



**TRANSITION
ADVISORY
GROUP**

Welcome

Agenda

- Welcome
- Voices from the field
- Logistics
- Update from subgroups
- Review charge
- Review of stakeholder feedback on universal preschool
- Discuss universal preschool recommendations
 - Application
 - Funding flow
- Next steps
- Public comment

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Voices from the Field

**Kyle Ohl
Early Childhood Mental Health
Consultant**

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Logistics

Meeting Norms

- Come prepared.
- Mute yourself when not speaking.
- Stay engaged (e.g., actively participate and use the chat function).
- Be mindful of how much “air time” each member receives.
- Always assume good intent.
- All ideas are valued.
- Center equity in all conversations.

Expectations

Every meeting you should expect the following:

- **Via e-mail:**
 - Agenda for meeting
 - Suggested pre-reading
- **In meeting:**
 - Subgroup updates
 - Background information
 - Focused discussion around a specific part of the transition plan
 - Closing/next steps

TAG Meeting Schedule

Meetings will take place on Wednesdays from 3–5:30pm MST

Meeting Dates	Key Focus Areas
July 14	–Kick-off meeting: Introductions and mission/vision discussion
August 4	–Movement of programs to new department –Department structure & timeline of move
August 25	–Revisit program movement, funding & timeline –Discussion: local structures & partnerships
September 15	–Complete program review including Special Education –Governance of DEC –Local structures & partnerships –Technology and blending/braiding funds to support unification
September 22	–Revisit governance of DEC –Revisit discussion on local structures & partnerships –Revisit discussion of technology and blending/braiding funding
October 20	–Review transition plan draft –Universal, voluntary preschool preview
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December 15	– Review of draft recommendations for universal preschool

Feedback Form Responses

A reminder about the Feedback Form [responses](#):

- The responses are all shared publicly on the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) website removing all identifying information
- TAG members should review the responses in the feedback form before every meeting
- These responses are valuable input for this stakeholder engagement process

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Subgroup Update

MEETING 9 REPORTING

How can the state support and protect infant and toddler care as we implement Universal Preschool.

Ideas to protect Infant and Toddler Care	Challenges to Consider & Aspects to Monitor
Ensure that the system remains Birth through 5 and that we integrate the learning continuum through 5 th grade.	Monitor family preference and whether families can find one place for needed care, or do they have to piece together different options?
Maintain a mixed-delivery system.	The workforce should have the ability to digitally keep track of their credentials in a portable, easy to manage system.
Coordinated eligibility with a simple application for UPK and child-care.	Ensure and monitor continued cooperation between UPK, public schools, and infant & toddler care.
Provide additional funding and supports for infant and toddler teachers including pay, benefits, and training.	Monitor infant and toddler care capacity, loss of slots, and outcomes.
Presumptive funding eligibility and built-in funding for infant and toddler care.	Ensure that families have information available to them in their preferred language.

Staffing considerations for providing inclusive learning environments in a mixed delivery system Tier 1: Universal Instruction	
Workforce Qualifications	Workforce Supports
<p>Equip general education teachers with knowledge, skills, and evidenced-based strategies to support all children, especially those with disabilities.</p> <p><i>Training might include: universal design, accommodations/modifications, understanding impacts of disabilities, understanding basic requirements of Child Find.</i></p>	Strong multidisciplinary teams that collaborate with general education teacher and help develop appropriate child and family supports.
Consider requiring Bachelors-level early childhood degree for all early childhood educators in settings receiving public funding.	Smaller child-to-adult ratios in inclusive classrooms.
Develop a career ladder for ECE professionals to encourage entry into the workforce, professional development opportunities, and skill/knowledge development.	Professional development that clarifies the concepts and requirements of IDEA as it pertains to least restrictive environment (LRE) and monitoring.
Offer preschool teachers behavioral support training and access to expert consultation to reduce barriers to inclusion within the classroom setting.	Ongoing coaching to retain ECE workforce who have training in supporting identified needs, as well as language, culture, and identity skills.
Promote expert use and knowledge of formative and summative assessments across the diversity of early childhood students.	Differentiated funding for systems working with children and families with greater needs

