



Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

PARTNER SUMMARY REPORT

January 2024

Department of Education (NDE)

Office of Early Learning &
Development (OELD)

Name of Primary Contact: Patti Oya

Email of Primary Contact: poya@doe.nv.gov

- Moving forward with a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) request for proposal (RFP)
 - Statewide tool for use during the 2024/2025 school year.
 - For more information on the KEA RFP or joining the KTT group, contact Kelly Carr kelly.carr@doe.nv.gov

QRIS Updates:

- One key highlight is the upcoming launch of a new online and self-paced training tool (LearnERS). This tool will be offered to support our QRIS programs that have not been able to increase their 2-star rating for more than two consecutive rating cycles (4 years). Our goal is to help the QRIS coaches facilitate this program starting in March, offering valuable insights into the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) tools that Nevada utilizes to enhance and measure quality in early childhood classrooms. What makes this training tool particularly noteworthy is its accessibility and flexibility, allowing providers and teachers to engage at their own pace. Coaches will be available to guide participants through the process, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the ERS tools.
- In addition to this new training approach, we are expanding our reach by offering in-person and virtual training sessions facilitated by Environment Rating Scale (ERS) experts in Nevada, specifically tailored for teachers. Historically, QRIS focused primarily on ERS training for directors, but we recognize the importance of extending this knowledge to teachers who play a crucial role in shaping the early childhood education landscape.
- Moreover, Our first QRIS monthly newsletter was sent out to providers this month, aiming to share best practices, resources, and quality tips beneficial for teachers and directors. We are excited about this prospect!
- Finally, we are delighted to report that after completing a full QRIS cycle following the 2021 revision, we are witnessing positive shifts in star ratings. While there is still a percentage of 2-star rated programs (20% of total enrolled programs), there has been a remarkable increase in 3-star ratings (14%), and we are especially proud to note a significant percentage of 4-star ratings

(24%)! What a remarkable way to kick off 2024! This improvement only reflects the hard work and dedication of the QRIS providers and our valued partners.

