



# FROM CROWDED TO COORDINATED:

Examining the Governance of Nevada's Early Childhood System

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# REPORT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Nevada's Early Childhood Systems (ECS) currently include 18 programs exclusively focused on early childhood, alongside 45 other entities serving both early childhood and other populations. These programs operate under 26 different chapters of the Nevada Revised Statutes and are financed through 40 separate state budget accounts. This complexity creates significant challenges for both state leaders and parents trying to navigate the system.

For example, a parent with a toddler who has disabilities may qualify for 15 to 20 different programs. While this range of services is beneficial, accessing them can be overly complicated, requiring numerous contacts, applications, and extensive documentation, which makes the process difficult for families.

Our research identifies this fragmented system as inefficient, complicating the allocation of resources and limiting access for those most in need. Early Childhood Systems are vital for shaping the future of Nevada's children. Studies consistently show that investments in early childhood lead to long-term benefits, including reduced societal costs and increased contributions to the economy. The system also plays a crucial role in supporting working parents, enabling them to stay in the workforce and contribute to the economy while raising children.

Nationally, ECS has evolved in a fragmented manner, yet with substantial resources. Improved coordination could enable these systems to deliver more effective services, including child care, early education, healthcare, and economic support for struggling families.

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# KEY FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

- 1. Fragmentation of Nevada's Early Childhood Systems (ECS): Nevada's Early Childhood Systems are fragmented, with 18 programs solely focused on early childhood and 45 other programs serving both early childhood and other populations. Many have observed that fragmentation leads to inefficiencies and difficulties for both administrators and families navigating the system.
- 2. Under-Participation in ECS Programs: Despite the available ECS programs, participation rates are significantly low. For instance, only 5.5 percent of eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in Head Start, and just 10.4 percent of eligible children receive child care subsidies. Structural barriers and limited awareness are key factors contributing to these low participation rates.
- 3. Economic and Societal Benefits: Research shows that investments in ECS yield long-term economic and societal benefits by reducing future costs related to crime, education, and social interventions. Early Childhood Systems also play a critical role in supporting the workforce by enabling parents to remain employed.
- **4.** Challenges in Workforce Development: The ECS workforce in Nevada faces significant challenges, including low wages, high turnover, and limited access to professional development opportunities. This negatively impacts service quality and sustainability.
- 5. Complex Funding Structures: Nevada's ECS is funded through a web of 40 different state budget accounts, contributing to the complexity and inefficiency of the system.

This report suggests policy makers streamline ECS governance by empowering a single, independent entity to coordinate services across federal, state, local, and private stakeholders. This approach would foster broad collaboration, recognizing that a top-down model would not work effectively within such a complex landscape.

By implementing these policy approaches, Nevada can enhance its ECS, ensuring equitable access to high-quality services and creating a more efficient system that better serves families and providers.







More than 30 actionable strategies for redesigning and streamlining Nevada's ECS governance, supported by detailed research and successful examples from other jurisdictions;



A phased approach to implementation that ensures foundational steps are taken first, with continuous improvement built into the system;



A comprehensive inventory of key entities involved in Nevada's ECS, including their budgetary and regulatory authorities, mandates for collaboration, and accountability requirements; and



Summaries of best practices from other states and nations for Nevada to consider in its journey toward improved ECS governance.



# **Key Policy Considerations**

### Establish a Centralized Governance Structure

Create an independent ECS governance body to streamline operations, improve coordination, and ensure that resources are allocated efficiently. This body should integrate federal, state, and local stakeholders to avoid duplication and enhance collaboration.

# Implement a Single Point of Entry for Families

Develop a "No Wrong Door" approach, allowing families to access all ECS services through a single, easy-to-navigate portal. This would simplify the application process, increase participation, and improve data collection.

# Reform Funding Mechanisms

Move toward cost-based funding models for ECS, ensuring that funding aligns with the actual costs of care rather than arbitrary benchmarks. This would allow for more equitable and effective distribution of resources.

# 4 Enhance Workforce Development

Improve compensation and professional development for ECS workers to reduce turnover and ensure high-quality services. This should include policy changes to professionalize the workforce and provide sustainable career pathways.

