

# Welcome and thank you for joining!



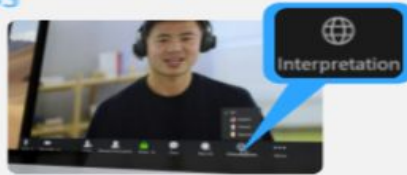
Early Childhood Leadership Commission

- This meeting will be recorded and posted on the ECLC Transition Webpage
- Please use the chat to ask questions for the presenters
- Spanish language interpretation is available. Follow the instructions to join the appropriate language channel

**Durante este evento, se dispondrá de interpretación de idiomas.  
Para escuchar la interpretación en un idioma:**

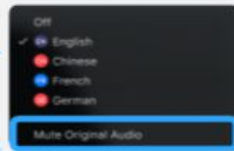


1. En los controles de la reunión o el seminario web, haga clic en **Interpretation (Interpretación)**



2. Haga clic en el idioma que desee escuchar

3. (Opcional) Para escuchar solo el idioma interpretado, haga clic en **Mute Original Audio (Silenciar audio original)**



1. En los controles de la reunión, toque el icono de los puntos suspensivos **⋮**
2. Toque **Language Interpretation (Interpretación de un idioma)**
3. Toque el idioma que usted desea escuchar



4. (Opcional) Toque el interruptor **Mute Original Audio (Silenciar audio original)**



5. Haga clic en **Done (Done)**



*Early Childhood Leadership Commission*

**Early Childhood Transition Plan**  
**Monthly Town Hall**  
**November 2021**

# Introductions

## Early Childhood Leadership Commission Co-Chairs:

- Pamela Harris - President & CEO, Mile High Early Learning
- Tom Massey - Deputy Executive Director, Health Care Policy & Financing
- Susan Steele - President & CEO, Buell Foundation

# Voices from the Field

**Jennifer Orosco**

Early Childhood Educator

# Overview



# Overview

Colorado is creating a new state department to oversee early childhood programs, including the development and implementation of a voter-approved universal preschool program.

As the state moves forward in designing both the department and the program, it will seek significant engagement from families, providers, school districts, advocates, community leaders, and other stakeholders. This input will be key to ensuring success for young children and families across the state.

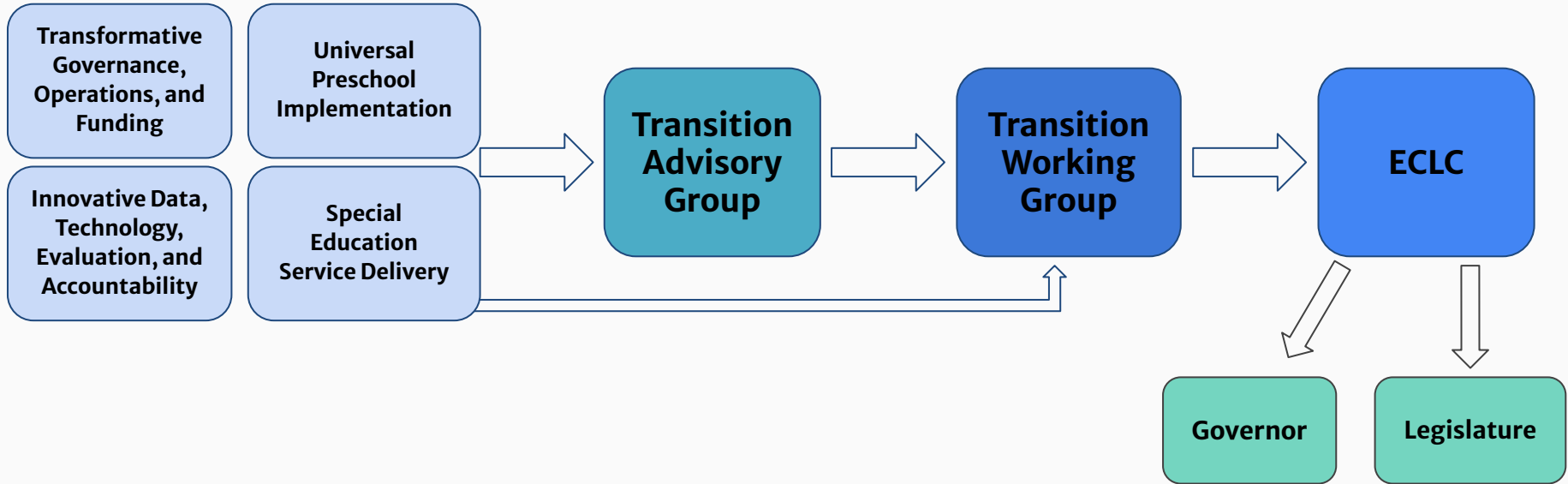
**The monthly Town Hall is designed to provide stakeholders with the most up-to-date information and opportunities to get involved.**