- **Preschool Development Grant Birth through 5 (PDG B-5):**
- Learn more about what is happening with the grant and let us know what you are interested in by visiting bit.ly/nevadaPDGB-5.
- **Meet our team if you haven't already!**
 - Rachel Stepina, Grant Manager Rachel.stepina@doe.nv.gov
 - Sabrina Jones, ECAC Systems Specialist Sabrina.jones@doe.nv.gov
 - John Giammona Wilber, ECAC Administrative Assistant john.giammonawilber@doe.nv.gov
 - Nayesdi Badillo, Early Childhood Family Engagement Specialist Nayesdi.badillo@doe.nv.gov
 - Vivian Bolanos, Birth through Third Grade Specialist Vivian.bolanos@doe.nv.gov
 - Jamie Mendez, Early Childhood Workforce Specialist Jamie.mendez@doe.nv.gov
 - Meghan McQuillan, Early Childhood Quality Specialist Meghan.mcquillan@doe.nv.gov
- **Summary of Activities:**
- Activity 1: Updated Comprehensive Statewide Birth through Five Needs Assessment
 - Contracted with Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) to update the 2019 Needs Assessment
 - Continued Look Studies:
 - ECE Access Study by University of Nevada Las Vegas, Department of Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education
 - Nevada Pathway to Universal Pre-Kindergarten by WestEd
- Activity 2: Updated Strategic Plan
 - Two new full-time positions are supporting the work of the ECAC and its subcommittees
 - Currently planning for the upcoming strategic plan process for the 2025-2027 plan
- Activity 3: Maximize Family Engagement in the Birth through Five System
 - Updating the Birth through Grade 12 Family Engagement Framework with an early childhood lens through a re-established Family Engagement Framework Advisory Committee, including parent voices
 - Coordinating efforts with the Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council (NECFLC)
- Activity 4: Support the Early Childhood Workforce
 - Developing a statewide Wellness Guidebook and a series of mini-grants to design and implement plans using tools from the guidebook.
 - Participate here: <https://bit.ly/NVECEWellnessGuidebook>
 - Coordinating the Nevada Early Childhood Educator Workforce Framework Action Planning process
 - Workforce Development with preschool CDA and Spiral Up Academy statewide by University of Nevada, Reno Extension
- Activity 5: Quality Programs
 - Supports to the QRIS Assessor team and coordination with the State QRIS team to ensure and support quality programs
 - Birth – 3rd Grade supports statewide
- Activity 6: Subgrants to Programs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNR Home Visiting program ○ Northern Nevada professional development supports for Nevada Ready! Pre-Kindergarten community programs ○ Planning for a Family Child Care pilot of the Nevada Ready! Pre-Kindergarten program 	
Office of Inclusive Education (OIE)	Name of Primary Contact: Christi Hines-Coates Email of Primary Contact: christi.hinescoates@doe.nv.gov
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● OIE is currently working with the Department of Health and Human Services, IDEA Part C to revise the Cooperative Agreement. ● OIE is participating in Differentiated Monitoring Support (DMS 2.0) Federal IDEA Part B Audit with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). ● Providing a variety of technical assistance and professional learning opportunities to district Special Education Directors and Early Childhood Special Education providers. 	
Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EdLife)	Name of Primary Contact: Email of Primary Contact:
No update provided	
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	
Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Child Care and Development Program (DWSS, CCDP)	Name of Primary Contact: Karissa Loper Machado Email of Primary Contact:
No update provided	
Division of Child and Family Services, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (DCFS, IECMH)	Name of Primary Contact: Rhonda Lawrence Email of Primary Contact:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DCFS Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Services is successfully recruiting, hiring, and training mental health professionals in all clinics (Las Vegas and Reno). ● DCFS Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation program at Northern Nevada Child/Adolescent Services in providing “Reflective Practice” groups with childcare and early learning professionals. This is a “promising” practice that can increase staff retention and increase understanding of child/family needs and implementation of interventions to support child’s needs in the childcare center. 	
Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) – Child Care Licensing	Name of Primary Contact: Email of Primary Contact:
No update provided	
Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) –	Name of Primary Contact: Tami Conn Email of Primary Contact:

Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health (MCAH)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nevada Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Program completed a successful grant application and annual site visit. ● Nevada Title V MCH Directors attend the annual Title V Partnership meeting with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), where new performance measures were released, including a measure on measuring school readiness with the data source of The National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH) ● MCAH staff are working to implement new scopes of work and new evaluation strategies as new subawards roll out over the next few months. ● Nevada Home Visiting (NHV) Program reauthorization increased funding and added the requirement of states to provide a state match. 	
Women, Infants & Children’s Program (WIC) Program	Name of Primary Contact: Blanca Ayala Email of Primary Contact: BlancaAyala@health.nv.gov
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nevada WIC will continue the higher Cash Value Benefits (CVB) amounts for Women and Children to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. ● Nevada WIC is continuing to work with the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services to get referrals for all children under the age of 5 who are already on SNAP. ● 	
Nevada State Immunization Program	Kristy Zigenis kzigenis@health.nv.gov
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 2023-2024 formulations of the COVID-19 vaccines from Novavax, Moderna, and Pfizer are available. Those eligible are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Novavax – available for those 12 years of age and older who are at least two months out from their last COVID-19 vaccine ○ Moderna – available for those 6 months of age and older who are at least two months out from their last COVID-19 vaccine ○ Pfizer – available for those 6 months of age and older who are at least two months out from their last COVID-19 vaccine ○ Visit vaccines.gov for a location near you ● Flu vaccines are also available and safe to receive at the same time as your COVID-19 vaccine. Visit vaccines.gov for a location near you ● RSV protection for both pregnant people and infants has arrived. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Abrysvo (Pfizer) – Recommended for both pregnant people 32-36 weeks pregnant during RSV season. Abrysvo (Pfizer) protects infants in utero when given to the expectant parent at least two weeks before delivery; thus, in most cases, the infant does not require an additional RSV vaccine. ○ Nirsevimab (Beyfortus) – Recommended for all infants eight months or younger during or entering their first RSV season AND some young children. Infants younger than eight months 	