## 5 Increase Family Engagement

Leverage existing resources and best practices to improve parent and family engagement at both service and systems levels. A culture of family involvement is essential for the success of ECS programs. Governance of Early Childhood Systems involves integrating policies, resources, and programs to support the development and well-being of young children. Effective governance requires collaboration across government agencies, community organizations, and families to ensure equitable access to high-quality services. This report captures the current state of ECS governance in Nevada, identifies models from other states and nations that could enhance the state's ECS, and provides practical solutions for streamlining the system's governance.

# INTRODUCTION



#### What do we mean by Early Childhood Systems?

First, to define the timeframe that encompasses early childhood, this report uses the more expansive period from the prenatal months to age eight. Some might argue the more vital early childhood age span is prenatal to five—the time before a child enters kindergarten. However, for this report, we assume the broader early childhood period that ends at age eight.

Second, what services and programs should be included when thinking about early childhood? For a long time, the short answer was solely the programs and services within the early childhood care and education (ECCE) sectors. In fact, ECCE was a common acronym used for early childhood services. Certainly, the child care and education sectors are vital pieces of the early childhood puzzle. In this report, we prefer to use the acronym ECS, Early Childhood Systems, which implies a comprehensive set of systems that provide education, child care, physical and mental health care, child welfare, nutrition, early intervention for children with developmental delays, economic support for struggling families with young children, and any other programs that serve children up to age eight and their families.

It is important to note that the "S" in ECS is plural, for "systems." Because of the wide array of entities existing in the early childhood space, they are not currently functioning as a singular system. It is useful to acknowledge that it may be difficult for them to become a fully unified system, although striving toward that end should always be the goal. At the least, these entities can function as a collaborative and cohesive set of systems that work together to provide comprehensive support to the youngest Nevadans as they springboard into life.

So, throughout this report, you will see the acronym ECS used in its plural form.

#### Why is this report needed?

About a decade ago, the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) assembled a bipartisan group of 28 veteran legislators and legislative staff to undertake an in-depth study of high-performing education systems worldwide. Nevada was one of only two states with a legislator and legislative staff participating.

The study group chose eight countries and, for three years, closely examined what makes them successful in K-12 education. The report of their findings is titled "No Time to Lose: How to Build a World-Class Education System State by State," and it became the most requested research study in NCSL's 40-year history.1 The significance of this report is that "No Time to Lose" found four factors that high-performing nations are doing better than the United States to educate their children. One of those factors had absolutely nothing to do with K-12 education. That is, in nations with strong K-12 systems, their children enter the school system prepared to learn. These nations do well in K-12 because they first do well in early childhood. In a high-performing society, adult success is driven by quality education, and quality education is only possible if children arrive at the door of their kindergarten classrooms ready to learn.

A second international study group was assembled by NCSL, and its companion report is titled "The Time is Now."<sup>2</sup> The report urges state legislatures to leverage the COVID-19 pandemic's disruption to reimagine and rebuild an education system that improves learning outcomes for all students and meets our future workforce needs. The report describes their adoption of the National Center on Education and the Economy's "Blueprint for a High-Performing Education System" as a policy framework to improve state education systems focused on common elements found in the most effective education systems. Robust early childhood systems are a key component of those systems.

### So, how are we doing in the United States?

One study found that, before they enter kindergarten, the average cognitive scores of our nation's most affluent children are 60 percent higher than those of our poorest children. Furthermore, low-income children are more likely to attend lower-quality schools, making it unlikely that these gaps close.<sup>3</sup> Researchers have identified gaps in several critical areas, including cognitive development, social-emotional development, and health status.4 Early childhood systems are the foundation on which a high-performing society is built, and the U.S. is underperforming in this critical area.

**Before they enter** kindergarten, the average cognitive scores of our nation's most affluent children are 60 percent higher than those of our poorest children.

<sup>1</sup> No Time to Lose: How to Build a World-Class Education System State by State. 2016. National Conference of State Legislatures. https://documents.ncsl.org/wwwncsl/Education/EDU\_InternationalEdu\_Revised\_30523.pdf 2 Review of The Time Is Now. 2022. National Conference of State Legislatures. https://www.ncsl.org/education/the-time-is-now

<sup>3</sup> Lee, V., and D. Burkham. 2002. Review of Inequality at the Starting Gate: Social Background Differences in Achievement as Children Begin School. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute. 4 Halle, Tamara, Nicole Forry, Elizabeth Hair, Kate Perper, Laura Wandner, Julia Wessel, and Jessica Vick. "Disparities in Early Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study.-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)." Policy File. Child Trends, Inc, 2009.



