



## Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

### NEVADA EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL (ECAC)

LEADERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2023**

**9:00 AM**

*“Nevada’s children will be safe, healthy, and thriving during the first eight years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential.”*

**Meeting Location:**

This meeting was held via Team videoconference.

### MINUTES

**1. Welcome, Call to Order, and Roll Call- Meeting to Order at 9:04 AM.**

*Patrice Gardner and Denise Tanata, Leadership Subcommittee Co-Chairs*

• **Members in attendance:**

- Denise Tanata, ECAC Chair – Present
- Patrice Gardner, ECAC Vice Chair- Present
- Julie Houchins, System Alignment & Policy/Finance Co-Chair -Present
- Dr. Jenna Weglarz-Ward, System Alignment Co-Chair – Present
- Dr. Linda Young, Communication/Engagement Co-Chair -Present
- Jennifer Butler, Communication/Engagement Co-Chair -Present
- Marty Elquist, Data/Evaluation Co-Chair -Present
- Ashley Dines, Parent Representative -Present
- Kathy Yoder Bass, Provider Representative- Present

• **Guests in attendance:**

- Tiffany Olivas, The Children's Cabinet
- Anna Villatoro, The Children’s Cabinet
- Rosa Tamayo, The Children's Cabinet
- Michael Stewart, The Guinn Center
- Jeana Miller, The Guinn Center
- Rachel Stepina, The Office of Early Learning and Development (NDE)

**2. Public Comment #1**

*No Public Comment.*



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### 3. Approval of Flexible Agenda

- Dr. Linda Young motioned to approve a flexible agenda.
- Marty Elquist seconded the motion to approve a flexible agenda.
- Denise Tanata approved the motion of the flexible agenda.

### 4. Minutes from April 4, 2023

- Marty Elquist motioned to approve the April 4, 2023, Minutes as presented.
- Jennifer Butler seconded the motion to approve the April 4th, 2023, Minutes.
- No one objected to the motion, Denise Tanata approved the April 4<sup>th</sup> Minutes.

### 5. Discuss Process for Nominating and Electing New Chair at the May 2023 ECAC Meeting

- Denise Tanata announced that she is stepping down from the ECAC effective at the end of June. ECAC needs to elect a new chair at the May 17th ECAC meeting. The ECAC meeting schedule will be full, so Denise recommended requesting nominations via email. The council can have a list of candidates to vote on at the meeting. Denise asked what everyone's thoughts were.
- Dr. Linda Young thanked Denise Tanata for all her work and leadership. Dr. Linda Young asked if there are guidelines when submitting nominations. For example, does the nomination have to be seconded, do nominations have a timeline, and is there a job description for the role?
- Denise Tanata responded that she can draft a position description but is not sure there will be time to review.
- Marty Elquist agreed that there should be a job description and that it would be beneficial for the council to best select the next chair.
- Denise Tanata will draft the job description and include the upcoming staffing assistance from the PDGB-5 grant. Denise will send this along with the request for nominations. Individuals can also self-nominate for the chair position if they are appointed members of the ECAC. Once someone is nominated, they will need to accept the nomination. The candidates will be presented at the May 17th ECAC meeting. Denise asked the members if there were any thoughts or questions.

### 6. Updates from Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Discuss Workplans, Meeting Dates, Posting Deadlines and Membership

- Denise Tanata reminded the subcommittee about posting deadlines. There is a document with all the meeting dates and posting deadlines for materials to be submitted for ADA compliance and posted on the website. The materials need to be posted through the state listservs and state calendar to meet the open meeting law requirements. Denise will resend the document to everyone and is also available in the Team folder. Alyson Godfrey with the Nevada Department of Education, who does the postings for ECAC at the state level, is out on PTO. For the next couple of weeks extra time will be needed for posting.
- Denise Tanata reminded the subcommittee to have the master work plan and all the items on their status, key activities, and any metrics updated to the work plan by Friday. Denise will submit the materials for the May 17th meeting by Monday and wants to have the work plan updated. Additionally, Denise will be updating OnStrategy with the new updates as of the end of April. The work plan PDF document was attached to the meeting invite. If you need the Word version of the work plan, email Denise, or send her the updates by Friday.
- Denise Tanata utilized the flexible agenda to hold the remainder of the discussion and moved to item #7 to have The Guinn Center provide an update and will return to this item. The Council returned to this item after the update from The Guinn Center.
- **Data and Evaluation-** Data and evaluation met on April 20th. Marty Elquist thanked Amanda Haboush-Deloye and her team for identifying the key performance indicators across the early childhood system. The subcommittee is working on identifying important research questions to gather missing data indicators. The subcommittee is beginning its work by focusing on the early childhood sector and examining the research question of whether Nevada is providing equitable access