# Early Childhood Leadership Commission

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) is tasked with submitting a report to the Governor and the Legislature outlining detailed plans to transition to the new department and to implement the voluntary universal preschool program. The transition plan is due November 2021, and the recommendations for voluntary universal preschool are due January 2022.

Stakeholders will be key to informing the path forward, and the ECLC has developed a transition planning process in accordance with [HB21-1304](#) that prioritizes public engagement and input.

# Planning Process





# Transition Website

The ECLC has a dedicated [page](#) on its website with information about the transition process.

The page includes up-to-date news and information, with meeting agendas, background materials, meeting recordings, a [calendar of events](#), and a list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

SIGN UP FOR THE NEWSLETTER!



#### MONTHLY TOWN HALLS

Starting on August 10, the ECLC will hold monthly town halls to provide updates on the transition planning progress, highlight the work ahead, and share opportunities to get involved.



#### SUBGROUPS

The Transition Advisory Group Subgroups will meet regularly to advise and inform the Department of Early Childhood transition plan and universal preschool program recommendations.



#### FEEDBACK FORM

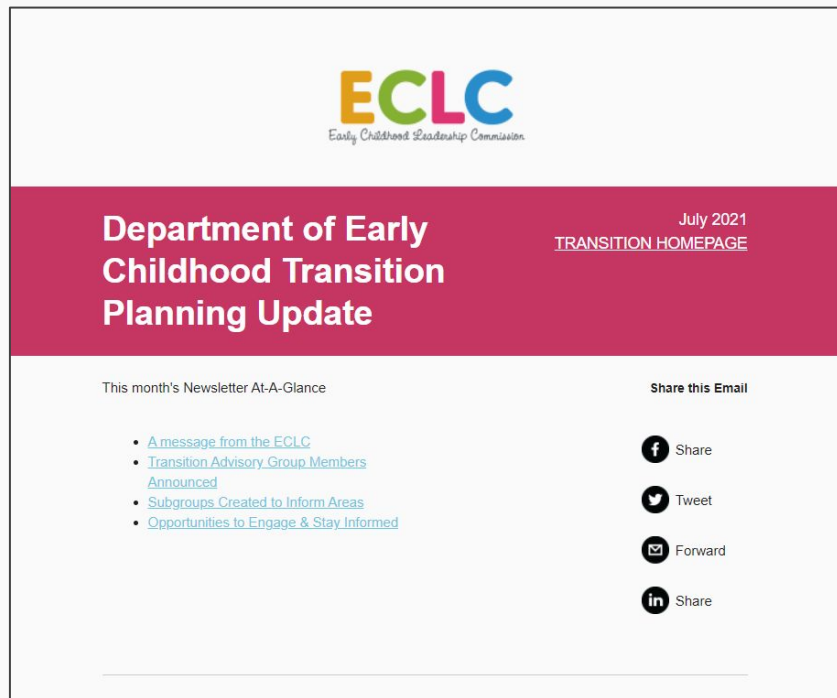
The ECLC values your suggestions, recommendations, questions and innovative ideas to inform the Department of Early Childhood transition plan and universal preschool recommendations.

# Monthly Newsletter

The ECLC has a monthly newsletter that provides stakeholders with updated information about the transition process.

You can subscribe to the newsletter through the ECLC website.

The November newsletter will be issued tomorrow.



The screenshot shows the top portion of an email newsletter. At the top center is the ECLC logo, which consists of the letters 'ECLC' in a stylized font where the 'E' is yellow, 'C' is green, 'L' is pink, and 'C' is blue. Below the logo is the text 'Early Childhood Leadership Commission'. To the right of the logo, the date 'July 2021' and the text 'TRANSITION HOMEPAGE' are displayed. A large red banner contains the main title 'Department of Early Childhood Transition Planning Update' in white text. Below the banner, on the left, is the text 'This month's Newsletter At-A-Glance' followed by a bulleted list of links: 'A message from the ECLC', 'Transition Advisory Group Members Announced', 'Subgroups Created to Inform Areas', and 'Opportunities to Engage & Stay Informed'. On the right side, under the heading 'Share this Email', there are four social media sharing icons: Facebook, Twitter, Email, and LinkedIn, each with the word 'Share' next to it.