It is also helpful to understand that ECS are a lever for the general workforce. That is, if someone in the workforce does not have access to services needed for the young child in their life, at best, the adult may be stressed and distracted and, at worst, they will be unable to work. Groundbreaking research recently published by Harvard University and Opportunity Insights shows a strong correlation between the employment status of a child's parents and that child's economic prospects as an adult.<sup>5</sup>

In summary, coordinated early childhood services not only help a child in the long run, but they also help their parents to be able to work, which also strongly helps the child in the long run - a compounding return on investment in human capital.

Moreover, from an economic perspective, the U.S Chamber of Commerce Foundation estimates that current early childhood sector shortcomings result in an annual loss of between \$479 million to \$3.47 billion for state economies.<sup>6</sup> From before the COVID-19 pandemic to the period following, Nevada netted just more than three new workers for every 100 new residents. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, this represented the third-largest drop among all states following the pandemic. Nevada's labor force participation rate (LFPR) ranked 20th in February 2020 and 32nd in February 2023. As of October 2023, Nevada's LFPR was 62.1 percent, still below its pre-pandemic level.<sup>7</sup>



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#### Some helpful context...

The development of early childhood services in the United States has evolved in a fragmented and siloed manner, primarily beginning at the federal level. Services are provided across various domains, including childcare, education, health, nutrition, and economic support. This segmented evolution can be attributed to unrelated policy priorities, funding mechanisms, and administrative frameworks that shaped the independent development of each service area.

Early child care services emerged in the early 20th century with welfare and maternal health initiatives. The Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921 marked one of the earliest federal efforts to support maternal and child health, albeit within a limited scope and duration. Similarly, early education programs developed in isolation.

The mid 20th century witnessed the establishment of initiatives like Head Start in 1965, designed to address educational disparities among disadvantaged preschool children.9 Although praised for its comprehensive approach encompassing educational, health, and nutritional components, Head Start operated separately from other federal programs aimed at child welfare and economic support. Health and nutrition services for young children followed a parallel path with the establishment of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) in 1972.10 The WIC program provided essential nutritional support to pregnant women and children under age five, yet its services remained distinct from broader early childhood development initiatives. Economic support programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), initiated in 1996, further underscored the compartmentalization of federal efforts.11 While providing financial assistance to low-income families with children, TANF was introduced independent of the child care and early education sectors. The silved development of these early childhood services persisted due to diverse legislative origins, distinct funding streams, differing regulations and reporting requirements, and varying administrative oversight across federal agencies These factors contributed to a lack of a coordinated and cohesive strategy, thereby impeding the creation of a unified framework capable of holistically addressing the needs of young children.

<sup>5</sup> Chetty, Raj, Will Dobbie, Benjamin Goldman, Sonya R. Porter, and Crystal S. Yang. 2024. Review of Changing Opportunity: Sociological Mechanisms Underlying Growing Class Gaps and Shrinking Race Gaps in Economic Mobility. Harvard University and Opportunity Insights. https://opportunityinsights.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ChangingOpportunity\_Paper.pdf.

<sup>6 &</sup>quot;Untapped Potential: Economic Impact of Childcare Breakdowns in the U.S." www.uschamberfoundation.org, 30 Nov. 2021, www.uschamberfoundation.org/solutions/early-childhood-and-k-12-education/untapped-potential. 7 Woods, Andrew and Levine, Meredith, et al. "An Analysis of Nevada's Pre- and Post-Pandemic Labor Force Participation Rate: Trends Analysis," University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNIV), Lee Business School, Center for Business and Economic Research, and Kenny C. Guinn Center for Policy Priorities, December 2023, https://www.guinncenter.org/research/why-did-nevada-experience-the-third-largest-drop-in-its-labor-force-participation-rate-lfpr-after-the-covid-19-pandemic-2.

<sup>8 &</sup>quot;Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Protection Act (1921)." Accessed June 26, 2024. https://keep.lib.asu.edu/system/files/embryo/pdfs/LawShepperdTownerKM.xhtml.pdf.

<sup>9 &</sup>quot;Head Start History | ECLKC." 2018. ECLKC. March 2, 2018. https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/head-start-history.

<sup>10</sup> USDA. 2013. "About WIC-WIC's Mission | USDA-FNS." Usda.gov. 2013. https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/about-wic-wics-mission.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2017. "About TANF." Office of Family Assistance | ACF. 2017. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tanf/about.



