



Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

NEVADA EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL (ECAC) SYSTEMS ALIGNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING WEDNESDAY AUGUST 30, 2023 1:00 PM

“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 Zoom videoconference.

MINUTES SUMMARY

1. Welcome, Call to Order, and Roll Call

Julie Houchins, Subcommittee Co-Chair

- Julie Houchins called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM.
- Members in Attendance:
 - Ashley Dines, Family Leadership Coordinator (South), The Children’s Cabinet
 - Cynthia Magaña, Childcare and Development Chief, Nevada Division and Welfare and Supportive Services
 - Diane Nicolet, Board Vice President, Washoe County School District
 - Julie Houchins, Senior Director of Early Education, United Way of Southern Nevada
 - Patrice Gardner, Educations Programs Supervisor, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development
 - Rachel Stepina, Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 Grant Manager, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development
 - Tina Springmeyer, Child and Family Services Director, Washoe County School District
- Members Not in Attendance:
 - Anna Marie Binder, Parent Representative
 - Anna Severens, Education Programs Professional, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development
 - Jenna Weglarz-Ward, Associate Professor, Department of Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Public in Attendance:
 - Anna Villatoro, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Program Specialist, The Children's Cabinet
 - Byron Dondoyano, Data Coordinator, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development
 - Denise Tanata, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Consultant, The Children's Cabinet
 - Elyse Monroy, Government Affairs Manager, Belz & Case Government Affairs



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- Jamie Mendez, Early Childhood Workforce Specialist, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development
- John Giammona Wilber, ECAC Administrative Assistant, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development
- Rosa Tamayo, Family Leadership Coordinator (North), The Children's Cabinet
- Sabrina Jones, ECAC Systems Specialist, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development
- Tiffany Olivas, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Manager 2, The Children's Cabinet
- Vivian Bolanos, Birth through 3rd Grade Education Specialist, Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning Development

2. Approval of Flexible Agenda

Julie Houchins, Subcommittee Co-Chair

- Ashley Dines motioned to approve a flexible agenda.
- Diane Nicolet seconded the motion.
- All members voted to approve the motion; none opposed.
- The motion passed.

Review and Approval of July 26, 2023 Minutes

Julie Houchins, Subcommittee Co-Chair

- Rachel Stepina noted that the July minutes were written in the present tense. She confirmed that John Giammona Wilber would draft all future minutes in the past tense.
- Diane Nicolet motioned to approve the July 26, 2023 minutes.
- Rachel Stepina seconded the motion.
- All members voted to approve the motion; none opposed.
- The motion passed.

3. Public Comment #1

Julie Houchins, Subcommittee Co-Chair

- Ashley Dines, parent leadership coordinator at The Children's Cabinet, invited subcommittee members to participate in the Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council's Nevada ECAC Family Leadership Mentorship program. She explained that this program supported authentic engagement of the family leaders in the context of the ECAC. She clarified that mentors would be chosen from a volunteer pool of ECAC and subcommittee members. She invited interested parties to reach out to herself or Rosa Tamayo for more information and apply:
<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=NF-6ed86Z0ujGUnHsDpCnx-9Daew01ZKmatUE6MHHVFUMUROVTFKMDRMWUpFTzMxN1RQSDFKSEI2MC4u>

4. Subcommittee Work Plan Revision and Approval

(Discussion/possible action)