of age will not need nirsevimab – an RSV preventative antibody - if born 14 or more days after their birthing parent received their (Abrysvo [Pfizer]) RSV vaccine while still pregnant, in most cases. As nirsevimab supplies are limited, providers are encouraged to recommend and provide prenatal RSV vaccination strongly. If the infant's birthing parent received Abrysvo 14+ days from giving birth, nirsevimab should not be administered. The protection offered by nirsevimab lasts for up to five months.

If one is eligible for all three, it is safe to receive the COVID-19, Flu and RSV vaccines at the same time.

Oral Health Program

Jannette Gomez

Email of Primary Contact:

Home Visitor Training on oral health was provided at the Home Visitor Statewide meeting. Training included prevention of childhood caries, baby bottle caries, importance of oral health during pregnancy, importance of having first dental check up by 1 year of age, proper nutrition and oral hygiene tips. Oral hygiene supplies were provided to Nevada Home Visiting, including baby oral care kits, toddler toothbrushes and educational materials.

The Oral Health Program is applying for the HRSA-24-039 Maternal and Child Health- Improving Oral Health Integration Demonstration Project. The purpose of the grant is to increase access to preventative oral health services for pregnant Nevada residents and children under the age of 1. Nevada will increase access to care for the target population by integrating preventative oral health care into primary care services along with addressing Nevada’s policy and practices that can impact access to preventive oral health care, providing education and outreach to medical and dental providers and enhancing oral health surveillance to address social determinants of health.

Early Childhood Partner Updates

ECE Workforce Plan

Name of Primary Contact: Marty Elquist

Email of Primary Contact: melquist@childrenscabinet.org

Report available to the public: <https://www.nevadachildcare.org/data-reports/>

Next steps: Action plan to carry out the strategies for each priority is being developed. On January 18, 2024, groups for each section will be identified to identify actions, cost estimate and timeline to implement each strategy. Meeting is being facilitated by Nevada Department of Education as a part of the PDG B5 Grant.

HRSA Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Health Integration

Name of Primary Contact: Tiffany Olivas

tolivas@childrenscabinet.org

The HRSA ECCS Health Integration initiative is aligned with the goals and objectives of the ECAC 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. As such, much of the project activities are updated through the ECAC Subcommittee Work Plan document.

Additional ECCS Updates:

- Nevada’s Prenatal to Age Three Health Integration ECCS Strategic Plan draft is complete! You can view (temp placement) here: [Nevada's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems \(ECCS\) Leadership Padlet](#).
- The next ECCS Leadership meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2024.
- The initial Children's Fiscal Map, focused on ages 0-24, was released on November 16th and is available on the nvecac.com homepage. We are currently in the process of finalizing the

Early Childhood Fiscal Map, which will include an analysis of all funding for the 0 to age 8 population. We are also working with the Children's Funding Project to complete the Early Childhood Fiscal Gap Analysis which will take a deep dive into several key programs to determine what gaps exist to expand access and improve quality. The Gap Analysis is scheduled to be complete in early Spring 2024. Following the Gap Analysis, the Children's Funding Project will complete a Revenue Options report, outlining opportunities to fill the fiscal gap through innovative financing strategies and additional government investments.