#### What are states doing to improve their early childhood efforts?

Policymakers at all levels of government increasingly recognize early childhood as a foundational time in the development of our children and, therefore, our society. State legislators are taking action to expand and strengthen early childhood services. From 2019 through May 2024, state legislatures across the U.S. considered 6,290 measures related to early childhood; they enacted or adopted 964 of those bills and resolutions. These initiatives included the creation of universal pre-K programs, the strengthening of workforce development supports across ECS sectors, the expansion of childcare subsidies and tax credits, the improvement of early intervention services, and the reorganization of state early childhood governance structures—the topic primarily addressed in this report.<sup>12</sup>

#### Where do things stand in Nevada?

Overall, Nevada is experiencing challenges in expanding access to early childhood services, reducing child development and school readiness disparities, and coordinating its fragmented system. This report offers two macro-observations about Nevada:

- Many recent studies, including this report, provide the needed information, analysis, and considerations for action (see the list of Nevada-specific studies and reports at the end of the Recommendations section).
- The state may wish to establish and empower an authority of some type to move its divided ECS forward.

The first step in advancing the system of governance for Nevada's ECS will be to convene, engage, and maintain open communication with the many stakeholders in the system. Fortunately, Nevada has a passionate and committed group of stakeholders, and many are already involved through the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and other collective endeavors. Despite its struggles and challenges ahead, Nevada has accomplished much over the past several years, and its ECS already have high-quality elements, plus resources in development, upon which the state can build.





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<sup>12 &</sup>quot;Early Childhood Legislation Database." www.ncsl.org. https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/early-childhood-legislation-database.

<sup>13</sup> Butterworth, Todd. "National Education Rankings: What Nevada can Learn and a Proposal for Moving Forward." Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities, 2023.

<sup>14 &</sup>quot;Nevada | National Institute for Early Education Research." Nieer.org. Accessed June 28, 2024. https://nieer.org/yearbook/2023/state-profiles/nevada.

<sup>15 &</sup>quot;2023 Health of Women and Children Report." https://assets.americashealthrankings.org/app/uploads/ahr\_2023hwc\_comprehensivereport\_final\_web.pdf.

<sup>16 &</sup>quot;2024 KIDS COUNT Data Book." The Annie E. Casey Foundation. https://www.aecf.org/resources/2024-kids-count-data-book.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20 &</sup>quot;Nevada (NV)." State of Babies Yearbook 2023. https://stateofbabies.org/state/nevada/.

<sup>21 &</sup>quot;Nevada." Prenatal-To-3 Policy Impact Center. Accessed July 2, 2024. https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2023/nv.



Although national rankings are not a basis for truly objective performance measurement—as the Guinn Center reported about K-12 rankings in 2023<sup>13</sup> — they can offer some context for Nevada's relative performance. Here is a sampling of recent rankings related to early childhood:



#### Preschool access

According to the National Institute for Early Education Research, Nevada's statefunded pre-K programs meet 7 out of 10 national quality benchmarks and rank ninth nationally in state spending. However, because the state only serves about 7 percent of its 4-year-old population, Nevada ranks 40th in preschool access.<sup>14</sup>



#### **Health outcomes**

The United Health Foundation (UHF) ranked Nevada 40th overall in health outcomes in its Comprehensive State Rankings and Scores in the UHF's "2023 Health of Women and Children Report." The state underperformed in maternal mortality and low-birthweight babies, but saw improvements in infant mortality and the number of people considered to be in very good health. In the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2024 "Kids Count Data Book," Nevada ranked 42nd in the health category (using data from 2022). Their data shows the percentage of low-birthweight babies in Nevada was 9.3 percent, up from 8.8 percent in 2019. It also shows the portion of Nevadan children without health insurance remains unchanged at 8 percent. In the state of the content of of the c



#### Family and community

Kids Count found that the percentage of Nevada children living in highpoverty areas dropped from 10 percent in 2019 to 7 percent in 2022.<sup>17</sup>



#### **Education**

Kids Count ranked Nevada 46th overall in education, with 67 percent of Nevada children ages 3 and 4 not in school in 2022, up from 64 percent.<sup>18</sup>



#### **Economic well-being**

According to Kids Count, Nevada ranked 45th in the economic well-being category in 2024 and had 16 percent of children living in poverty, down from 17 percent in 2019. Twenty-eight percent of Nevada children had parents without secure employment, slightly up from 2019. The state further had 35 percent of children living in households with a high housing cost burden, also up slightly from the earlier measure. 19