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to high-quality early childhood programs and services. Before evaluating programs, it is important to define what is meant by "high quality" and identify specific criteria. In this case, the focus will be on programs rated four or five stars. They are also looking at the number of slots in those programs in Nevada and then the number of children served by age in those slots by each factor in the vulnerable population definition. The subcommittee is using the vulnerable population definition from the ECAC and then making sure that the data can be disaggregated at those factors. This will help the subcommittee determine if the state is effectively reaching the children who require the most need. Lastly, they have a robust roadmap and are taking it one step at a time.

- **Systems Alignment-** Systems alignment had a meeting scheduled for last Wednesday and didn't meet Quorum. Their standing meeting time will be the last Wednesday of each month from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM. The next meeting will be on May 31st. Denise Tanata will set up the remainder of the meetings.
- **Communications and Engagement-** One of their goals and concerns is to reach the vulnerable, non-connective population. They want to find ways to better connect with the community. Dr. Linda Young also added that there needs to be more communication and what does that look like. She has ideas of how to reach those without technology, but she and Jennifer will continue to work on this. They also want to attend four community events (2 in the North and 2 in the South) and possibly have some ECAC presentations. Dr. Linda Young will present on July 17th to the Nevada Association of School Administrators and invite the subcommittee to attend and possibly have a panel to get the information to the community. Dr. Linda Young and Jennifer will meet to go over the agenda.
- **Finance and Policy-** There are no pressing updates. Denise Tanata will include updates on their work plan document.

### 7. Discuss and Update Leadership Subcommittee Workplan

*(Discussion, For Possible Action) The subcommittee will discuss updates, progress and needs related to the Leadership Subcommittee Workplan document, covering Goal 1 of the ECAC Strategic Plan.*

*Materials: Nevada ECAC Workplans Document; NV ECAC Family Engagement Mentorship Program Overview & Application*

- Denise Tanata referred to Objective 1.1, establishing the Office of Early Childhood Systems within the Office of the Governor. Denise introduced Michael Stewart and Jeana Miller from The Guinn Center to give an update on the Guinn Center projects.
- Michael Stewart is the Research Director at The Guinn Center and shared other professional work backgrounds. Michael shared that The Guinn Center is a nonpartisan and statewide policy research institute. The Guinn Center advances evidence-based policies through analysis, research, and engagement. Jeana Miller introduced herself and is part of The Guinn Center helping with the EC project.
- Michael Stewart shared the scope of work that The Guinn Center is working on. The work includes studying the Early Childhood comprehensive systems in Nevada. There is a focus on governance funding structure and developing targeted recommendations to policymakers that can improve and streamline the Early Childhood system in Nevada. These can include statutory and regulatory changes or amendments. The goal is to collaborate with key organizations, leaders, and stakeholders within the system to create a report before the next legislative session. The report and the policy recommendations can initiate a system-wide change at the policy level. The early childhood ecosystem consists of various programs that have different funding sources. The Guinn Center aims to make meaningful recommendations to streamline the system.
- The Guinn Center is thrilled to be partnering with Jeana Miller with the College of Education and Human Development. Michael Stewart announced that they have added Todd Butterworth to the project team to assist with the work. Todd has worked at the legislature for many years and worked at the Department of Health and Human Services.
- They will also be looking at the early childhood entities throughout the state. They will be looking at what's their specific charge in the statute. What is their statutory authority? Where do they get their funding, and how much? They will be providing links to the organization's budget as well. The Guinn Center will examine how the entities oversee and advise other entities within the system. They will determine if there are any required coordination requirements outlined in the statutes that would require collaboration between entities. Additionally, are there reporting requirements involved by these entities?