**ECLC**  
Early Childhood Leadership Commission


July 2021  
TRANSITION HOMEPAGE


**Department of Early Childhood Transition Planning Update**

This month's Newsletter At-A-Glance

- [A message from the ECLC](#)
- [Transition Advisory Group Members Announced](#)
- [Subgroups Created to Inform Areas](#)
- [Opportunities to Engage & Stay Informed](#)

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# Progress



# Draft Department of Early Childhood (DEC) Transition Plan Feedback

- The draft plan and associated feedback form were published Oct.8.
- The ECLC hosted on a statewide listening tour from Oct. 11-15 with **11 sessions**: Alamosa, Denver, Durango, Edwards, Fort Collins, Fort Morgan, Grand Junction, Montrose, Pueblo, and two virtual.
  - The ECLC was able to meet and hear feedback from **hundreds** of parents and caregivers, members of the early childhood workforce, providers, school districts, human services leaders, Early Childhood Councils, and other stakeholders in communities across Colorado.
- The feedback form **collected 156 responses** with a wide range of representation.

[View transition plan feedback here](#)

Voice Represented (self-reported)	Number of Responses
Parent/caregiver of a young child	18
Early childhood workforce professional	40
Early childhood program or service provider	37
Stage agency staff	16
School district employee	36
County employee	12
Higher education	5
Early childhood nonprofit or advocacy organization	29
TAG member	11
ECLC member	2
Subgroup participant	15

# Feedback from Stakeholders - Key Themes

- Concern about lack of detail in special education implementation and that a system of family choice will leave public schools with most of the students with disabilities.
- Rules and Regulations Advisory Council (RRAC) should have: rural representation, charter representation, representation from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, representation from higher education, representation from health/mental health care, Family Friend & Neighbor (FFN) representation.
- The Executive Director should have experience in early childhood.
- The rulemaking process for DEC should include a balance of power.
- A strong emphasis is needed on data privacy and security.
- More training opportunities that include training on trauma-informed care are needed.

# Recommendation #1: Adopt a Vision, Mission, and Values.

## Vision

All Colorado children, families, and early childhood professionals are valued, healthy and thriving.

## 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.

## Values

- We value equity across the early childhood system and are committed to utilizing an equity-focused lens to drive priorities and decision making.
- We believe formal and informal care environments can provide high-quality, developmentally appropriate care and learning.
- We respect and appreciate the diversity and strengths of all of our communities in Colorado.
- We believe accessibility to early childhood services considers affordability, cultural responsiveness, and parent choice.
- We value an innovative and expansive approach to our early childhood system.
- We value a whole-family approach.

# Recommendation #2: Adopt the ECLC's Guiding Principles.

The Transition Advisory Group and Transition Working Group adopted the ECLC's guiding principles to further ground this plan in the ongoing work.



## Recommendation #3: Build a diverse, equity-driven, expert leadership team.

Under an Executive Director, with significant experience in early childhood and systems management, DEC should have a culturally diverse leadership team with a comprehensive set of skills, a strong equity focus, significant expertise, and a culture of trauma informed care.

In addition, the Transition Working Group (TWG) recommends:

- Program delivery should be organized around functions of the early childhood system and user experience, rather than around the administration of individual programs and grants, to create more cohesion for the field.
- DEC should maintain a strong commitment to data and a strong, responsible data collection process that includes data privacy requirements, and should leverage technology to improve user experiences.



## Recommendation #3 (cont): Build a diverse, equity-driven, expert leadership team.

DEC's leadership team should include:

- An expert in policy and governmental affairs.
- A finance expert who is oriented toward using their significant understanding of financial regulations to find innovative solutions that meet Colorado's funding needs.
- A program lead who is charged with improving the coherence of experience for children, families, providers, and workforce throughout the system.
- A lead who is charged with maintaining partnerships and collaborations across departments.
- An effective leader to develop a robust data collection and analysis system that is used to inform future strategies and guide decision making.
- **DEC should also have a team to manage the department's technology needs and systems, managed by a lead with expertise in digital transformation and adept at using technology to streamline systems.**

This team must focus on DEC's legislative charge to streamline and enhance the child, family, workforce, and provider experience.

