

Early Learning

Overall Goal

Promote understanding of the role of early learning and develop systems of support so that all Nevada children are well supported during their early learning years.

OBJECTIVE 1

Describe Early Childhood Education (ECE) in terms of Workforce Development and Economic Development for federal, state and county policy makers.

Vision

In states with highest performance on grade 3 academic evaluations, Early Childhood Education is a central component strategic plans for competitive economic development, workforce development, and academic achievement at K-12, post-secondary and post-graduate levels. Nevada's message and voice for robust investment, supportive public policy, and competitive wages for ECE will be shared among business, economic development, workforce and education leaders.

Strategy

- Recruit corporate, economic development, workforce development, military, and tribal leaders, to join education leaders at ECAC table.
- Identify and engage corporate champions who require high-skill workforce and young families.
- Collaborate on state and federal advocacy for ECE to be jointly supported by corporate economic development education, labor, military, tribal, and workforce development.
- Seek local investment in ECE to meet rural, reservation, municipal and county ECE provider and workforce needs.

Benefits

It's important to impress upon policy makers that an investment in ECE is a short-term and long-term investment in the productivity of the current workforce and emerging economy workforce. Quality ECE meets the needs of working families now and the needs of high-tech, high-skill families attracted to Nevada by information technology, financial services, energy, aviation, aerospace and advanced manufacturing companies.

Time Frame

Year One: Focus on outreach to Economic Development Agency of Western Nevada, Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance, Las Vegas metro Chamber of Commerce, Reno-Sparks Northern Nevada Chamber of Commerce, NV Dept. of Employment Training and Rehabilitation, and affiliated employers with regional/statewide influence to serve as champions.

Coordinating Agency

Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)

Strategy Implementation Partners

Nevada Department of Education (NVDOE), The Children’s Cabinet, Children’s Advocacy Alliance, UNR, UNLV, Great Basin College, Ed Alliance Partners in Education, and Ed Alliance P-16 Council

Funds Needed

ECAC and The Children’s Cabinet should secure funds to facilitate outreach to economic development, workforce development, and corporate leaders

ECAC Role

Serve as the coordinating body and develop teams to conduct targeted outreach to association leaders and leading employers

OBJECTIVE 2

Establish, monitor and enforce child learning and development standards, quality program standards, and workforce training standards for all programs and personnel in the B-3 field.

Vision

The foundation of high-performing child learning/development programs begins with state-of-the-art standards for all home-based, private, and school-based ECE programs. These standards lead to model programs, training and personnel in the B-3 arena. Unified standards, clear communication, funding, policy and oversight will help to guide the work carried out in the remaining six Early Learning objectives.

Strategy

- Embark on long-term process to review and establish state-of-the-art licensure standards for ECE teachers built on model states or counties.
- Establish reasonable and affordable minimum workforce licensure standards for home-based providers.
- Use this unified approach to set the foundation for funding, policy and oversight to support and guide the work carried out in the remaining six objectives.
- Form task force to align and award CEUs, training hours, and/or college credits for all qualified training programs.
- Establish expectations, standards and ways to reward buy-in for Child Care to Kindergarten handoffs (*e.g., Countdown to Kindergarten in Boston, MA*).
- Provide ECE providers information or check list of what a child entering into kindergarten should know and provide resources for the ECE provider to ensure that this is done.

- Engage more closely with for-profit center-based companies to expand access to fee-for-service and subsidized childcare.
- Explore new rating system for Silver State Stars that reflects greater value for one-star providers.
- Explore wider promotion of Silver State Stars to parents through employers, health systems, United Ways, and community-based providers.

Benefits

School children will improve their academic achievement as Nevada increases its support for providers and its ECE workforce with the same intensity that it is addressing K-3 instruction and teacher skills, so that there is uniform high quality in home-based, center-based, and district-based child care.

Time Frame

- Year One: Formulate an ECAC subcommittee to initiate assessing training programs for training hours, CEUs, and college credits, and look into model states and their evolution to B-3 specific licensing.
- Year Two: Focus on raising standards and ways to reward buy-in for childcare to kindergarten handoffs. Develop and disseminate childcare provider checklist to support preparation for kindergarten entry.

Coordinating Agency

Nevada DOE and licensing

Strategy Implementation Partners

Nevada Department of Education (NVDOE) and The Children’s Cabinet, QRIS, The Nevada Registry, School Districts, and Turning Point

Funds Needed

Promotional and outreach budget for Silver State Stars QRIS to conduct advertising through partners.

ECAC Role

Serve as the coordinating body.