Staffing considerations for providing effective targeted supports and interventions in a mixed delivery system Tiers 2 & 3	
Workforce Recruitment/Retainment Strategies	Workforce Supports
Avoid diluting qualifications for the sole purpose of staffing.	Offer scholarships/tuition credit for degree/licensing, continuing education funds, and higher salaries.
Ongoing assessment of ECE workforce qualifications to support innovation and flexibility to meet child and family needs in inclusive, mixed delivery system	More support in rural Colorado for special education professionals.
Create attainable pathways to enter the workforce that consider challenges in rural areas	Re-invent how we work together to make working in the ECE field welcoming, fun, open, and inclusive.
Pair apprenticeships concurrent enrollment programs for high school students.	Offer stipends for additional certifications/levels.
Encourage pathways from early childhood teacher to early childhood special educator and other special educator positions which result in higher pay.	Consider how assistant positions can be used within the ECE workforce in support of Tier 2 interventions.

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**Universal Preschool
Recommendations: TAG Charge**

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 CPP to create one state-wide preschool program
- Alignment with other EC 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

TAG Charge on Universal Preschool

TAG will continue to convene to discuss ideas and recommendations for the new statewide, voluntary preschool program to offer the TWG. These ideas and recommendations will take into consideration the ideas and feedback from subgroups, listening sessions, town halls, and any other engagement.

Themes to be considered:

Application

Funding flow

Local
partnerships

Alignment with
other programs

Eligibility and
prioritization for
funding

Mixed delivery

Quality and
Evaluation

Workforce

Special Education
service delivery

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**Universal Preschool Program -
Stakeholder Feedback**

Stakeholder Feedback: Application

- There should be a single application that is streamlined and easy to use for families and providers.
- There should be a one-stop eligibility form. Parents can apply for the program, list hours/days, and then eligibility and program placement are determined
 - Families should be able to access to all child care subsidies in one application
 - Families should be able to understand all their options, and availability of those options.
- There should be navigators or local support in each community who can assist families in filling out the application and spread awareness within the community.
 - The application process should also be accessible in multiple languages, with multilingual community navigators on hand to support families if needed
- Denver Indian Family Resource Center recently surveyed 100 clients who have applied for SNAP, WIC or CCAP. Found CCAP had the hardest application and lowest success. This was due to confusion on eligibility, long approval process and lack of spots available. The easiest programs were Medicaid and SNAP, so the new application should mirror these applications where possible.
- A desire stop treating CPP enrollment and application as independent from the larger birth to five system

Stakeholder Feedback: Funding Flow

- The burden of blending and braiding falls on providers and families because of the way that funding is currently distributed.
- State or local level should handle the coordination of funding so that it does not fall on families or providers.
- An intermediary organization charged with facilitating the necessary collaboration across systems/levels should be created.
- Funding should follow the child. Many children move from program to program for a variety of reasons
- Funding should flow to a local intermediary which understands the local context can ensure that money is distributed equitable.
 - If school districts manage money and distribute it to community partners, it can create power imbalances and result in a system that is not truly “mixed delivery”.
- Funding for the child needs to be blended and braided with other funding streams to support full days where needed.
- Strive to match the NIEER per-child funding average of \$12,500 annually.

Stakeholder Feedback: Local Partnerships

- An intermediary organization charged with facilitating the necessary collaboration across systems/levels should be created.
 - There should be a local intermediary (i.e., Councils, school districts, counties, special districts, or others) that serves in a coordinating role under a contract with DEC.
- Communities need implementation support tailored to the individual community and need help with accountability and cooperation across relevant entities.
 - There needs to be room for local communities to establish local structures that work for their community. One size will not fit all.
- Local examples of success should be elevated and scaled.
- Local representation should be diverse and take into consideration the perspective of districts and community based providers.
- Ensure new system doesn't lose access to local funds that school districts access.