## **Recommendation #4: Establish a Rules and Regulations Advisory Council to advise the Executive Director on rules and regulations.**

Additionally, as a state agency in the Executive Branch, DEC must adhere to the rulemaking process outlined in the Administrative Procedure Act or APA. The rulemaking process involves four stages:

- 1) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking;
- 2) Comment Period on Proposed Rule;
- 3) Hearing on Proposed Rule; and
- 4) Final Adoption of Proposed Rule.

## Recommendation #4 (cont): Establish a Rules and Regulations Advisory Council to advise the Executive Director on rules and regulations.

Based on stakeholder feedback that the rulemaking process should be balanced, the TWG also recommends the creation of a Rules and Regulations Advisory Council (RRAC) to facilitate meaningful advice, consultation, and collaboration.

To maintain a unified and cohesive vision, TWG recommends the Executive Director hold final rulemaking authority for DEC programs, based on the advice of the Rules and Regulations Advisory Council.

By July 2025, DEC shall conduct an evaluation of its governance structure to determine if additional supports or structures are needed.

## Recommendation #4 (cont): Establish a Rules and Regulations Advisory Council to advise the Executive Director on rules and regulations.

The DEC RRAC should have **no more than 15 members** and at a minimum should include:

- Parents, families, or caregivers of children who are enrolled in a variety of public and private early childhood programs;
- Members of the early childhood workforce, including community and school-based educators;
- Representatives of geographically and programmatically diverse community and school-based public and private early childhood programs and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers;
- County and school district officials, **including preschool directors and charter schools**;
- Representatives from foundations, business, and advocacy organizations;
- **Experts in finance and/or regulations**;
- **Representation from culturally and linguistically diverse communities**;
- **Representation from higher education**; and
- **Representation from health and mental health care professionals.**

To ensure equity is at the center of all rulemaking processes, at least 50% of the RRAC should represent stakeholders with lived experience in the early childhood system (e.g., parents, providers, members of the workforce) and/or represent historically under-served and under-resourced communities.

Recommendations from the Rules and Regulations Advisory Council should be made by a majority vote, and the Executive Director should demonstrate the department thoroughly considers each of these recommendations.

## **Recommendation #5: Maintain the advisory role of ECLC and other existing advisory groups.**

As the federally authorized state advisory council, the ECLC has advised Colorado leaders on strategies to promote strong and research-backed early childhood practices across the state since its creation in 2010.

In moving to the new department, the ECLC should also serve in a key advisory role to the leadership of DEC, as well as continuing its advisory capacity to state policymakers, other departments, and the Governor's Office.

In addition to the advisory role of the ECLC, DEC should be guided by many other existing engagement structures currently advising Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

## Recommendation #6: Transition suggested programs and services to DEC.

TWG recommends the following programs and services begin to transition to the Department of Early Childhood **beginning in July 2022**:

- Colorado Preschool Program/Early Childhood At Risk Enhancement
- All services administered by the Early Childhood Workforce Development team
- All programs and services administered by the Office of Early Childhood

The purpose of each of these programs aligns with the mission, vision, values, and guiding principles of DEC to create a comprehensive, community-informed, effective, high-quality, and equitable early childhood system.

TWG is also cognizant that the movement of programs will require thoughtful timing to ensure seamless access to services for children and families.

## Recommendation #7: Re-evaluate program movement to DEC by 2025.

Establishing and maintaining a strong Department of Early Childhood will require a cycle of continuous review and improvement. After the department is established in July 2022, stakeholders recommended an ongoing review of the programs overseen by DEC.

DEC and ECLC, along with relevant agencies, stakeholders, and experts, should re-evaluate the movement of the following programs, if federal law allows, and potentially others, by July 2025:

- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- IDEA Part B (Preschool Special Education)

## Recommendation #8: Address feedback on preschool special education.

TWG recommends IDEA Part B (Preschool Special Education) remain at CDE.

- TWG also recommends the agencies work together in close collaboration to continue stakeholder engagement and address the concerns raised by stakeholders before the new statewide, universal preschool program launches in the 2023-2024 school year.
- CDE, in partnership with DEC and stakeholders, will utilize the input from the Special Education Service Delivery Subgroup to develop a preschool special education implementation plan to support districts, administrative units, and other providers working in partnership to fulfill the requirements of IDEA and Colorado's Exceptional Children's Educational Act.