OBJECTIVE 3

Unify ECE Workforce within The Nevada Registry.

Vision

The Nevada early learning workforce is estimated at more than 15,000 teachers, administrators, teacher’s aides, academics, clinicians, and other adults providing care and education to the state’s birth through grade 3 children. The Nevada Registry offers an extraordinary asset for that workforce to be understood as one, and for those registered to access training, technical assistance and support. Through comprehensive registration, the

early learning community will be able to best represent a large and critically important workforce to federal, state, county and municipal policy makers and private funders. The Registry will also be able to provide registrants, policy makers and planners a clear understanding the levels of provider training, target training efforts where they are needed most, and approach training in ways that will create stronger connections between community- and school-based early educators.

Strategy

- Register all K-3 adults in school systems as members of The Nevada Registry.
- Work with DOE to make registration automatic through technology.
- Assess all ECE training offering for CEUs, Training Hours and College Credits.
- Encourage providers of ECE training to offer training program registration at The Nevada Registry as well as through traditional promotion mechanisms.
- Accept all training and educational accomplishments recorded in The Nevada Registry from childcare to school districts to reward individuals on ECE career pathway.
- Promote all B-3 qualified training on-line through The Nevada Registry for CEUs, Training Hours and College Credits.
- Promote the on-line early childhood education opportunities offered by Great Basin College in all counties to provide greater access to workers unable to attend classroom training.
- Offer ECE training in community partner locations – Boys & Girls Clubs, libraries, churches, UNR, UNLV, Great Basin College, community colleges especially in rural communities and areas with a high percentage of English Language Learners.
- Focus B-3 training investments in geographic and demographic areas of greatest need based on Registry data analysis.

Benefits

If each birth through grade 3 ECE worker is enrolled in The Nevada Registry with complete credentials and educational attainment, it will provide the information needed to direct human and financial resources at each level and location of ECE to meet the needs of families in Nevada. It will also align community-based care with school districts to help them act as a unified B-3 system.

Time Frame

- Year One: Focus on consensus and informing school districts and staff to enroll all k-3 workers in The Nevada Registry,
- Year Two: Initiate implementation through existing data and information gathering from school staff at beginning of 2019 school year.
- Year Three: Complete implementation.

Coordinating Agencies

The Nevada Registry and the Superintendent's Office of Nevada DOE

Strategy Implementation Partners

Nevada Department of Education (NVDOE) The Nevada Registry, School Districts, UNR, UNLV, Great Basin College, and other higher education training providers, TEACH, community based providers

Funds Needed

Resources for local consultant to organize credits, hours and CEUs. Funds for data management support to assist The Nevada Registry and any additional hardware needed to maintain and process increased information and updating.

ECAC Role

Serve as the coordinating body.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Align and locate all Child Care Program Licensure in the Nevada Department of Education.

Vision

Providers, administrators, facility managers, and licensure inspectors will benefit from a unified set of regulations and government oversight agency tailored specifically to the conditions required in early learning settings and programs. Updating regulations, responding to changing federal, state and county regulations, and communicating these changes will be streamlined through alignment.

Strategy

- Move Early Intervention Licensing to Nevada Office of Special Education.
- Move Child Care facility licensure to Nevada Office of Early Learning.
- Embark on long-term process to review and establish state-of -the-art program licensure standards built on model states or counties (e.g. Arizona, Georgia, and Florida).
- Remove disincentives and conflicting regulations from health, safety and workforce program license requirements.
- Align stricter county licensure standards with state standards.
- Include early childhood program licensure operated by municipal or county Parks & Recreation departments in unified licensure regulations.

Benefits

Alignment and single oversight of licensure of child care facilities and ECE instruction will create a system focused on the health, safety and development of children without the often conflicting or illogical interference of regulations from other systems focused on adults. It will also permit state and county licensing inspectors to work with providers on corrective measures that enhance access and quality in support of the QRIS.

Time Frame

- Year One: Build consensus among Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Department of Health, and Nevada Department of Aging and Disability Services to re-organize all *childcare* licensure within Nevada DOE. Also form task force to seek out best practice states for models to aid in this evolution implementation in year two.
- Year Two: Focus on implementation, re-writing regulations for adoption by the state legislature, and looking at ways to align county and state licensure regulations to encourage greater access while ensuring quality, health and safety.
- Year Three: Complete implementation.