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- The Guinn Center will also do additional fiscal mapping, network analysis, and gap analysis. They will look at various strategic plans that are out there and pull out those policy pieces that might be important. They will also be comparing the roles and responsibilities of the primary government actors. Michael Stewart said they have and will continue conducting key informant interviews along the way with stakeholders. Through conducting interviews, they can gain insight into the involvement and roles of individuals within the Early Childhood ecosystem.
- Michael Stewart said the report will identify areas of best practices and areas of improvement in Nevada. In addition, the report will feature successful practices and systems utilized in other states. Is it possible to implement these practices and systems in Nevada? In the long term, they are looking to develop an independent, nonpartisan report for the early childhood comprehensive system and provide recommendations for any structural improvements needed to ensure that children and families have universal access and services.
- Michael Stewart said they also want to include current issues like AB113, which creates The Office of Early Childhood in the Governor's Office. If the bill for AB113 passes, it will include recommendations about what the office should be doing and who they should be engaging. Including these issues in the report would be informative, and there is still time to do so. The ECAC can serve as a steering committee for this project and can provide thoughts or suggestions for the work.
- Dr. Linda Young thanked Michael Stewart and The Guinn Center for the information shared. Dr. Linda Young asked if the goal is to have the report for the 2025 Legislative session. Michael Stewart responded that they plan to release the final report in the fall of 2024. This should allow sufficient time for the recommendations to be disseminated and hopefully be considered by legislators during the session.
- Dr. Linda Young asked if there are specific guidelines they are using for stakeholder involvement in the report. Dr. Linda Young shared that she is part of the Communications and Engagement Subcommittee and is interested in this aspect. Dr. Linda Young mentioned that Jennifer Butler is the co-chair of a subcommittee and aims to connect with groups that have not typically been involved. Michael Stewart responded that The Guinn Center has great experience conducting focus groups. They can engage with individuals this way if needed. Michael gave an example that they are working on a project on housing needs for individuals with developmental disabilities. They reached individuals who were part of the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDDs) community with housing concerns. They can model something like this and would love the input from the Communications and engagement subcommittee to capture the right population.
- During the conversation with Dr. Linda Young, Michael was asked about what "early childhood entities" are. In response, Michael explained that they include government organizations such as the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services, as well as non-governmental entities like The Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and The Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC).
- Denise Tanata added that The Guinn Center had shared the list of entities with the ECAC, and they are looking at what Todd put together and will be comparing it to the master list the ECAC has created. Todd also had some questions about the list, and they are currently reviewing it to provide answers to those questions.
- Rachel Stepina asked for clarification that the entities include prenatal to 8-year-old serving entities. Rachel also inquired whether the cross offices focused on early childhood education will also be included as part of The Department of Education entity because they also have early childhood-focused policies and regulations when it comes to statutory authorities. For example, early literacy is part of the read-by-grade 3 law. Another component for special education is early childhood. The Department of Education serves early childhood through almost every office, but The Office of Early Learning and Development does not have the authority over other offices. Rachel emphasized the importance of listing and considering other offices within the Department of Education. Rachel pointed out that this should apply to the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding aging and disability services and the Child Care and Development Fund requirements.
- Michael Stewart will coordinate with Marty Elquist and Denise Tanata to ensure that all offices are included on their list. Michael mentioned that Todd has an extensive list of entities but will ensure there is crossover. Michael also asked if there is a list that Rachel can provide, they would be happy to take them and capture the summaries.
- Rachel pointed out a helpful resource on the ECAC website that The Guinn Center can use. Nevada Ready! Birth-3 project from 2019, which produced a policy report analyzing various documents. This report is outdated but still contains valuable information. Additionally, Rachel asked if The Guinn Center would be attending the early childhood Comprehensive Systems meeting.