## **Recommendation #9: Provide DEC with fiscal authority and regulatory power.**

As programs shift to the new department, DEC should also acquire the authority and regulatory power of the funding sources tied to these programs.

During the unification process, existing rules, regulations, statute, and budget structure of these programs may need to be amended to ensure consistency in regulation across the landscape.

# Recommendation #10: Address five identified funding challenges.

These five challenges and solutions regarding the blending and braiding of funds were elevated by TAG and subgroups.

Historical investments in early childhood at all levels are not nearly enough to fully fund the needs of families, even when fully maximized.

## Challenge 1

Regulations are not aligned.

DEC should revise and streamline existing regulations (e.g. eligibility, program standards) across funding sources to ensure families and providers have flexibility with funds and less administrative burden.

## Challenge 2

Separate programs have separate funding and technology structures.

DEC should utilize one simple application for universal preschool and related programs that is easy to use for families and providers. Over time, additional programs should be added to the unified application.

# Recommendation #10 (cont): Address five identified funding challenges.

## Challenge 3

Different funding sources flow to different local structures with no one responsible for ensuring cohesion.

DEC should itself blend and braid dollars at the state level before allocations are released for state-controlled funds. DEC should build local capacity to blend and braid local and federal-to-local funds with state funds across programs.

## Challenge 4

Each community is different with differing current levels of coordination and implementation.

DEC should structure itself to empower local communities to lead and innovate based on their context. DEC should commence a review of community readiness to determine necessary supports for successful launch of the new preschool program and alignment.

## Challenge 5

There is a lack of visibility into systems statewide.

DEC should prioritize, coordinate, adequately fund, and require the collection of data on access, need, demand, and capacity by demographics and locality across all program types and in a way that does not burden providers.

# Recommendation #11: Utilize technology and data to make informed decisions.

To inform decisions for children and families in Colorado, DEC should:

- Collect data that provides additional information on system capacity, including number of open or closed classrooms, number of current teachers and workforce shortages, and overall availability of slots and current vacancies.
- Implement a child count process that provides insight into the unique number of children served at every publicly-funded site, across programs and funding sources, including unique identifiers when available, to encourage seamless K-12 integration while fully respecting the privacy of every student and family.
- Ensure that the child count process captures the number of children served by Colorado Shines quality level.
- Coordinate and require the collection of data in a way that does not burden providers and families.
- Ensure the data privacy security of all data collected by all participants in early childhood systems.
- Leverage technology in innovative ways to create efficiency and digital transformation in the system.

# Recommendation #12: Address Workforce Challenges

TAG and subgroups repeatedly raised challenges faced by the early childhood workforce. The following recommendations directly address those challenges.

The early childhood workforce is an incredibly diverse field, including teachers, speech and occupational therapists, health services providers, cooks, bus drivers, and family support staff.

Challenges	Recommendations
<p>There are not enough members across the spectrum of the early childhood workforce due to challenges with recruitment and retention.</p>	<p><b>Early Childhood Workforce:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review qualification pathways for opportunities to reduce complexity while also maintaining a diverse workforce in all settings.</li><li>• Work with higher education to develop pathways and recruitment strategies for specialists needed in the early childhood workforce, including early childhood teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech language pathologists, mental health consultants, and others critical to meeting the needs of children and families.</li><li>• Support and increase approved pre-service and in-service training opportunities that include training on trauma-informed care.</li></ul> <p><b>Early Childhood Educators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Simplify, promote, and measure achievement using Colorado’s Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Professionals (revised 2021).</li><li>• Support individuals to achieve these competencies through ongoing, accessible professional development.</li></ul>

# Recommendation #12 (cont): Address Workforce Challenges

TAG and subgroups repeatedly raised challenges faced by the early childhood workforce. The following recommendations directly address those challenges.

The early childhood workforce is an incredibly diverse field, including teachers, speech and occupational therapists, health services providers, cooks, bus drivers, and family support staff.