Coordinating Agency

Nevada DOE and Department of Health

Strategy Implementation Partners

Nevada DOE, Nevada Department of Health, Nevada Department of Aging and Disability Services, Clark and Washoe county licensure authorities, The Children’s Cabinet

Funds Needed

TBD

ECAC Role

Serve as the coordinating body.

OBJECTIVE 5

Advocate for greater investment in wage programs that reward increased education levels, and in TEACH to subsidize B-3 Workforce development and faculty training.

Vision

Nevada will emerge from its next phase of early learning development as a state that values its early learning workforce and rewards outstanding performance. As demands on early learning teachers and administrators increase to improve Nevada’s educational achievement, there will be greater investment in the training, accessibility and standards of training programs.

Strategy

- Map all B-3 financing and identify specific funding gaps.
- Identify opportunities for federal, state, county and municipal funding to increase wages of birth to age 5 early childhood teachers in all settings.
- Explore significant funding request for TEACH from state marijuana tax dollars to create greater scale for TEACH.
- Mobilize task force to seek county, municipal and private investment in TEACH.
- Explore county, municipal, and private funding rewards for Pre-K training and worker loyalty.

Benefits

There will be increased percentage of tuition and fees underwritten by TEACH to support greater access and incentives for low- and middle-income ECE teachers to enter and pursue credentials. There will be greater assistance to rural family- and district-based programs to participate in QRIS. There will be the ability to offer strategic and compelling opportunities for individuals, corporations, and foundations to invest private dollars in children, workforce development and family assistance.

Time Frame

- Year One: Focus on mapping all B-3 financing and reaching consensus on priority funding needs, and exploring request to expand funding for TEACH from marijuana tax.
- Years Two and Three: Deploy task force to conduct outreach to county elected and appointed officials to invest in B-3 education.

Coordinating Agency

TEACH and The Children's Cabinet

Strategy Implementation Partners

TEACH, Nevada Department of Education (NVDOE) and The Children's Cabinet

Funds Needed

Identify year one goal for expanded investment in TEACH and rewards systems

ECAC Role

Serve as reporting and monitoring agency.

OBJECTIVE 6

Allocate Manpower and Financial Resources to Integrate ECE Data.

Vision

The early learning community in Nevada collects an extraordinary amount of data on its programs, workforce, performance, approaches, and research. That data is reported in the context of the demands of its funders, grants, or appropriations by state, federal or local governments. Making its data more readily accessible within its community will help to improve evaluations, program development and advocacy for needed support.

Strategy

- Integrate Registry, DOE, School District, TEACH, and Licensing Data for parent, provider, advocacy and economic development usage.
- Make data transparent and available through DOE for providers and school districts.

Benefits

As this strategic plan unfolds, ECAC and DOE will have several richer data sets with which to engage families, recruit and retain ECE teachers and providers, evaluate progress, identify areas in need of improvement, make strategic decisions, and allocate resources. Bringing these data together and making them accessible can assist in sustainability and commitment to continuous improvement.

Time Frame

- Year Three: Integrate new data onto platforms providing information on licensing workforce, education credits, provider information, etc. for greater access by all concerned entities and families.

Coordinating Agency

Nevada DOE

Strategy Implementation Partners

QRIS, The Nevada Registry, TEACH, Access Nevada, Nevada and county licensing authorities, Nevada DOE, and The Children’s Cabinet

Funds Needed

Determine funds needed to collect, organize and make data available.

ECAC Role

Serve as the coordinating body.

OBJECTIVE 7

Align B-3 and ECAC Strategic Plans.

Vision

Nevada has a rich history of developing goals, strategies and plans to improve early childhood education. Nevada should emerge from this phase of with one strategic plan against which the early learning community can measure its progress, direct its resources, and align its regulations.

Strategy

- Align around common set of goals and principles.
- Focus on common outcomes measures in terms of quality and child/student achievement.
- Align training standards for ECE, literacy and instructional specialists and coaches.
- Align B-3 curricula standards across developmental domains.
- Simplify credentialing for ECE faculty and trainers to expand access.

- Prioritize opportunities for joint training and relationship building across all the domains of ECE.

Benefits

Remove conflicting goals and objectives and ambiguity for ECE providers, school districts, licensing authorities, school districts, trainers, policy makers and evaluators.

Time Frame

- Year One: Seek areas of alignment and present areas of divergence in need of conference committee agreement.

Coordinating Agencies

Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), Turning Point, DCA, Children’s Cabinet

Strategy Implementation Partners

Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), Turning Point, DCA, Children’s Cabinet, Nevada DOE

Funds Needed

None unless this work extends into 2019.

ECAC Role

Serve as the coordinating body.