



Nevada Early Childhood
Advisory Council

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council
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Letter from the Chair and Vice-Chair

The Honorable Governor Joe Lombardo
c/o Boards and Commissions
101 North Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Amy Stephenson
Legislative Counsel Bureau
Director of State of Nevada,
Governor's Office and Finance
401 South Carson Street

Dear Governor Joe Lombardo and Ms. Amy Stephenson,

On behalf of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, we are pleased to present the Annual Report for the 2024 calendar year. In accordance with Nevada state requirements, NRS 432A.076, we are submitting this report to the Governor and the Legislature. This document outlines the Council's purpose, vision, and values, highlights key accomplishments, and includes a summary of our three-year strategic plan. Additionally, it offers recommendations for enhancing the early childhood system across the state of Nevada.

Should you have any questions regarding the contents of this report, we welcome your inquiries. On behalf of the entire Nevada ECAC Council, it is our privilege to serve both the Governor and the people of Nevada.

Tiffany Alston
Tiffany Alston
Nevada ECAC Chair

Nevada Head Start Association, President
Sunrise Children Foundation, Director



Patrice Gardner
Patrice Gardner
Nevada ECAC Vice-Chair

Nevada Head Start State Collaboration, Director
Nevada Department of Education
Office of Early Learning and Development



A photograph of four young children sitting around a table in a classroom, engaged in a painting activity. They are using paintbrushes and a palette of colorful paints. The background shows educational posters on the wall, including alphabet cards for 'Aa', 'Bb', 'Cc', 'Dd', 'Ee', and 'Ff'.

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Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) Overview

Our Purpose Statement

The Council shall work to strengthen state-level coordination and collaboration among the various sectors and settings of early childhood education programs in Nevada.

Our Vision

Nevada's children will be safe, healthy, and thrive during the first eight years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential.

Our Fundamental Values

"All" means all. Opportunities and access are needed for children regardless of race, ethnicity, language, ability, or socioeconomics; also includes children in all environments including those with disabilities.



Executive Summary of the Nevada ECAC 2024 Annual Report

Key 2024 Accomplishments:

As of year 2024, the Nevada ECAC has accomplished many strategic plan objectives aligned to our goals of strengthen the Early Childhood System to include the following:

- Sustained two Nevada ECAC Administrative and Systems positions to support the Nevada ECAC for year 2024-2025 and recommends to continued permanent support.
- Participating, advocating and refining talking points to support the development and passage of an Assembly Bill in the February 2025 Nevada Legislative Session, which proposes the creation of a Governor’s Office for Early Childhood Systems. Although the bill did not pass in 2023, the efforts highlighted critical steps needed to establish a unified leadership infrastructure for early childhood systems in Nevada.
- Expanded Nevada ECAC membership by recruiting and obtaining new members to support the successful passage of Assembly Bill (ABI 14) NRS 432A.076, Nevada Legislative Session expanded the scope and membership of the Nevada ECAC. This includes representation of the comprehensive early childhood system inclusive of early learning, maternal and child health, and families.
- Begin the Development of Nevada ECAC Early Childhood Systems Strategic Plan for year 2025-2027.
- Development and utilization of the rubric tool developed by the Nevada First Five Family Leadership Counsel, including how assessments results are shared and used by ECAC leaders to make changes that will support equitable engagement of family leaders.
- Provided advisory support and technical assistance to the Guinn Center, which has been completed and presented to the Nevada ECAC, in October 2024 and other agencies for review and to identify needs and strategies of the Early Childhood Governor’s Office System.
- Provided Language Access for Families to participate in Nevada ECAC and share valuable input and experiences involving their Early Childhood System experiences with the assistance from the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five.
- Partnered and advised with The Children’s Cabinet for the Nevada Early Childhood Marketing and Outreach Campaign which includes the First Five Nevada Website.
- Provided support for The Children’s Funding Project to complete Nevada’s initial Children’s Fiscal Map. The Nevada Fiscal map is housed on Nevada ECAC Website.
- Partner with Children’s Advocacy Alliance and other agencies to identify policy priorities for Year 2025-2027.
- Created a comprehensive list of early childhood programs, key indicators, and a data dictionary to inform a data system.
- Developed an Early Childhood System Definition to foster consistency across the Early Childhood System.
- Defined the Vulnerable and Underserved Population for the purpose of identifying funding solutions and Pathways.