Stakeholder Feedback: Alignment with other Programs

- The new preschool program should be mindful of its impact on infant and toddler care.
- There needs to be a greater degree of collaboration of between local entities, particularly the school system and community based providers.
- Each community should have a local plan that all programs are aligned with.
- Quality measures and standards should be consistent across programs.
- Consider opportunities for mixed aged classroom (3s&4s)
- There should be a greater focus on whole child and whole family care, with health and mental health being considered in all decisions.
- No funding stream is capable of providing all that children need and that blending and braiding of funds is necessary and should include non education specific funds to support the whole-child, private-pay, public and private funding.

Stakeholder Feedback: Eligibility and Prioritization of Funding

- Need to ensure that at risk children are receiving targeted support while balancing the growth needed for universality
 - Discuss targeted universalism because many families will require much more than 10 hours of care
 - UPK should be available to all children before kindergarten and those with more risk factors for school failure should have extended services for full, day, extended hours and full year services.
- Providing additional hours for working parents who need it is imperative to the economic sustainability in Colorado.
- Prioritization of additional funding should be determined by family need.
 - Differing opinions on whether to use the current CPP criteria. Some said it was outdated and not comprehensive and others said it was effective and should be maintained. Many agreed risk factors need to be reviewed and updated.
 - Others recommended that prioritization criteria should be determined at the local level
- Implement a Cost of Care Model and ensure the CCCAP rate and UPK rate reflect the true cost of running a classroom, including maintenance.

Stakeholder Feedback: Mixed Delivery

- Local communities should be required to develop a vision for mixed delivery (that meets state standards) and that can nimbly move funding to programs where actual enrollment exceeds anticipated enrollment.
- There should be a local partner who represents both the school district and community providers who can facilitate the distribution of slots in a community and considers families' choices.
 - Concerns were expressed that the current structure perpetuated power imbalances among providers in the community.
- There should be greater accountability under the new preschool program to ensure that mixed delivery and regulations are actually being carried out in each local community.

Mixed Delivery & Special Education

- Special education services should be provided in a mixed delivery setting to allow for family choice.
 - School districts are concerned about SPED services being offered in mixed delivery because they are liable for compliance under IDEA Part B
 - Community based sites feel that local school systems have monopolized preschool SPED and that they are unable to serve students.

Stakeholder Feedback: Quality and Evaluation

- There was strong agreement that classrooms should be rated with a high quality system.
 - Some stated that that CO Shines, the existing QRIS, should be maintained because it is effective.
 - Others stated that Shines should be modified because it currently does not measure true quality.
- Whether it is CO Shines or another system, stakeholders expressed the QRIS should:
 - Rate providers more frequently
 - Be consistent across the state
 - Include the quality of teacher–child interactions
 - Not be burdensome for provider
 - Include metrics for social emotional learning, physical, and mental health
 - Use an environmental rating tool
- There should be continuous evaluation of the extent to which the state’s approach is advancing mixed delivery, parental choice, and access to quality.
- Require ongoing, in–classroom coaching and ensure professional development is individualized and focused on teacher–child interactions, quality of instruction, and student outcomes Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Developmentally appropriate, observation–based assessments must be consistently utilized to determine each child's strengths, interests, and instructional approaches to support continued growth.
- Program quality should influence funding, as well as aspects like the ability of the program to charge fees over and above the state funding.

Stakeholder Feedback: Workforce

- Pathways and credentials
 - Pathways should allow more movement and make it easy for the workforce to earn degrees with cumulative PD and college coursework.
 - The program should include an escalator to quality, so that teachers/providers can gain the necessary trainings and supports to meet the high standards
 - There should be a set of key competencies for the workforce rather than credentials.
 - Provide incentives to enter the field and scholarships for required college level coursework.
- Professional development
 - PD should be able to be stacked to create credits for continuing education and to help teachers move up, rather than PD just for the sake of PD.
 - Required trainings should be available on-demand and are made either affordable or free through PDIS.
 - Implement a high quality professional development/certification track. Higher preschool workforce that meet the standards (not require them to reach these standards while also working full time).
 - Require at least 15 hours of teacher training per year, individualized PD plan, and regular, in-person coaching
- Compensation
 - Workforce should be well compensated both in wages and benefits.
 - Compensation (beyond a livable minimum wage) should be aligned with experience and incentivizing childcare and workforce positions in childcare deserts
 - Keeping funding streams flexible enough to allow employers to offer incentives, bonuses, supports and other perks -- in addition to competitive pay.
 - Require a regionally-based recommended compensation target (for short term, consider setting a \$15 or \$20/hour minimum) for all providers and identify additional resources to incentivize providers to meet those targets.