Julie Houchins, Subcommittee Co-Chair



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- Julie Houchins shared the Systems Alignment subcommittee workplan. She noted that no changes had been made to Objective 2.1 (Conduct Assessment of the strengths, disparities, inequities, strategic priorities and goals among programs and agencies within the early childhood system.)
- Julie Houchins shared changes that had been made to the workplan regarding Objective 2.2 (Produce and disseminate an early childhood system assets and gaps analysis.) She mentioned that there has been previous discussion about a “crosswalk” to align work with other subcommittees/agencies/organizations/funding streams in the early childhood space.
- Julie Houchins noted establishing a clear definition the early childhood sector was a priority. She asked the subcommittee for ideas about that definition.
- Diane Nicolet asked that the term “sector” within “early childhood sectors” be further defined to increase specificity.
- Julie Houchins commented that Diane Nicolet’s question got to the heart of the matter: without a definition, the concept of the early childhood sector would remain too ethereal to be workable.
- Tiffany Olivas commented that within her Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems work, three early childhood core sectors had been identified:
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Parent Leadership/Parent Support Programs
 - Maternal and Child Health
- Tiffany Olivas clarified that specific people within these core sectors had been identified, and she could share them if helpful.
- Rachel Stepina added that within the sectors that Tiffany Olivas had identified, there were also age bands.
- Tiffany Olivas clarified that within the HRSA grant, the work is focused on the age band of prenatal to age 3, and that the work of both the preschool development grant and the ECAC generally focused on birth through age 8.
- Rachel Stepina asked Diane Nicolet to share her interpretation of the different sectors based on what Tiffany Olivas had shared.
- Diane Nicolet shared that she was still unsure of who the audience for these sector definitions would be. She shared that, after reading the Nevada Preschool Mixed Delivery System Coast and Equity Study, definitions and communications would need to be framed so that legislators would understand the who/what/where/why/when of contributing funds. She explained that that legislator understanding would be critical for securing the funding to achieve early childhood goals.
- Diane Nicolet commented that the term “early childhood education” was too broad. She said that, to her, the early childhood sector meant children, and families, and where they stood. She used the examples of the University of Nevada, Reno and Truckee Meadows Community College and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, as institutions that provide education to people who work in the early childhood field.
- Diane Nicolet commented that the seventeen school districts that provide prenatal to age 8 education and care across the state had their own frameworks of early childhood education, which should fit into this sector definition.
- Diane Nicolet commented that she didn’t think the title, Parent Leadership/ Parent Support Programs, was broad enough. She suggested that family or community leadership be used instead.
- Diane Nicolet commented that Maternal and Child Health was such a broad category that it bled into every other facet of early childhood, not to mention that it introduced at whole new category of institutions into the sector- such as hospitals and foster care.
- Diane Nicolet suggested that the categories be amended for ECAC use to be:
 - Early Childhood Education and Care
 - Parent, Family, and Community Leadership
 - Maternal and Family Health (Which may be an umbrella category which intersects with the other two)
- Diane Nicolet commented that the Parent, Family, and Community Leadership component should include workplaces that offer childcare. She suggested that “leadership” could change to advocates.
- Rachel Stepina asked Julie Houchins if a lead person and a timeline should be added to the definition piece.
- Julie Houchins said yes. She asked if the subcommittee thought a workgroup should be formed.



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- Tina Springmeyer asked if the intention was to align the headings coming out of the workforce group for the three suggested categories.
- Tiffany Olivas commented that the core sector areas ECCS worked with identified workforce as an area of focus. She reiterated that the ECAC did not have to use the same core sectors as ECCS and adjusting those sector definitions for ECAC to be more workable could be helpful.
- Tina Springmeyer agreed that Diane Nicolet's proposed alterations would encompass more relevant organizations- such as those that work with unhoused children and children in foster care. She cautioned however, that care be taken not to make these sectors so broad as to not be workable.
- Denise Tanata offered that creating a definition of the early childhood system itself was more of a priority than delving into all the sectors. She explained that sector definitions within early childhood systems worked had been changed multiple times in the past. She noted that the sectors definitions could be more flexible than the overarching early childhood system definition.
- Denise Tanata reiterated the necessity of clarity when talking about the early childhood system. She offered that the definition that was utilized in the not-passed AB113 concerned the entities which administered services in the early childhood sector.
- Denise Tanata cautioned that the subcommittee does not forget to include family support when formulating the new sector definitions (specifically in the family leadership piece.)
- Rachel Stepina commented that she wanted to see the subcommittee amend the key activity of "develop clear definition of 'early childhood sectors' with examples of Nevada agencies/programs" to "develop a clear definition of 'early childhood system' including definitions of the 'early childhood sectors' with examples of Nevada agencies/programs across the birth through age 8 continuum.
- Rachel Stepina suggested that next month's subcommittee meeting include an agenda item to discuss a draft of these definitions. She suggested that rather than forming a workgroup, the subcommittee establish timeline for the definitions draft and appoint a responsible member.
- Diane Nicolet commented that, moving forward, a consistency in terms would be vital for communication and understanding around the ECAC's work. She suggested honing in on the birth through age 8 aspect to make these categories as relevant as possible for the work of the ECAC. She reiterated that the ultimate goal of these definitions was to secure funding and continue the early childhood work.
- Rachel Stepina agreed that consistent internal terminology would ease the work of the ECAC. She suggested adding this wording to the key activity.
- Sabrina Jones commented that, in her research of all the ECAC subcommittees, she noticed a need for definitions across subcommittees. She said that she would report on potential subcommittee alignment regarding definitions at next month's subcommittee meeting. She suggested that she may schedule another public meeting beforehand to work with the Systems Alignment subcommittee on the definitions draft.
- Ashley Dines and Diane Nicolet indicated interest in helping with the definition drafts.
- Sabrina Jones asked if Ashley Dines and Diane Nicolet should be added as leads to the definitions key activity on the workplan.
- Julie Houchins and Rachel Stepina answered yes.
- Diane Nicolet asked where notes would be added so that she could delve a bit deeper into the objective.
- John Giammona Wilber commented that the workplan with Sabrina Jones' changes would be uploaded before the next meeting.
- Rachel Stepina suggested that Diane Nicolet reach out to John Giammona Wilber at any time as he would be developing the minutes.
- Sabrina Jones requested that leads be added to action items on the workplan to provide accountability and move the work along.