Executive Summary of the Nevada ECAC 2024 Annual Report (Cont.):

Key 2025 Recommendations 1:

To establish the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood (prenatal to age eight) to align policy and fiscal decision-making for the early childhood system across relevant agencies. The recommendation includes a purpose detail plan describing the purpose, detail timeline, early childhood definition, functions roles and responsibilities, staffing and financing.

- The primary purpose of the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood is to develop a plan for restructuring Nevada’s Early Childhood System, inclusive of necessary changes to programs, funding, staffing, and data systems, which may include significant realignment of state agencies to meet the holistic needs of young children and their families. The purpose is NOT to create a study or report, but an actional plan developed with key stakeholders, including impacted populations representing the diversity of Nevada’s population.
- Establish the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood and a timeline to complete the prescribed roles, responsibilities, and functions (as outlined below) within a prescribed period of not less than 5 years.
- Require legislation to include the Early Childhood System definition approved by the Early Childhood Advisory Council on May 29, 2024, ensuring inclusion of all early childhood systems sectors within the scope and responsibility of the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood.
- Require the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood to have the following roles, functions, and responsibilities: 1. Analyze and assess state-specific, national, and international research, reports, studies, and assessments addressing early childhood system governance structures and strategies, beginning with the [Guinn Center’s 2024 report](#), From Crowded to Coordinated: Examining the Governance of Nevada’s Early Childhood Systems. 2. Convene key stakeholders and participate in and support relevant advisory councils and boards to assess needs in developing an early childhood system governance structure. a. Key Stakeholders shall include, but are not limited to:
 - Require the Early Childhood System Offices to complete reports and deliverables (pg.)
 - Ensure the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood has the staff support necessary to carry out the roles, functions, and responsibilities detailed above, including the following positions: Director, Data Systems Analyst, Fiscal System Analyst, Early Childhood Workforce Analyst, Family Engagement Specialist, Early Childhood Administrative Assistance and other position deemed as appropriate.
 - Ensure the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood has the support and authority to carry out the roles, functions, and responsibilities detailed above:
 - Provide adequate funding to support a staff with the expertise and experience necessary to complete the roles, functions, and responsibilities outlined above, as well as necessary operational costs to include travel, materials, and other resources as deemed appropriate.

Key 2025 Recommendations 2:

Provide funding to sustain the two administrative support positions of the Council, described on page 14 of this report.



Nevada ECAC 2022-2024 Strategic Plan Summary

On January 19, 2022, the Nevada ECAC approved the [2022-2024 Strategic Plan](#), which aims to enhance the Early Childhood System in the state.

The Nevada ECAC 2022-2024 Strategic Plan is focused on creating a more coordinated, alignment, inclusive and integrated early childhood service system. Its goal is to ensure that every child in Nevada has access to high-quality early childhood services, regardless of their family's location or circumstances. Building on existing partnerships and ongoing statewide initiatives, the plan offers a clear framework with specific goals for the collective efforts ahead. At the same time, it remains adaptable, allowing stakeholders across Nevada to define, implement, and refine strategies and action plans tailored to the unique strengths and needs of different communities and populations. Therefore, the key accomplishments, goals, activities and recommendations mentioned below result from the combined efforts of several state agencies and programs, organizations, and other key community partners. We have substantially coordinated and leveraged existing initiatives and resources to support our collective work.

To achieve the objectives set out in the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, the Nevada ECAC has formed five workgroups comprising appointed members and more than 40 key community partners from across the state, including both provider and parent representatives. We've made significant progress on the plan for 2023-2024 and are excited to continue our efforts in 2025 to improve the early childhood infrastructure in Nevada, aiming to promote improved outcomes for young children and their families.

The 2025-2027 strategic planning process has begun as we currently have identified and selected a facilitator to execute the next plan. This six-month facilitation and creation process will be paid for through federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) funding.



Strategic Plan Goals and Achievements 2024



The [2022-2024 Nevada ECAC Strategic Plan](http://nvecac.com/strategic-planning/) is located on the NECAC website at nvecac.com/strategic-planning/. The NECAC utilizes the following framework to guide the Strategic Plan and related activities. In carrying out this plan, the Nevada ECAC is committed to laying a solid foundation for systems work that will build upon existing strengths while also innovating and transforming those areas that are not performing optimally. Our work will be grounded in equity, authentic partnerships, and responsive, two-way communication that will lead our path forward.

For more information regarding Nevada ECAC: http://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/NECAC2022_2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf

Goal I:

Create a Coordinated Early Childhood Leadership Infrastructure in Nevada

Continued the appointment of Tiffany Alston, President of Nevada Head Start Association as to Lead as Nevada ECAC Chair. The Council would like to recognize Tiffany Alston, for her service to the Nevada ECAC through June - 2023-2024 and current.