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- Michael Stewart responded that Nevada Ready! B-3 Policy Analysis is on their list of documents to review. They will be attending the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems meeting but not presenting. They will continue to give periodic updates to the Leadership Subcommittee.
- Marty Elquist stated that The Guinn Center will receive support for this project from the ECAC.
- Michael Stewart responded that they view all the ECAC members as experts in Early Childhood. Their ultimate goal is to make content easily understandable for policymakers, but at times it can be complicated. The Guinn Center hopes to engage with ECAC members during the project as they are the experts.
- Denise Tanata thanked The Guinn Center for their work on the project and the outcomes it will provide. Denise mentioned actionable next steps for the subcommittee. The next time the subcommittee meets session will be over and they will know if AB 113 passed. Denise proposed reviewing the list created by Todd from The Guinn Center and cross-checking it with ECAC's master list. ECAC can then decide who else to add to the list. It would be useful to have a list of the individuals or groups The Guinn Center has interacted with as informants.
- Denise Tanata moved on to objective 1.1 and gave an update on AB 113. The bill has been referred to the assembly of Ways and Means due to a fiscal note, which means it's still pending. Bills with fiscal notes tend to wait until closer to the end of the process, but Denise anticipates hearing more about it in an upcoming hearing, probably within the next few weeks. Denise inquired if anyone has had further meetings or discussions related to the creation of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. This information is essential to the work plan document as the subcommittee aims to keep a record of all relevant updates.
- Rachel Stepina replied that within the Nevada Department of Education budget hearing through Ways and Means, it came up when they were discussing the new EPP data person for the Office of Early Learning and Development. The data position went through and will be moving forward.
- Denise Tanata moved on to objective 1.2, which is the restructuring of the ECAC to provide advisory support to the governor's office. The recommendations for this restructuring will be provided by The Guinn Center's report. However, AB 114 has already implemented some initial membership changes to the ECAC. A hearing is scheduled for Thursday in the Senate Health and Human Services to present the bill, which has already passed out of the assembly and been sent to the Senate. Denise foresees no significant issues, and the assembly passed it unanimously. There is no budget attached to it and there seems to be general support for the changes that are recommended. Denise stated that the topic of discussion should only concern the alignment with AB 463. This bill proposes to transfer childcare licensing to the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, and it also includes changes to the Early Childhood Advisory Council membership.
- Denise Tanata included some additional proposed activities for objective 1.2 in the work plan document. One of them is to create recruitment strategies for new ECAC members to promote equitable representation. Denise also wants the group to work on establishing the new member orientation policies, procedures, and materials to support the integration of new members. There had been some discussion about it. Additionally, there is a new member orientation packet but not enough job descriptions.
- Patrice Gardner stated that it's a good idea especially since we're trying to replace Denise as chair. She thinks if people understand the ask, the committee would be better positioned to get someone to take over.
- Marty Elquist added that it would be nice to have the job descriptions documented not only for those who are recruiting but to keep other council members informed. Every member comes from their sector in the early childhood system and might not understand the role of the other positions.
- Rachel Stepina expressed her appreciation for job descriptions regarding orientation. Rachel mentioned The Nevada Department of Education with the PDG 5 has an influx of new hires and different positions. They are taking a step back and looking at how they provide orientations and onboarding processes. They are creating an onboarding Canvas course that they can easily share with new members. This course will touch base on the overlapping system pieces and point them in the right direction. This strategy is a possibility when considering orientation policies and procedures.
- Marty Elquist thanked Rachel for the conversation regarding the Canvas course because that's a conversation Denise and she had a couple of months ago about building the system's capacity of our leaders and having consistent training. Having a Canvas course would be amazing.
- Rachel Stepina responded to Marty that they are exploring possibilities right now, but directly linking them to their new PDG position for the ECAC system specialist and Anna's role and looking at what these components can include to their roles. How can they leverage the new positions they have created? Rachel added that these are great actionable steps to include. They are also moving into those PDG B5 interviews next week.