- The Childhood Marketing & Outreach Campaign continues to move forward with some exciting changes coming in 2024, including the development of the First 5 Nevada website which will serve as a one-stop-shop for families seeking services and support for young children. The site will feature a new Early Childhood Programs Eligibility Portal which will allow families to determine which programs they may be eligible for, as well as how to access those programs. The new campaign is expected to launch in Spring 2024.
- The NV Coordinated Intake and Referral System Workgroup continues to meet, with the aim of developing a system that will allow for the seamless flow of referrals and a closed loop system among providers and families in early learning, health and other family supports to streamline service delivery and coordination.
- We are also in the process of developing Nevada's first Early Childhood Leadership Academy - a six-month program designed to empower professionals in the early childhood sector with the knowledge, skills and resources needed to serve in leadership roles. Applications are expected to go out in February and the program will begin in late April or early May.
- The Guinn Center is actively working on the Nevada Early Childhood System Governance Structure report and have completed a comprehensive literature review of early childhood systems reports from across the country. They will provide an initial assessment report to the ECAC in April or May and the final report is scheduled to be complete by December 2024.

Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC)

John Cregg
john@nevaeyc.org

- The 2024 NevAEYC Early Childhood Conference will be held April 25-27, 2024 at The Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, NV. Registration will open in January 2024. Requests for Workshop Proposals will begin in November 2023.
- The 2024 NAEYC Public Policy Forum will be virtual and will be held in February or March.
- During FY23, NevAEYC supported 163 early childhood educators pursue college credit towards early childhood degrees. NevAEYC is accepting college scholarship applications to begin with the Spring 2024 semester. To request an application, please call 775-327-0680 or email at teachnevada@gmail.com.
- During FY23, NevAEYC approved 5,808 applications for the Early Childhood Staff Stipends. NevAEYC will begin accepting applications for FY24 in October 2023.

Nevada Child Care Provider Action Committee (CCPAC)

Lela Arney and Carrie Paldi

- With the new school year starting, the CCPAC took the month of August off to focus on our child care programs. However, in early August Senator Cortez-Masto's staff reached out to request a tour of some

Northern Nevada child care programs. We took them to tour Under the Magic Pine Tree in Reno and talked about the background process and made a recommendation for the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) to ensure all states have an up-to-date list of the out-of-state process for requesting child care background checks for early childhood educators who recently moved to Nevada.

- We also visited Nancy Konopucki's licensed home-based child care program in Reno. We discussed how the stabilization grants made a positive impact in the programs who received the money and what we expect now that there are no more stabilization grants available, which is an increase in tuition rates for children in licensed child care. If you have stories you would like to share about the impact the stabilization grants made in your program, please email Larney@childrenscabinet.org. Thank you!

<p>Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council (NECFLC)</p>	<p>Name of Primary Contact: Ashley Dines (South) or Rosa Tamayo (North) Email of Primary Contact: adines@childrenscabinet.org rtamayo@childrenscabinet.org</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NECFLC is currently accepting new members in the South and is looking for alignment opportunities within our parent groups and parents to continue to assemble families at the table. Please contact our Parent Leadership Coordinators for additional information. ● NECFLC has developed a Facilitation Rubric for evaluating and supporting family engagement during NECAC and NECAC subcommittee meetings. ● NECFLC (North) has provided family leaders with equitable opportunities for networking and outreach through volunteer work provided by the Children’s Cabinet training program. ● NECFLC is interested in partners and or agencies that would like to assist in creating a Family Leadership Roundtable in the first Quarter of ‘24 	
<p>Pyramid Model</p>	<p>Name of Primary Contact: Janice Lee Email of Primary Contact: janicelee@unr.edu</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School/Program year began - lots of pre-service and in-service training, professional development, and planning activities occurred in August and early September ● Renewed and several new commitments to high fidelity program-wide implementation of Pyramid Model practices - 3 new programs and 3 school district early childhood programs starting this year ● Family Child Care Cohort for high fidelity program-wide implementation started ● Home visiting to support young children with social, emotional, and behavioral delays and their families going well - offered through The Children’s Cabinet ● Continuing and expanding Pyramid Model implementation to tribal/rural/frontier programs and families, with PDG B-5 funds, including support to prevent and address challenging behavior 	
<p>Research and Needs Assessments (NICRP)</p>	<p>Name of Primary Contact: Dr. Amanda Haboush-Deloye Email of Primary Contact: amanda.haboush@unlv.edu</p>
<p>No new assessments were added to the tracker this past quarter. If anyone has updated strategic plans or needs assessment they are aware of please let us know.</p>	
<p>Strong Start/Pritzker PN-3 (Children’s Advocacy Alliance)</p>	<p>Name of Primary Contact: Jamelle Nance or Annette Dawson-Owens Email of Primary Contact:</p>