Sustained two administrative staff positions through federal PDG B-5 dollars through 2023-2025 administrative staff positions through PDG B-5 grant to support the Council and improve implementation of the strategic plan.

Participating, advocating and refining talking points to support the development and passage of an Assembly Bill in the February 2025 Nevada Legislative Session, which proposes the creation of a Governor's Office for Early Childhood Systems. Although the bill did not pass in 2023, the efforts highlighted critical steps needed to establish a unified leadership infrastructure for early childhood systems in Nevada.

Provided advisory support and technical assistance to the Guinn Center with the development of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Governance Structure study, which was completed and presented to ECAC in October 2024.

Expanded Nevada ECAC membership by recruiting and obtaining new members to support the successful passage of Assembly Bill (AB 114) NRS 432A.076, Nevada Legislative Session that expanded the scope and membership of the Nevada ECAC. This includes representation of the comprehensive early childhood system inclusive of early learning, maternal and child health, and families.

Begin the Development of Nevada ECAC Early Childhood Systems Strategic Plan for year 2025-2027.

Participated in the utilization of a rubric tool developed by the Nevada First Five Family Leadership Counsel, including reviews of how assessments results are shared and used by ECAC leaders to make changes that will support equitable engagement of family leaders.

Strategic Plan Goals and Achievements 2024 (Cont.)

Goal 2:

Increase Coordination and Alignment Between Systems of Care for Young Children and Families

Completed the Nevada Early Childhood Network Analysis with Visible Network Labs which included an assessment of 56 early childhood partners, representing a collective 786 partnerships. The analysis is being utilized to help identify assets and gaps in network connections throughout the early childhood system to improve cross sector coordination and alignment.

Goal 3:

Increase Capacity to Equitably Connect Families with the Early Childhood System Continuum of Care and Community at Large

Supported the Nevada Early Childhood Marketing and Outreach Campaign in its primary focus to increase outreach to underserved populations and increase awareness and access to childcare assistance programs statewide. The Nevada ECAC continues to receive regular updates from the campaign during the bi-monthly Council meetings and monthly subcommittee meetings.

This campaign reached Nevadans via more than 50 million messages shared through various media platforms and contributed to a 22 percent increase in the number of children served by the childcare subsidy program. Furthermore, the monthly benefits distributed increased by 45 percent.

Goal 4:

Identify Budget and Finance Strategies to Drive Policy Goals and Objectives

Provided support and technical assistance to The Children's Funding Project to complete Nevada's initial Children's Fiscal Map and the development of the Early Childhood Fiscal Map, which will be released in early 2024.

Partner with Childcare Alliance and other Early Childhood Agencies to reviewed and drafted Early Childhood Priorities for year 2025.

Goal 5:

Improve data collection by fostering understanding and collaboration with providers, families, policy makers and other stakeholders

Created a master list of early childhood comprehensive systems (ECCS) services and programs, along with key program indicators (KPIs), a data dictionary, and research questions and data points for a data system to address.

Developed an Early Childhood System Definition to foster consistency across the Early Childhood System.

Defined the Early Vulnerable and Underserved Population for the purpose of identifying funding



Key Recommendations for 2025

Governor's Office for Early Childhood System

I: PURPOSE STATEMENT

The recommendations are categorized to align with the Nevada ECAC Goals outlined in the 2022- 2024 Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan Goal I. To Develop an Early Childhood Leadership Infrastructure

Establish the Governor's Office for Early Childhood (prenatal to age eight) to align policy and fiscal decision-making for the early childhood system across relevant agencies.

The primary purpose of the Governor's Office for Early Childhood is to develop a plan for restructuring Nevada's Early Childhood System, inclusive of necessary changes to programs, funding, staffing, and data systems, which may include significant realignment of state agencies to meet the holistic needs of young children and their families. The purpose is NOT to create a study or report, but an actional plan developed with key stakeholders, including impacted populations representing the diversity of Nevada's population. We understand that reorganizing the governance structure for a comprehensive, coordinated, and aligned early childhood system is a complex task which will require the development of a coordinated plan to address the numerous governance and support elements necessary to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable system.