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- Marty Elquist said that utilizing the Canvas training could also serve as an effective orientation tool for new legislators regarding the early childhood system. This would be very powerful. Marty Elquist said to add the Canvas course to the action steps.
- Rachel Stepina mentioned that NDE & OELD has access to the canvas course. The PDG is publicly available and can be designed similarly, eliminating the need to add individuals as students.
- Patrice Gardner added that the council always talks about creating that bench strength and having someone to take over. Implementing systems like this can be effective in achieving this goal. Patrice believes that Rachel is the ideal candidate to lead this effort.
- Rachel Stepina added that another benefit to the canvas course is that it would comply with the ADA compliance.
- Denise Tanata stated that Rachel Stepina and the new PDG team will be leading the Canvas course, and this will be reflected in the work plan. These new items will be added to the agenda for the next meeting. This allows members to think about recruitment strategies and possibly what needs to be in the orientation packet.
- Denise Tanata discussed objective 1.3, establishing support and resources to ensure equitable engagement of parent families and leadership and decision making. She mentioned that Ashley Dines and Rosa Tamayo submitted a Mentorship program proposal for the ECAC meeting on the 17th.
- Rosa Tamayo explained the mentorship program and the application. Their goal is to pair up parent leaders with mentors from ECAC who have diverse backgrounds and can assist them in achieving their goals as leaders. The application is like others where applicants provide their background details, availability, and demographics. Some parents prefer to be matched with someone like them. Additionally, applicants can indicate the language they speak and their geographic location. Rosa asked for suggestions or questions.
- Dr. Linda Young emphasized the importance of involving parent-family leadership in decision-making at both state and local levels. She asked Rosa and Ashley about the strategies for engaging families who are busy, working families, and struggling to survive.
- Rosa Tamayo replied that members are working-class families. The council understands there are scheduling, conflicts, availability, and child care needs. So, when families attend the council meetings, they receive stipends of \$25 an hour. They meet as a council for about 2 hours a month.
- Denise Tanata added that the council is making progress in their efforts to involve parents and families in leadership roles. This initiative has started with the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, as well as other parent groups they are connecting with. While they are starting there, they are also exploring how to expand this effort to the broader community. How does the ECAC create those two-way communication strategies and not just push information out? There is a significant amount of work required to ensure there is genuine engagement of families and parents in the ECAC.
- Rachel Stepina also reminded the subcommittee that activity three of the PDG grant also focuses on family engagement and maximizing family engagement within the birth through five or birth through 8 system. They will be regularly collaborating with the Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council and the Pritzker family engagement team. The subcommittee can add this collaboration to the objective as it is implemented. This work will be led by the new family engagement specialist. They will soon be interviewing candidates for this position.
- Marty Elquist highlighted objective 1.3 and the need for ECAC to restructure meetings for meaningful family engagement. What would this restructuring look like? How does ECAC restructure other Early Childhood meetings? Marty brought up the Manifesto training and wondered if there are other key activities within it.
- Denise Tanata mentioned that in addition to the mentoring program, the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council has additional strategies for family engagement, like updating the language on the website and making it accessible. Denise is open to revising the key activities and being more specific to family engagement.
- Rosa Tamayo added that the mentoring program will equip parents with background and key information to participate in the ECAC and the community. In addition, the program will support parents with training opportunities to help them use their voices and understand the bigger picture.
- Denise Tanata will look at objective 1.3 key activities and potentially revise them to make clear directions. Denise also wants to align the key activities with other groups like the Communications and Engagement subcommittee.

### 8. Discuss Agenda for May 17<sup>th</sup> ECAC Meeting

- Denise Tanata suggested postponing certain items on the agenda for the May 17th meeting. Specifically, proposed delaying the presentation from The Child Care Provider Action Committee and the Nevada Early Childhood funding



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sustainability planning discussion with Marty. Denise emphasized the importance of the Network Analysis Presentation from Visible Network Labs, which needs to happen based on the contract timeline. The Early Childhood Family Leadership Council presentation on family engagement strategies will also remain on the agenda based on their conversation. Additionally, she recommended keeping the Definition of Underrepresented and Underserved Populations discussion, as recommended by the Communications and Engagement Subcommittee. Finally, the partner updates will be minimal due to time constraints.

- Dr. Linda Young asked if it would be possible to share the presentations and materials beforehand without violating any open meeting laws.
- Denise Tanata replied that the network analysis report will be shared in advance. The Visible Network Labs team will be providing an explanation of the report. Each presentation will also have time for Q & A.

### **9. Public comment #2**

*No public comment.*

### **10. Adjournment-** Meeting was adjourned at 10:36 AM.