Stakeholder Feedback: Special Education

- There should be a family consultant/concierge/service coordinator providing bridge to resources outside of the school district, health insurance navigation, parent training/education, financial services, support groups, communities of practice
- More supports should be offered for the challenging transitions from Part C to Part B, from home-based to school-based services.
- Families should have more options for education for their children with special needs.

Goals for UPK from Special Education Subgroup:

We believe that meaningful parent input should be included throughout this process.

We strive to unite as an EC community.

The needs of children and families and the professionals who serve them are at the center of our discussions and recommendations.

We value a strengths-based, high expectations approach for children.

We value all perspectives and work to understand across lines of difference.

We support linkages for service delivery across settings.

We endorse inclusive/least restrictive classrooms as appropriate to support the individual student's needs.

We focus on children receiving individualized support and programs.

We understand that funding be taken into consideration and that additional funding for children with special needs is needed to support mixed delivery.

We support the administration of special education services in mixed delivery settings - with the standard of care approval by the Educational Unit (Administration) locally.

Report Aims

The feedback received ranges from general principles to very specific recommendations. The legislation requires that this report provide DEC with guidance and direction to ensure a successful launch of the universal preschool program.

To meet the legislative charge, the report must address the following questions about the basic structure of the new preschool program:

- How should funding flow to families and providers?
- How should families enroll in the preschool program?
- How should eligibility and prioritization for additional hours of care work?

The report must also support DEC and its stakeholders to successfully establish UPK, which includes addressing the remaining implementation themes from the legislation.

To meet this charge, the report should:

- Name values, priorities, and guidance for UPK implementation
- Determine important questions and workstreams for DEC in UPK implementation
- Outline processes and deadlines for DEC to arrive at critical answers, (e.g., additional topic-specific stakeholder processes, collaborating with other departments, updating the ECLC and the legislature, etc.)

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**Recommendation #1:
Application**

One Single Unified Application

HB21-1304 calls for the development of a common program application process, that is easily accessible to families and streamlines enrollment and eligibility.

In feedback across engagements, there was consensus on the following points:

- Families should **complete a simple, unified application for all funding sources** that would be blended, braided, or stacked with universal preschool dollars.
- The application should **collect only as much information as necessary** to determine eligibility
- There should be technology that **verifies eligibility for additional hours of care** by checking against other programs families may already be eligible for or utilizing
- The state must set requirements to ensure **equitable access** to the application process (ex: translated to multiple languages)
- DEC should work towards **including additional early childhood programs and services** in the unified application over time



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Discussing Funding Flow

Preparing for Next Recommendation: Funding Flow

A key consideration for this report is how funding will flow to ensure access for the new statewide universal preschool program.

This recommendation is an important decision point that has implications for the remaining points of conversation for the report.

Colorado has an opportunity to set up infrastructure that would be ready to receive any additional funding that comes into the system in addition to the current Prop EE funding landscape.

Funding for Universal Preschool

With Prop EE, every child will be eligible for 10 hours of preschool funded through **Universal Preschool**. Colorado can leverage additional funds to increase the hours offered to each child, including:

State funding	Local funding	Mixed governance of funding
<p>Universal preschool (Prop EE funding)</p> <p>Targeted universal preschool funds</p> <p>Colorado Preschool Program (CPP)</p> <p>Early Childhood At-risk Enhancement (ECARE)</p>	<p>Additional school funds, including Title I, Title V, local funds (e.g., Colorado Preschool Program match funds)</p> <p>Head Start (federal to local grantees)</p> <p>Tax funds, including mill levies</p> <p>Philanthropic funds</p> <p>Tuition</p>	<p>Child Care Development Fund (Child Care Assistance Program)</p> <p>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B</p> <p>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)</p>

Funding Flow Options



Tuition Assistance



Funding allocations direct to providers



Leverage existing school system infrastructure



Local coordinating organization or agency
(competitively determined)