Nevad ECAC Continue to support the Assembly Bill 113 proposed to add the Nevada Governor's Office of Early Childhood to guide informed decision making regarding early childhood policy, practice, and financing at the Governor and Executive Leadership level. While AB113 was unsuccessful, the Council recommends in 2023 and in 2025 Legislative Session we continue to support this bill to

- Improve coordination and efficiency across state departments and local levels of government.
- Mobilize resources around the Governor's priorities for children and families.
- Facilitate holistic approach to serving children and families who utilize a cross sector of programs and supports.
- Strengthen partnerships with non-profit and private sector entities serving these populations.
- Increase equitable access to programs and services in the early years to prevent or reduce the need for more costly remediation or services in later year
- Federal and private funding are currently available to support Goal I. For example, the Health Resource and Service Administration grant (currently led by The Children's Cabinet in collaboration with multiple state agencies and private partners) extends through July 2026 and the federal PDG B-5 grant (currently led by the Nevada Department of Education) extends through December 2025.



Recommendations for 2025 (Cont.)

Governor's Office for Early Childhood System

II: TERM OF OFFICE

To establish the Governor's Office for Early Childhood as a temporary office in the planning process and a timeline to complete the prescribed roles, responsibilities, and functions (as outlined below) within a prescribed period of not less than 5 years.

- Review and consider implementing the recommendations from [Guinn Center 2024 Report on Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems governance structure](#). This study includes an analysis of governance structures by incorporating work completed by Nevada ECAC critical partners during 2023, for example the system asset and gap analysis (SAGA) and the early childhood fiscal mapping project and examines related primary and secondary sources.

III: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEFINITION

Require legislation to include the Early Childhood System definition approved by the Early Childhood Advisory Council on May 29, 2024, ensuring inclusion of all early childhood systems sectors within the scope and responsibility of the Governor's Office for Early Childhood

IV: KEY ROLES, FUNCTION, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Require the Governor's Office for Early Childhood to have the following roles, functions, and responsibilities:

1. Analyze and assess state-specific, national, and international research, reports, studies, and assessments addressing early childhood system governance structures and strategies, beginning with the Guinn Center's 2024 report, *From Crowded to Coordinated: Examining the Governance of Nevada's Early Childhood Systems*.
2. Convene key stakeholders and participate in and support relevant advisory councils and boards to assess

Key Stakeholders shall include but are not limited to:

- Parents and families who are direct beneficiaries or end users of Nevada's early childhood system
- Local government, including both rural and urban municipalities
- State government administrators and program staff, inclusive of all sectors and services within the early childhood system
- Members of the early childhood workforce, inclusive of all sectors and services within the early childhood system
- Community-based organizations and intermediary organizations that assist State government in the delivery of programs, services and supports
- Academic faculty with research or expertise in early childhood programs and services
- Advocacy organizations

Advisory Councils and Boards shall include but are not limited to:

- Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Maternal and Child Health Advisory Board
- Nevada Children's Behavioral Health Consortium and regional Children's Mental Health Consortia



- Governor’s Council on Food Security
- Advisory Council on the State Program for Wellness and the Prevention of Chronic Disease
- Advisory Committee on the State Program for Oral Health
- Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Interagency Coordinating Council
- Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovation – Workforce Development Board and Nevada P-20 To Workforce Advisory Committees in developing an early childhood system governance structure.

3. Meet with representatives from other states and jurisdictions that have implemented or are in the process of implementing new early childhood governance structures to assess insight on identified strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities.

4. Provide staff support to the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

- Move the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council under the Office to provide staffing support, reporting, and all administrative functions of the Council.
- Provide all administrative support to the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council and its subcommittees.
- Support the development and implementation of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council’s Strategic Plan.
- Provide regular updates on the status of the Early Childhood Governance Structure Assessment and Recommendations Plan and seek input on key findings and recommendations.

V: REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES

Require the Early Childhood Systems Office to complete the following reports and deliverables:

1. Submit at least quarterly reports to the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council regarding the activities of the Office and any recommendations for improvements to the early childhood system, seeking input and advisory support for key findings and recommendations. Submit a draft of the annual report to the Governor and Legislature for review and input by the ECAC prior to submission.

2. On or before December 1 of each year, submit an annual report to the Governor and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau regarding the activities of the Office/Department and any recommendations for improvements to the early childhood system.

3. No later than July 1, 2028, submit a final report to the Governor and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau that includes specific recommendations and a comprehensive plan to reorganize Nevada’s early childhood system governance structure. The report shall include, but is not limited to:

- Assessing the needs of families with young children in Nevada, with a particular focus on the needs of vulnerable and underserved populations (as defined by the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council), including current challenges of service delivery to inform a governance structure to support more efficient and effective processes.
- Consolidating or reorganizing of State departments, divisions, agencies, offices, or programs, as deemed necessary to support a comprehensive and coordinated governance structure based on the needs of families with young children in Nevada.
- This may include recommendations to add, change, or eliminate existing departments, divisions, agencies, offices, and/or programs.
- Offering recommendations to align, braid, and coordinate funding, including consideration of federal mandates and limitations, as well as opportunities to create fiscal efficiency within the system and generate or support new revenue streams, as needed.