#### Infant health

In the 2023 "State of Babies" report compiled by Zero to Three, Nevada's infants were judged to be in the bottom half of their four-phase rubric. The areas examined include good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences.<sup>20</sup>



#### Prenatal-to-3 outcomes

The Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center has created a State Policy Roadmap that identifies the 12 most effective evidence-based investments states can make to foster equitable opportunities for infants and toddlers. Across 19 indicators in the rubric, Nevada has an average ranking of 35th among the states.<sup>21</sup>



The Guinn Center does not recommend national rankings as a comprehensive state performance measure and guide. However, the reports referenced above demonstrate that Nevada has opportunities to improve its ECS.

Finally, even where Nevada may be doing well programmatically, ECS programs are often not reaching their target populations. Among those children eligible for certain programs, the following percentages participate:<sup>22</sup>

#### Pre-K

Among 4-year-olds, **15.8%** of eligible kids are participating in either the Zoom, Title I, or NevadaReady programs, which are intended to provide early learning and education services for children.

#### **Head Start**

In Nevada, 5.5% of eligible 4-year-olds are participating in Head Start, which provides early learning, health, and family support services to children and families.

### **Child Care Subsidy**

Only 10.4% of eligible families are using the child care subsidy program to help cover child care costs.

#### **Home Visiting**

**0.8%** of eligible children are participating in the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting programs. The home visiting program provides in-home support to expectant mothers and families, promoting health, parenting, and child development.

#### WIC





# **METHODS**

The first phase of this project involved conducting a thorough literature review and general analysis of existing research, legislative authorities, and early childhood governance structures. This phase included a review of relevant documents such as fiscal mapping, stem asset and gap analyses, and the Nevada Early Childhood Strategic Plan. After conducting this initial literature review, researchers created a landscape analysis to map Nevada's early childhood programs, their governance, and funding structures. This research examined the roles of primary government actors involved in ECS, including the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, the Nevada Department of Education, and the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Key informant interviews were conducted with stakeholders from Nevada's ECS, including government officials, program administrators, and service providers. These interviews provided qualitative data to complement the analysis of the existing research. In parallel, the research team performed a secondary analysis of early childhood governance models and best practices from other states. This comparative analysis aimed to identify strategies that could be adapted to enhance Nevada's early childhood governance structure and operations. In addition to the Nevada stakeholder interviews, there were additional interviews with state representatives of key states selected for their early childhood "best practices." Although the term "best practices" is used to highlighted approaches that have demonstrated success in certain contexts, it is important to recognize that these practices may need to be adapted to suit Nevada's unique needs.

The final phase of this project involved the development of a report that summarizes the findings from the previous phases. The report also includes policy considerations for improving the structure, governance, and funding mechanisms of Nevada's Early Childhood Systems.





# LITERATURE REVIEW

Some research is theoretical and more of interest to those in academic settings; the literature review for this report is geared toward practical considerations. Because of its length—it is more than 100 pages—you will find it as an appendix to this report. It explores findings and recommendations from more than 40 studies, articles, plans, and other documents related to early childhood governance. Each summary includes a link to the source material and a condensed overview of the material.

Knowledge about Early Childhood Systems (ECS) has grown broad and deep. Thanks to a great deal of research in recent decades, we have much better insights into brain development in early childhood, the importance of vocabulary acquisition before children begin school, the interplay between physical and mental health and cognitive growth, the need for economic stability and good nutrition during a child's development, and the value of basic social and emotional skills as a child begins their schooling.

There is also a growing body of evidence about the economic value of ECS. When functioning well, they are shown to reduce the future costs of remedial education, behavioral interventions, involvement in crime, and other individual challenges that come with a high societal price tag. They are also shown to yield economic benefits for years to come in the form of well-adjusted adults, engaged citizens, and a more productive taxpaying workforce.

Our literature review for this report focuses on how a state's ECS can be strengthened through a well-designed system of governance. It looks to other states that are further along than Nevada in the development of their early childhood systems, other nations that have strong early childhood programming, and academic literature that has analyzed what works best in organizing the policymaking, administration, finance, accountability, and other key elements of an effective early childhood governance structure.