Option 1



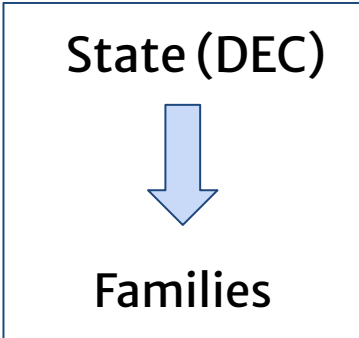
Tuition assistance

Model:

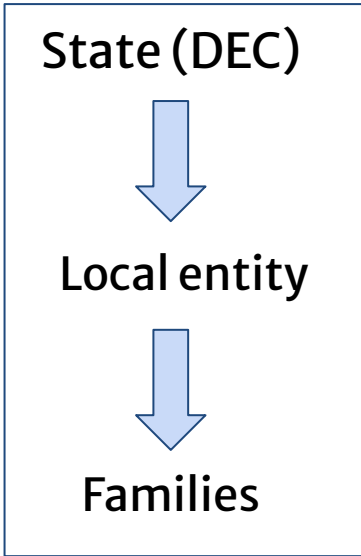
- Families apply individually to each provider of choice
- Once accepted, families can apply their tuition assistance amount towards the cost of early care and education services that participate (either as a check to family or to provider)

Considerations:

- Most decentralized option
- Family is in the driver seat, though not all families may find an enrollment option
- Provides least guardrails and stability for the system
- Limits the ability to increase quality across the system
- Complicated experience for providers and families who must navigate application and enrollment experiences individually, on top of the already complex EC system



OR





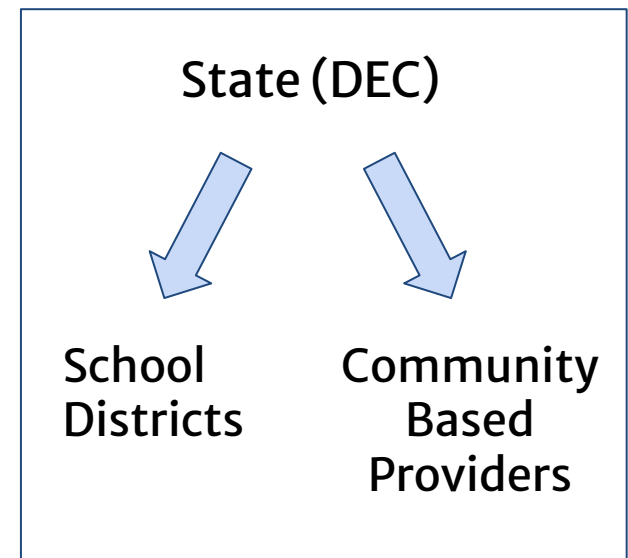
Funding allocations direct to providers

Model:

- State funds individual providers for slots directly
- Families apply individually to each provider of choice

Consideration:

- Helps providers to plan budgets based on allocated slots
- Provides opportunity for streamlining funding distribution of state administered funds
- Would require significant staff/operational capacity to run a statewide program centrally, and manage quality and distribution directly, including approving thousands of individual payments
- While some local providers have a streamlined process and blend/braid funding for families, many providers and families would have to navigate application and enrollment experiences individually, on top of the already complex EC system
- Requires state to solve for all local nuances, including any distribution inequities, lack of capacity, etc



