

Colorado's State Advisory  
Council for Early Childhood

December 1, 2017

Co-Chairs:

Barbara Grogan  
Anna Jo Haynes  
Lt. Governor Donna Lynne

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Lydia Prado  
Anna Robinson  
Cindy Schulz  
Susan Steele  
Erin Ulric  
George Welsh

Representative Robert Rankin, Dr. Katy Anthes, and members of the Education Leadership Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input from the early childhood perspective on priorities and vision for Colorado's education system. We support the Education Leadership Council's work to develop a broad vision and plan for action, and we encourage continued inclusion of early childhood development and education as a foundation for all future learning and development.

As Colorado's federally recognized advisory council on early childhood, the Commission has led several efforts to align education priorities and vision for children birth through age eight and their families.

One such resource is the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*. This *Framework*, initially developed in 2008 and revised through a broad stakeholder process in 2015, portrays our shared vision that all children are healthy, valued, and thriving. It identifies fundamentals for achieving this vision, strategies for action, and outcomes arranged by three domains: Family Support & Education, Health & Well-Being, and Learning & Development. Each domain articulates outcomes towards advancing access, quality, and equity of services and supports for children in our state. The *Framework* promotes a collaborative, culturally-responsive and outcome-based approach focused on the child and family at the center of their broader relationships, environments, and communities. The *Framework* is widely recognized in Colorado and is embedded into work at the state and local levels. The Commission is currently developing an interactive website based on the *Framework* that will allow programs and organizations to share how their work advances this shared vision throughout the state; we look forward to sharing this tool with you in early 2018.

The Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Plan is another resource related to early education and the goal that children are school-ready when they enter public education. Colorado, like many states, faces a tremendous challenge in

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recruiting and retaining a qualified early learning workforce. Despite the critical importance of early childhood educators to a child's future achievements, these professionals are often paid poverty-level wages and struggle to provide for their families. Moreover, the need for preschool teachers is expected to increase approximately 43% in the next eight years. Used as a guide, the EC Workforce 2020 Plan assists in advancing policies and investments that support the recruitment and retention of these early childhood professionals.

Finally, over the next several months, the ECLC will engage in a multi-faceted effort to summarize and prioritize short- and long-term actions and investments to help guide future early childhood efforts. We believe this tool will be a guide that will continue to align strategies to advance the outcomes for Colorado children and families.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on the Commission's work. We invite you to attend a future Early Childhood Leadership Commission to share your work so that we can continue to align and coordinate our efforts in this important conversation.

Sincerely,



Anna Jo Haynes  
Co-Chair



Barbara Grogan  
Co-Chair

Enclosures:

*Early Childhood Colorado Framework*  
Colorado's Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Plan  
2016 ECLC Annual Report  
ECLC Membership List