Any critique of the ECS in Nevada should begin with an understanding of the progress that has been made in recent years and the excellent foundational work already completed. It can be helpful to look at the early childhood recommendations put forth by the National Governors Association and compare those to the current state of ECS in Nevada. Much has been accomplished.

## OTHER STATES

Looking forward, other states offer examples of effective ECS governance, though most excel in certain areas of governance rather than comprehensively at a systems level. Nevada is not alone in working to better coordinate early childhood systems but can look to the trailblazing work of other states for ideas about what may or may not work for its governance. Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Tennessee, Utah, and Vermont are all explored in our literature review, and other states were examined through other means.

A deeper look into state best practices—which came from interviews and further research into the work of a handful of states—can be found in the Governance section of this report.

### INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

On the international front, the Nordic countries got serious about their early childhood systems in the 1970s; they are now well-developed and offer practical and philosophical insights for ECS everywhere. The Global Guidelines Assessment is an evidence-based instrument designed to help professionals in the early care sector systematically examine and improve program quality. Introduced in 2003, a fourth edition of the tool is currently under development.

There is also a growing body of evidence about the economic value of ECS. When functioning well, they are shown to reduce the future costs of remedial education, behavioral interventions, involvement in crime, and other individual challenges that come with a high societal price tag.

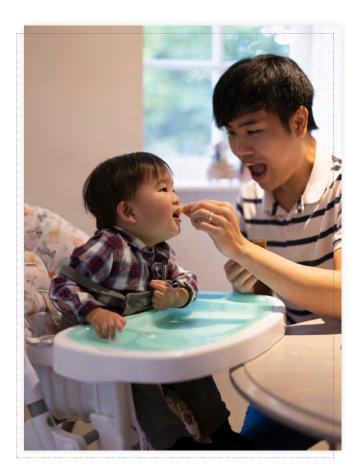


# SPECIFIC STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The literature also offers a variety of data-supported strategies worth considering when designing an ECS governance structure. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach for ECS governance, so it is important to consider all options through the lens of community needs.

- Vertical alignment is key. To accomplish the successful transition of a child from pre-K to kindergarten, a state's child development, health, academic, and other standards must be aligned between systems. See the reviews of "Early Childhood Utah," "A Systems Focus to Improve School Readiness," and "Governing Early Learning Among the American States" for research about vertical alignment.
- Quality data and ongoing research are vital. The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) offers a variety of research and tools for states thinking about their pre-K through 12 data systems. A review of a DQC paper shows Nevada could benefit from securely linking early childhood and K-12 data systems to inform policy decisions, monitor children's progress, and support students' success in school. It also shows that states can benefit from using data to answer crucial questions about children's school readiness, the effectiveness of programs in the early childhood education sector, and the alignment between early childhood and K-12 policies.
- Some research supports a consolidated approach to ECS governance. A doctoral dissertation titled "Exploring the Potential of Consolidated Approaches to Governance for Bringing Coherence to Early Childhood Education Systems" offers helpful research into the benefits of the consolidated model. An Education Commission of the States infographic overview of early care and education sector governance in the states shows where the various models are currently being used; it also offers key questions for policymakers considering governance changes. The research does not argue for the status quo and leaves room for changes within Nevada's existing structure.
- Some research supports the dispersion of policymaking authority. A study from the Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory argues the dispersion of policymaking authority among a handful of agencies can be more effective than either centralized or broadly dispersed policy governance.

- It is also important to consider the structure of ECS governance at the local level. There is a famous quote from former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tip O'Neill, who said, "All politics are local." The same may be said for early childhood services, as most are delivered to individual families in their communities by local providers and programs. Furthermore, the extensive role of local government in early childhood services is probably underappreciated. In our local governance research, our review of Collective Impact Organizations offers a prospective model for strengthening local ECS governance.
- Children with disabilities may merit special consideration in ECS governance. Because of their unique risk factors and challenges, a separate sector has been developed in ECS for children with disabilities; it has its own set of performance and compliance requirements. The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center has created a framework and companion self-assessment to help with this part of the larger governance discussion.





## THE BIG PICTURE

The larger body of research suggests that state-level ECS governance provide foundational supports and values—things like standards alignment, a comprehensive data system, research support, workforce development, et cetera—but then leave enough room for localities and providers to innovate for improvement and to be flexible in meeting local needs. Effective Early Childhood Systems should focus on children's developmental growth and readiness for K-12 education while being responsive to individual family needs for flexibility in receiving services. An effective ECS might also encourage the involvement of all the adults involved in raising the child.