Option 3



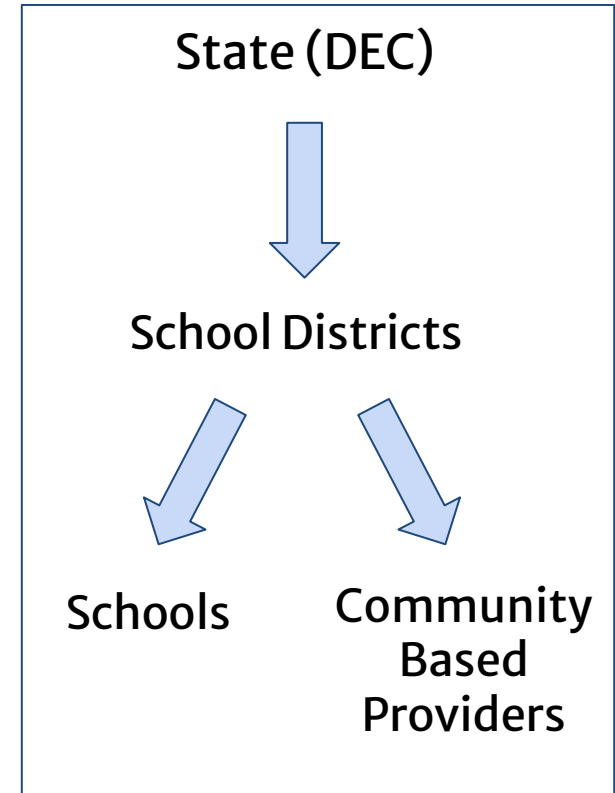
Leverage existing school system infrastructure

Model:

- School district distributes funding to community-based programs and all schools
- Families apply individually to each provider of choice, or apply to the school system and are matched to a spot

Consideration:

- Already have program and structure where parents and the public can weigh in on decision making (e.g., school board processes)
- Potential for consistency in a community (e.g., curriculum, PD, data sharing, family engagement)
- A school district monopoly or determination process would likely result in exacerbated decrease of licensed child care providers, spots for children ages birth to three, and before/after care options making mixed delivery harder to attain
- Would likely inflate the costs of infant and toddler care services (e.g., Washington, DC)



Option 4



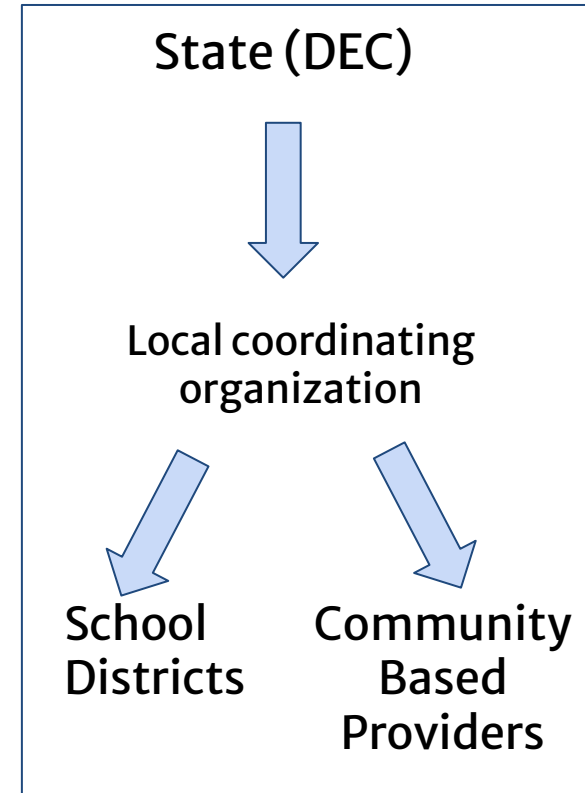
Local coordinating organization or agency (competitively determined)

Model:

- Local coordinating organization convenes providers to build a local EC plan and to request funds for serving all children
- State flows funds to local coordinating organization
- Families apply through a locally-coordinated process
- Local coordinating organization uses family choice to ensure every child has a spot, flexibly allocating funds to providers to match parent demand
- Catchment areas can vary in size and complexity to accommodate local context

Consideration:

- Adds additional process for coordination
- Local lead responsible for ensuring adequate capacity and streamlined processes that meet family needs
- Encourages collaboration and equity among providers
- Maintains local control and adaptability
- Varying community readiness would require that DEC provide oversight but also capacity-building support to meet communities where they are
- Could be any public or nonprofit organization



Breakout Room Discussions

What else would you add to the descriptions of these models?

Where do you agree or disagree?

Is there a model that resonates most with the needs of your community?