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- Julie Houchins suggested that the subcommittee move onto the first key activity in Objective 2.3, “develop a dynamic list of activities across early childhood sectors.” Regarding this key activity, she asked who would be doing what and how the key activity fit into the subcommittee’s overall strategic goals.
- Denise Tanata commented that this would be a major time-consuming activity.
- Tiffany Olivas commented that she was working on a “crosswalk” between HRSA, maternal health, ECCS, health integration prenatal to age 3 grants, PDG B-5, and others. She said that she would be meeting with Jamelle from Children’s Advocacy Alliance and Rachel Stepina from PDG B-5, to compare drafts of the “crosswalk” plan. She said that she’d report on that meeting at the next subcommittee meeting.
- Tiffany Olivas mentioned an ECCS leadership meeting that had taken place on August first, where strategic plans with Colorado HRSA and ECCS grantees discussed where they were in their own strategic plan. She offered to share resources and refer subcommittee members to Illuminate Colorado: <https://padlet.com/tiffanyolivas775/nevada-s-early-childhood-comprehensive-systems-eccs-leadersh-34locgqyb512h2hj>
- Rachel Stepina agreed with Denise Tanata about the scope of work, and suggested that if the subcommittee developed a padlet like the example Tiffany shared, it could be set up to divide workplan key activities by sector, and be used a workable draft. She offered that the proposed padlet could identify where information was missing that would need to be attained.
- Julie Houchins asked what a realistic start to this project would look like.
- Denise Tanata suggested that once the sectors had been identified, leads could be assigned to each sector, and questions regarding major initiatives and partners within sectors would be easier to answer. She suggested even starting with one sector, as early learning was strongly represented within the subcommittee, and creating a template that could be used for the remaining sectors.
- Diane Picolet asked if she could bring a community partner into a few meetings without them being a subcommittee member. Several members answered yes.
- Rachel Stepina commented that along with bringing outside partners into subcommittee meetings, subcommittee members had the opportunity to attend meetings and events held by community partners. She said that subcommittee member attendance in relevant outside meetings could be leveraged to maximize outside participation in the ECAC’s activities.
- Rachel Stepina suggested taking the activities in the workplan sequentially. She suggested having the definitions piece of Objective 2.2 done by the end of quarter four of this year and that the dynamic list development in Objective 2.3 could be handled in quarter one of next year.
- Diane Picolet suggested identifying relevant outside meetings where subcommittee members would be invited and/or welcome to attend.
- Rachel Stepina agreed that intentionality would be critical. She suggested setting some parameters around the types of activities that leads would include in the dynamic list.
- Julie Houchins summarized the plan to draft the sector definitions as outlined in Objective 2.2 and identify sector leads as action items to have ready for the next subcommittee meeting.

5. Discuss Agenda Items for Next Meeting

(Discussion)

Julie Houchins, Subcommittee Co-Chair

- Julie Houchins reiterated that presenting drafts of the systems and sector definitions would be an agenda item at next month’s meeting. She added that there would be continued review of the workplan.
- Rachel Steina asked when the next subcommittee meeting would be.
- John Giammona Wilber and Julie Houchins both answered that the next meeting would be on September 27, 2023.

6. Public comment #2



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Julie Houchins, Subcommittee Co-Chair

Public comment will be taken during this agenda item on any matter within the Council's jurisdiction, control, or advisory power. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter is included on an agenda as an item on which action may be taken. The Council Chair will impose a time limit of three minutes.

- No public comment was given.

7. Adjournment

- Julie Houchins adjourned the meeting at 1:50 PM.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Draft systems and sector definitions as outlined in Objective 2.2 and identify sector leads to have ready for the next subcommittee meeting. (Leads: Ashley Dines, Diane Picolet, Julie Houchins)
- Meet about, and report on, early childhood “crosswalks” (Leads: Rachel Stepina and Tiffany Olivas)
- Research and report on potential subcommittee alignment regarding definitions (Lead: Sabrina Jones)