Children’s Advocacy Alliance is working diligently to develop key policy priorities in the areas of health, school readiness, early childhood, and child welfare. We will be holding our Winter Policy Summit on February 29th to launch our policy priorities that will shape our advocacy efforts in the 2024 interim session in preparation for the 2025 legislative session. CAA continues to advocate for families impacted by the Medicaid “unwinding” period. Flyers, Tiktok videos, and other social media sources have been used to ensure we are reaching families with the information needed to enroll or reenroll for coverage.

Parent Voice: We are continuing to collaborate with Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council (NECFLC) to share resources and training opportunities to unite and strengthen our advocacy efforts. We are currently recruiting for a new cohort of [Child Advocacy Ambassadors](#) to begin January 2024. CAA is participating alongside the Children’s Cabinet in the National Family and Parent Leadership Cohort as a capacity building resource to enhance our family leadership initiatives.

The Strong Start Prenatal to Three (PN-3) coalition continues to meet quarterly. The last meeting was October 25th and highlighted key components of the Pritzker Sustainability grant to include uplifting community based organizations serving marginalized communities, family leaders, and business leaders. The next coalition meeting will be held on January 24, 2024 from 10:00am to 12:00pm. Although the larger coalition meets quarterly, each workgroup meets monthly to continue our collaborative efforts related to policy and programs impacting Health and Well-being, Early Learning, and Economic Well-being of families with children PN-3.

The Pritzker Children’s Initiative We will be concluding our three year grant cycle in February. The final report is due February 15, 2024. We will then transition into a sustainability grant where the focus will be to sustain the work of the Prenatal-to-3 coalition by uplifting family voice, community based organizations serving marginalized communities, and expanding partnerships in the business sector. We are excited to continue this initiative as we know there is still more work to be done to ensure all children have access to quality early childhood experiences.

Funding and Grant Opportunities

Early Childhood Innovative Literacy Program - Nevada Department of Education

- \$70 million for two funding opportunities:
 - Expand access to high quality preschool for new and existing Nevada Ready! PreK providers
 - Establish innovative new program or expand existing early literacy program that supports children less than the age of six, their families and early childhood professionals
- Eligible Applicants:
 - School Districts
 - Sponsor of Charter Schools
 - Non-profit Organizations

For more information: <https://doe.nv.gov/Grants/Home/>

Meetings, Trainings, Events & Conferences
– Professional Development/Outreach Opportunities

Nevada Afterschool Network Best Practice Webinar Rescheduled for 2/8 11:30am PST

Engagement & Innovation with Youth

Youth Entrepreneurship is an engaging way to recruit and retain youth, and provide critical career readiness and workforce skills, along with opportunities to engage your community of families and partners. Learn about recent data and specific programming to implement youth entrepreneurship virtually or in person.

Entrepreneurship is more than starting a business, it's a way of thinking and doing that brings learning to life for all students, especially girls. Entrepreneurial mindsets and skills allow youth to grow into passionate innovators and courageous change-makers of their communities. Starting young and providing consistent quality learning experiences, youth will learn to identify authentic opportunities, create innovative solutions, take calculated risks, and redefine failure as a learning opportunity. We need the adults in their life equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools to help make this happen!

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nevada-afterschool-network-best-practice-webinars-tickets-789647094717?aff=oddtcreator>

Nevada Afterschool Network Annual Showcase Registration now open:

2/22 & 2/23 Tuscany Las Vegas, NV

<https://www.nevadaafterschool.org/nevada-afterschool-showcase/>