Education Commission of the States is a national, nonpartisan organization that compiles data and research on education policies from early childhood through workforce entry to help state policymakers make informed decisions. They also provide advice on policy plans, consult on proposed legislation, and testify before legislative bodies as third-party experts. The Nevada Department of Education and the Legislative Counsel Bureau have been members of the organization. Through these memberships, the Commission may be available to Nevada for technical assistance. This report's literature review includes seven documents from the Commission related to early childhood systems and governance.

Finally, a study titled "What Predicts Legislative Success of Early Care and Education Policies?" offers strategic thoughts on how to frame legislative proposals for a greater chance of success. These insights could help shape certain ECS governance elements in Nevada.





# **NEVADA'S KEY ENTITIES**

One of the first tasks undertaken in this project was a thorough examination of the key entities operating in Nevada's early childhood systems. More than a simple list of organizations and programs, this report component provides a variety of useful insights, including:

- An entity overview, generally taken from materials produced by the agency or organization.
- A reference to its statutory authority that shows if the entity is created or empowered through federal or state statutes. This information can help determine if statutes offer an opportunity for, or a barrier to, future change. There are links to many sources throughout the document.
- A note about funding sources and links to the Nevada Executive Budget where relevant.
- A summary of oversight or advisory relationships to help understand who might exercise authority or influence over the entity or vice versa. These relationships may be levers for future change or improvement.
- A note about coordination that may be required with other entities. Knowing if an entity is compelled to work with other people or organizations can be helpful. Sometimes, this coordination does not happen, needs improvement, or additional entities may need to be added to the interaction.
- A list of reports that may be required or regularly issued. These reports can provide insight into a program or assist others in their accountability efforts.
- Details of the entity's regulatory authority. If an entity is empowered or required in statute to adopt regulations, this may be a vehicle for creating needed policy, which has the effect of law, in the early childhood arena. Statutes can be challenging to pass through the Legislature, but regulations have the same effect and can be adopted with a relatively straightforward administrative process if the regulating agency agrees with the need.
- Links to any relevant websites or pages. In many cases, these websites contain helpful links to additional resources.

The intent is that the Key Entities document will be a useful tool for those restructuring and later governing Nevada's early childhood systems. The document is attached to this report as an appendix.

The research on key entities demonstrates the extent to which many early childhood programs have evolved in a siloed manner. The Guinn Center found 18 Nevada programs and organizations operating exclusively in the early childhood space, plus an additional 45 that serve in early childhood but also help other populations. These entities are governed by 15 different chapters of the federal statutes or code and 26 different chapters of the Nevada Revised Statutes, and their funding exists in 40 different state budget accounts. One can imagine that systems coordination under these circumstances is a challenge... and an opportunity.



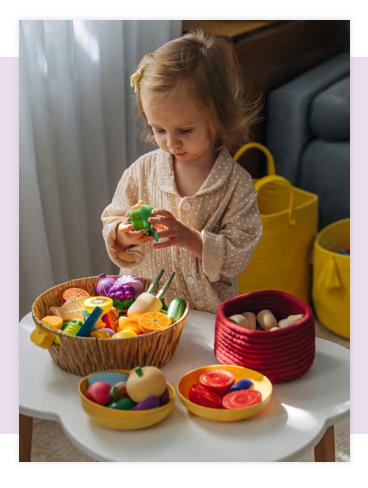


# SYSTEMS GOVERNANCE

The objective of early childhood systems governance is to create a macro-organizational structure to ensure efficient, effective, and collaborative management of programs and services. This includes making sure the necessary framework to prioritize equitable access to high-quality programs for all children and families. It also involves facilitating coordination among agencies responsible for these programs to provide comprehensive and integrated service delivery.

In Nevada, like most states, the governance of early childhood services exists in a complex and often uncoordinated arrangement influenced by federal, state, and local funding streams that, themselves, lack coordination. While ongoing efforts are working to enhance coordination, this isolated structure is still evident across departments responsible for children's health care, education, nutrition, and social development, among other needs. Research from many quarters, including Karoly et al.,<sup>24</sup> emphasizes the importance of integrated governance to deliver early childhood interventions effectively.