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Share Out

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Public Comment

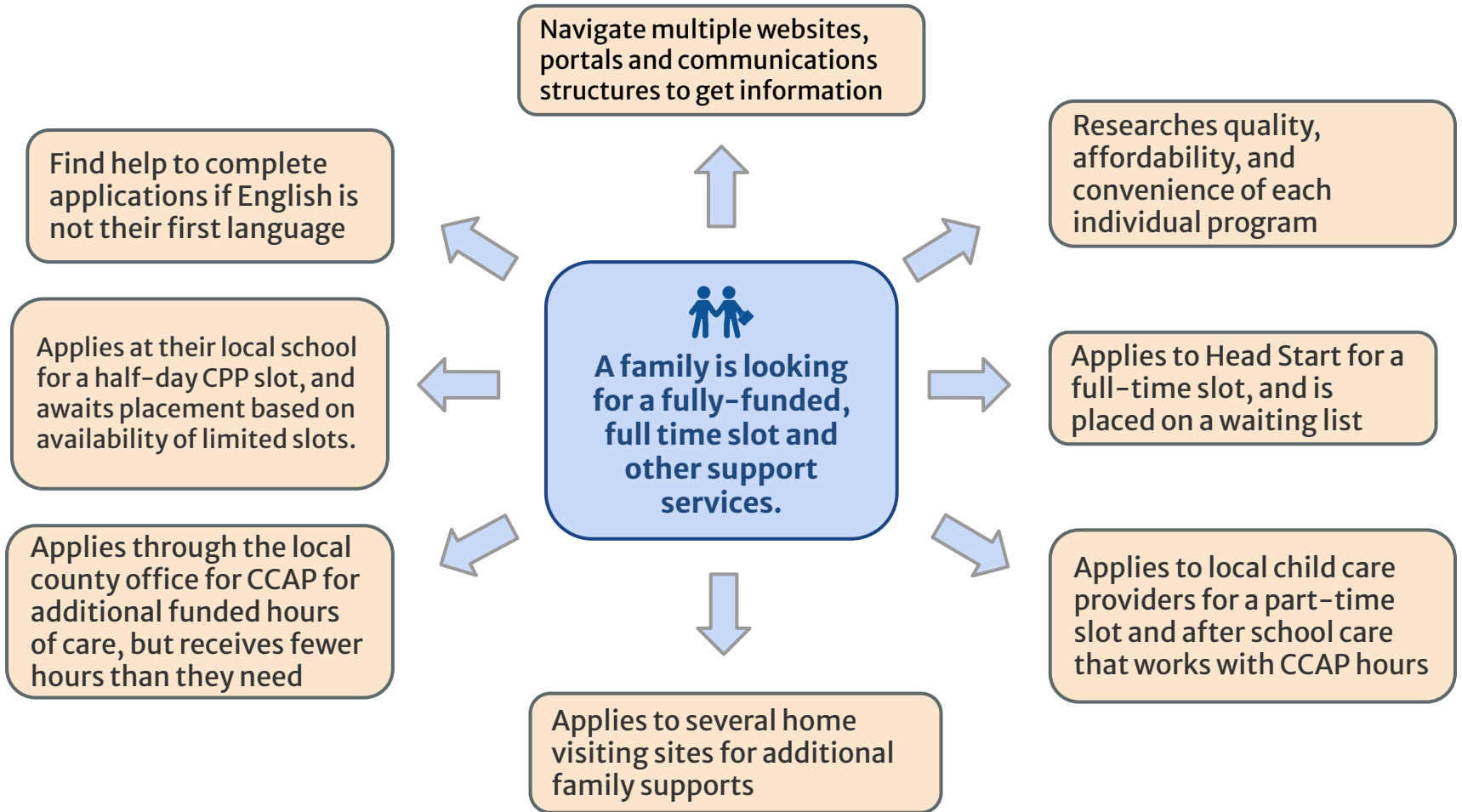
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Appendix

