatives to improve service delivery and interagency support for children in Colorado ages birth to age 8. Through data gathering, policy development and community engagement, the ECLC has worked to advance all components of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*: early learning; family support and parent education; social, emotional, and mental health; and health.

BASIS FOR CREATION OF COMMISSION CHARTER

In March 2012, the ECLC convened a retreat to discuss their future role, priorities and sustainability because its state mandate and funding end in June 2013. In addition, the ECLC was awaiting the outcome of SB 12-130, which would have created an Office of Early Childhood and included additional roles for the ECLC to support the new office. The bill did not pass, and the ECLC was left with many questions after the retreat about their near-term role and future existence.

That spring, the Governance Committee participated in a facilitated process to draft a set of recommendations to guide the ECLC’s future mission, vision, role, priorities and desired outcomes. The committee took into consideration the ECLC’s current external environment (both opportunities and challenges), as well as their desired legacy for the ECLC. In addition, they reviewed the federal and state mandates, so as to balance their aspirations with realistic parameters.

A draft Governing Charter was the result of that process, and the Governance Committee put forth a set of recommendations for the ECLC’s consideration and endorsement. This new Governing Charter is based upon these recommendations and further incorporates provisions of HB 13-1117.

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2013 AND BEYOND

MISSION

To be the trusted and proactive champion for high quality, outcome-focused programs and services for pregnant women and children birth to age eight in Colorado across all sectors.

VISION

Colorado has a comprehensive, seamless and effective service delivery system that supports families to ensure all Colorado's children are valued, healthy and thriving.

ROLE

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission will serve in the following roles:

- ➔ Statewide leader
 - ⇒ Promote a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado
 - ⇒ Set the strategic direction for early childhood services and governance
 - ⇒ Be a trusted advisory body to all stakeholders and sectors
 - ⇒ Embody a fully aligned system of supports
- ➔ Subject matter expert
 - ⇒ Represent the full spectrum of early childhood stakeholders and supporters
 - ⇒ Develop innovative tools, approaches and resources
 - ⇒ Provide systems-level thinking and oversight
 - ⇒ Hold constituents accountable and track progress against defined outcome metrics
- ➔ Communicator and connector
 - ⇒ Partner with key statewide entities in all sectors – public, nonprofit and private
 - ⇒ Be a credible, vocal advocate in support of early childhood in Colorado
 - ⇒ Coordinate the state's interagency work and connect with community efforts

⇒ Build public will, awareness and community support for early childhood

COMPOSITION

The composition of the ECLC is twenty individuals representing the full spectrum of stakeholders and early childhood supporters. In accordance with authorizing legislation, members include:

- Parents and families, receiving early childhood supports or services
- State Department of Human Services
- State Department of Public Health and the Environment
- State Department of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Representatives of local public health community
- State Department of Higher Education
- State Department of Education and local educational agencies
- Representatives of local government groups
- State director of Head Start collaboration
- Providers of early childhood education & development services
- Business community
- Nonprofit and/or foundation community involved in early childhood issues

This list ensures compliance with the federal State Advisory Council requirements.

LOCATION AND LEADERSHIP

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission is housed within the Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood. Three co-chairs are appointed by the Governor to include one representing business, one representing non-profit entities, and one representing public entities. The ECLC will maintain ties with the Lt. Governor's office and current administration to further emphasize Colorado's commitment to this cause. In fulfilling its duties, the ECLC shall collaborate, per authorizing legislation, at a minimum, with members of the early childhood councils and any other boards, commissions, and councils existing within the executive branch agencies that address services and supports for young children.

STATUTORY DUTIES

- ⇒ Identify opportunities for, and barriers to, the alignment of standards, rules, policies, and procedures across programs and agencies that support young children.

- ⇒ Recommend to the appropriate committees of reference of the general assembly and to government and non- profit agencies and policy boards changes to enhance the alignment and provision of services and supports to young children.
- ⇒ Advise and make recommendations to the state department and other relevant early childhood entities concerning implementation of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework.
- ⇒ To assist public and private agencies in coordinating efforts on behalf of pregnant women and children, including securing funding and additional investments for services and supports for children and their families.
- ⇒ To consider and recommend waivers from state regulations on behalf of early childhood councils as provided in section 26-6.5-104 (1).
- ⇒ Monitor the ongoing development, promotion, and implementation of a quality, cohesive professional and career advancement system; high-quality, comprehensive early learning standards; and the sharing and use of common data for planning and accountability among early childhood programs.
- ⇒ Develop strategies and monitor efforts concerning increasing children’s school readiness.
- ⇒ Develop strategies and monitor efforts concerning increasing participation in and access to child care and early education programs.
- ⇒ Develop strategies and monitor efforts concerning promoting family and community engagement in children’s educational development.

PRIORITIES

NEAR-TERM PRIORITIES (2013)

- ➔ Assist in the successful establishment of the Office of Early Childhood under the Department of Human Services
- ➔ Support the Office of Early Childhood and its staff, including realigning programs, integrating services, supporting a statewide roll-out campaign and championing the transition overall
- ➔ Oversee the development of the Strategic Plan in conjunction with the new Office and the Early Childhood Colorado Framework
- ➔ Implement an external communications plan, including messaging platform, campaign strategies and media outreach
- ➔ Secure additional funding and influence new investments in early childhood efforts
- ➔ Develop, implement and track work underway: Early Childhood Cost Model, Comprehensive Data System, Early Learning and Development Guidelines, new QRIS implementation, Early Childhood Professional Competencies, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, Results Matter, and Infant/Toddler Policy agenda

LONG-TERM PRIORITIES (2014-2017)

- Increase engagement with statewide partners (public entities, businesses, nonprofits and volunteers) for a holistic approach to serving children birth to age 8 across the Framework
- Set a statewide vision for early childhood in Colorado and influence a common policy agenda
- Define measurable outcomes for child and provider performance that can be tracked statewide
- Monitor progress against performance metrics and hold constituents accountable
- Mobilize a statewide movement for early childhood, from grassroots community support to state-level initiatives

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The ECLC will organize membership, and invite non-member stakeholder involvement, committees including, but not limited to:

- Data
- Program Quality and Alignment
- Finance

SUCCESS MEASURES

By 2018, the Early Childhood Leadership Commission seeks to achieve the following measures of their success:

- The Office of Early Childhood is fully operational and stewarding a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado
- Parents and families experience comprehensive, integrated and seamless systems of services and supports for early childhood; they value this system and acknowledge its improvements
- Colorado has a sophisticated data system that informs public policy, monitors progress and educates the community on the importance of financing the full spectrum of early childhood services
- Early childhood supports and services are a valuable priority, from the state-level down to local communities and parents across Colorado
- The ECLC is viewed as the trusted voice on early childhood across Colorado

As a result of these measures of success, more children in Colorado are valued, healthy and thriving.