Challenges	Recommendations
There are not enough Black/Indigenous/People of Color entering the early childhood field or serving in leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify and implement strategies that recruit and retain a diverse workforce and support greater diversity in leadership positions.</li></ul>
Members of the early childhood workforce are not compensated at a liveable wage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop and elevate innovative compensation strategies for the early childhood workforce across all settings at the program, community, and state levels, which should include pursuing comprehensive benefits and a liveable wage.</li><li>Ensure true cost of quality early childhood services is part of all funding models</li></ul>
It is too hard and complex to be determined qualified to teach in licensed programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review the process for meeting early childhood workforce entry requirements to reduce barriers, increase retention, and minimize administrative burden at all levels of the system.</li></ul>

# Department of Early Childhood Transition Plan Release

The [completed transition plan](#) was presented on Monday, Nov. 1, 2021, to the Early Childhood Leadership Commission.

The ECLC will meet on November 10, 2021 at 9:30am to review and approve the final Department of Early Childhood Transition Plan.

# What happens next?

By Nov.15, the Transition Plan, as approved by the ECLC, must be submitted to the Public and Behavioral Health and Human Services Committee and the Education Committee of the House of Representatives, and the Health and Human Services Committee and the Education Committee of the Senate.

By Dec.1, 2021, the Transition Working Group shall meet with the Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission to present the transition plan, as approved by the ECLC.



# Thank you!

Thank you so much to everyone who made this plan possible and to those who offered feedback to shape this work!

# Looking Ahead to Universal Preschool



# Legislative Requirements

The TWG is charged to provide recommendations for the universal preschool program and ensure they are aligned with the DEC Transition Report. These recommendations must address:

- Alignment with Colorado Preschool Program to create one statewide preschool program
- Alignment with other early childhood programs to create a streamlined experience
- Process for calculating funding rates and how the rates are designed to support quality preschool programs and the process for distributing money
- Necessary interagency agreements to define the roles and responsibilities of DEC
- Special education: alignment with federal requirements, identification, & accountability in a mixed delivery environment
- Reduction of duplicative oversight

# Legislative Requirements

Recommendations must help to ensure that the new preschool program meets legislative requirements. At a minimum, the new preschool program must:

- Be informed by the analysis of existing early childhood programs
- Support high-quality preschool programs that implement developmentally and culturally appropriate whole-child, quality learning experiences that support the learning and development of all children
- Be mixed delivery, but with every program meeting fiscal accountability
- Ensure alignment with all state and federal education requirements (ECEA, IDEA)
- Allow for family choice in type of care and education settings
- Establish standards for program quality
- Integrate with existing local early childhood infrastructure to ensure local coordination
- Be subject to program evaluation on child and family outcomes

# Themes for Consideration:

**Application**

**Funding flow**

**Local  
partnerships**

**Special  
Education  
service delivery**

**Eligibility and  
prioritization for  
funding**

**Quality and  
Evaluation**

**Mixed delivery**

**Alignment with  
other programs**

**Workforce**

# Upcoming Subgroups

Subgroups are meeting this week. Visit the ECLC Transition Planning webpage to register: [www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/subgroups](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/subgroups)

- **Special Education:** Nov. 3 , 2 p.m.-4 p.m.
- **Universal Preschool:** Nov. 4, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

# Subgroup Discussion Topics

## Universal Preschool

- National strategies to strengthen infant/toddler care as UPK launches
- State of infant/toddler care in CO
- Solutions to protect infant/toddler capacity
- Strategies to streamline duplicative regulations & oversight

## Special Education

- Staffing needed to provide inclusive learning in a mixed delivery system
- Staffing needed to provide targeted supports and interventions
- Leveraging pyramid models to identify students for special education services
- Reducing duplicative oversight and regulations in Special Education

# Next Steps

- The TAG and its subgroups will be discussing the implementation of the new statewide, voluntary universal preschool program from now through December 2021.
  - There are four upcoming TAG meetings: Nov.9, Nov.17, Dec.1, and Dec.15.
  - These are public meetings. Visit the ECLC Transition Planning website for information: [www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/transition](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/transition)
- Recommendations for the universal preschool program are due to the ECLC and the Governor on Jan.1, 2022.



# Feedback Form

A brief feedback form is available on the website and will remain throughout the process. Stakeholder input is made public, as directed by the legislation, and shared with the TAG and its subgroups.

[Access the feedback form here.](#)

[View feedback received, to date, here.](#)

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# Thank you!

For information on all of the opportunities to engage in this work,  
please visit

[www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/transition](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/transition)