Example: EC system for families

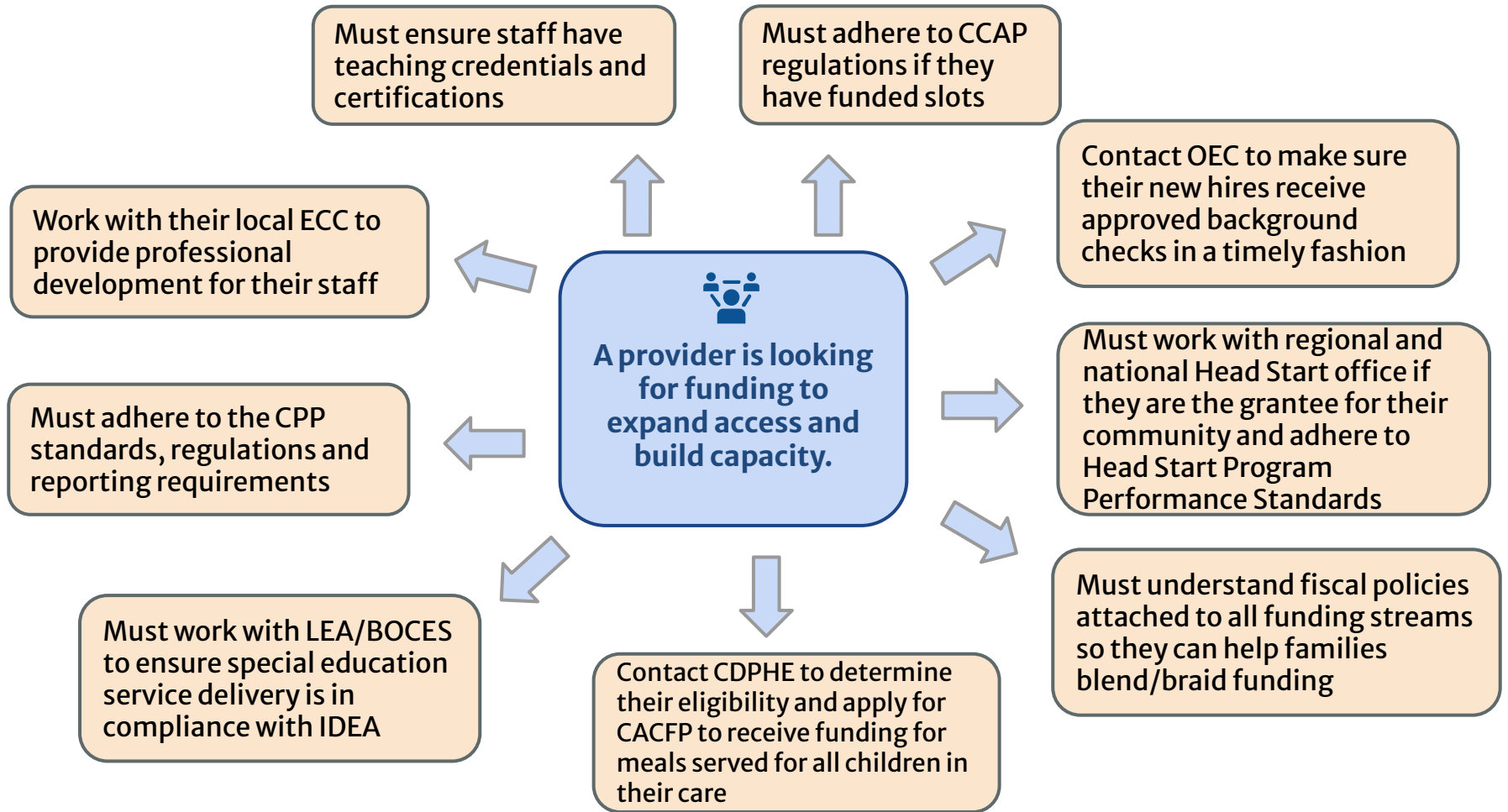
Throughout the stakeholder engagement process, **families** expressed having to navigate the following functions within the early childhood system. An example family may have the below experience:



This graphic is not exhaustive but highlights how the fragmented local governance system can cause challenges for the very people it is supposed to serve.

Example: EC system for providers

Through the stakeholder engagement process, **providers** expressed having to navigate the following functions within the early childhood system:



This graphic is not exhaustive but highlights how the fragmented local governance system can cause challenges for the very people it is supposed to serve.