- Recommending enhancements and supports for the early childhood workforce necessary to effectively implement the recommended consolidation or reorganization, as well as the broader early childhood workforce needed for programmatic implementation based on the needs of families with young children in Nevada.
- Providing recommendations to enhance and support early childhood data systems and infrastructure, including, but not limited to, *opportunities to develop an Early Childhood Integrated Data System, a Coordinated Intake and Referral System, and a Universal Application System.*

VI: STAFFING

Ensure the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood has the staff support necessary to carry out the roles, functions, and responsibilities detailed above, including the following positions:

1. Director– The Director of the created entity shall serve as a member of the Governor’s Cabinet and have primary responsibility for overall roles, responsibilities, and functions of the Office/Department, including hiring and supervision of all staff listed below. The Director, and/or his or her representatives, will serve as a non-voting members of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council and will assist in the implementation of the Nevada ECAC Strategic Plan.

- Minimum Qualifications:
 - A minimum of 10 years of administrative, management, or leadership experience within Nevada’s early childhood system in a public agency or private entity.
 - Demonstrated understanding of early childhood systems, including cross-sector coordination and alignment.
 - Experience and demonstrated ability to convene and collaborate effectively across stakeholder groups, streamline and improve efficiencies, and improve program and system level accountability.
 - Proven ability to communicate complex issues in writing and through public speaking.
 - Experience in managing multiple complex programs with a demonstrated ability to improve organizational performance and develop workforce capabilities.
- b. Appointment – The Governor shall appoint a person from a list of three persons recommended to the Governor by the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council established pursuant to NRS 432A.076.

2. Data Systems Analyst – *Responsible for developing the plan to establish an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) and overall data infrastructure to streamline data input and reporting for a comprehensive early childhood system.*

early childhood programs and services.

3. Fiscal Systems Analyst – Responsible for coordinating, analyzing, and communicating the impacts of



funding for programs and initiatives that fall under the umbrella of the early childhood systems governance structure.

4. Early Childhood Workforce Analyst – Responsible for initiating and managing an early childhood system workforce study, including assessing and identifying strategies to address workforce issues including compensation, benefits, and equitable representation across sectors of the early childhood system.

5. Family and Community Engagement Specialist – Responsible for conducting outreach and engagement of family and community representatives in State-level decision-making including the development and implementation of policies, programs, procedures, and infrastructure impacting the equitable delivery of

6. Early Childhood System Administrative Assistant – Responsible for providing administrative support to the Director and project staff of the Office of Early Childhood Systems, as well as providing administrative support to the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

VII: AUTHORITY

Ensure the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood has the support and authority to carry out the roles, functions, and responsibilities detailed above:

1. Require each agency, board, commission, department, officer, employee, or agent of the State or a local government to provide the Office/Department or any representative of the Office such assistance as the functions and operations of the Office may require if that assistance is within the scope of duties of the person or entity.

2. Vest the Office with the authority to request, for each regular session of the Legislature, the drafting of one legislative measure relating to matters within its scope. The request must be submitted to the Legislative Counsel on or before September 1, preceding the regular session.

VIII: FUNDING

Provide adequate funding to support a staff with the expertise and experience necessary to complete the roles, functions, and responsibilities outlined above, as well as necessary operational costs to include travel, materials, and other resources as deemed appropriate



Key Recommendations for 2025 (Cont.)

Sustain ECAC Administrative Support

The Nevada ECAC added two administrative staff positions through federal PDG B-5 grant to support the Council and improve implementation of the strategic plan. The contract will expire in December 2025. The Nevada ECAC need financial support to continue to sustain both positions.

- The Nevada ECAC Systems Specialist supports the ongoing work of the Council, including adjusting the corresponding workplans that drive the action steps and measurable outcomes of the plan. The specialist works closely with Nevada ECAC and systems partners to facilitate the shared goals of the Council
- The Nevada ECAC Administrative Assistant position supports compliance with Open Meeting Law, creates minutes, assists with scheduling, co-develops agenda, and manages the website and access to documents. Both positions are new, and funding will continue through 2025, including the development of the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan.