Education Commission of the States identifies three general structures for state early childhood systems (ECS) governance: creating new entities, consolidating existing ones, or adopting a coordinated approach requiring inter-agency collaboration. The diversity of governance structures across the U.S. states reflects the challenge of unifying disparate programs operating in isolation. Such fragmentation not only affects family economic well-being but also complicates service delivery and results in the inefficient use of public resources. In each of the following sections, we have provided an overview of governance models and practices used in other states that may serve as useful examples for policymakers in Nevada. We refer to these as "best practices," acknowledging that what may be considered best for one entity or state, might not be ideal for another. This term is used to highlighted approaches that have demonstrated success in certain contexts, though it is important to recognize that these practices may need to be adapted to suit Nevada's unique needs.









# BEST PRACTICES IN GENERAL GOVERNANCE: STATE MODELS NEVADA COULD REPLICATE

# COLORADO

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC), established in 2021 under HB21-1304, oversees a unified early childhood system, including a voluntary preschool program. Other legislation, HB22-1295, transferred programs from the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) and Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to CDEC in 2022. The CDEC coordinates with multiple state departments through memoranda of understanding and interagency agreements, and it collaborates with the CDE in special education transitions and CDHS in child welfare. Data sharing agreements with CDHS ensure privacy and security.

- The Early Childhood Leadership Commission provides statewide direction, and CDEC's Tribal Liaison works with tribal governments. County partnerships focus on program administration and policy, including Colorado Child Care Assistance Program contracts and policy advisory committees. The Colorado experience offers some ideas for Nevada to consider in designing its governance structure, including:
- Secure Funding Colorado has a diverse stream
  of steady funds dedicated to the ECS space. This
  enables them to provide high-quality services
  to a wide range of children and their families.

- Collectively Developing a Governance System – The State of Colorado closely engages advisory councils and reputable organizations with passion and experience in ECS. Their work and analysis led to the creation of a dedicated ECS agency.
- Planning for the Transition Colorado developed a comprehensive plan to move ECS from their prior structure to the one envisioned. Agreements were put in place to ensure coordination where functions needed to remain decentralized.
- Employing a Collective Impact Model –
  After deploying the new structure, Colorado
  instituted a collective impact model that includes
  regular listening sessions with stakeholders,
  maintaining continuous engagement, and
  addressing differences that arise between
  merged agencies and coordinated programs.
- Mandating Third-Party Evaluations To ensure that state ECS leaders do not become myopic in their view of the system, Colorado has mandated third-party evaluations to review regular and ongoing feedback from an outside perspective.









Vermont's early childhood services are administered across multiple agencies, primarily the Agency of Education (AOE) and the Agency of Human Services (AHS). The AOE's Early Education division manages universal pre-K and early childhood special education in collaboration with AHS, while the AHS's Child Development Division (CDD) oversees child care subsidies, licensing, quality ratings, and early intervention through Children's Integrated Services. The Maternal and Child Health Division partners with CDD on home visiting programs, and the Department of Mental Health collaborates on early childhood and family mental health services. However, Vermont faces structural challenges including varying quality definitions, inconsistent provider oversight, and differing professional expectations and support. Tensions between the AOE and AHS roles highlight the need for structural reforms to enhance collaboration and responsiveness within the system. Things that Nevada could learn from Vermont's experience include:

- Centralizing Governance with Clear Roles:
   Vermont has realized that joint governance
   is challenging; if everyone is in charge then
   no one is in charge. They have observed it
   is more effective to centralize governance
   whenever practical and to clearly define the
   roles, powers, and responsibilities of all parties.
- Establishing Independent Monitoring and Leadership: Vermont has found that ECS are more accountable and amenable to change when there is an independent body to provide oversight, accountability, and strategic leadership.
- Pursuing Continuous Improvement: Vermont regularly pursues legislative initiatives that are informed by ongoing assessments. Proposals have been advanced to reform and improve eligibility criteria, provider rates, and governance structures, among other things.





### GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The objective of community engagement governance in early childhood is to create innovative and dynamic communication and collaboration channels among all key stakeholders. These communication streams involve governmental agencies, service providers, parents and families, academic experts, and community stakeholders. The aim is to ensure these partners work together seamlessly and communicate effectively to alian programs and services, meeting the evolving needs of children and families. While Nevada's ECAC has made areat strides in enhancing communication streams, we see a need for communication to occur in all directions by all involved in the early childhood space. Achieving this objective will be easier if the ECAC is equipped with the requisite membership and the necessary authority to fulfill its oversight role. Effective community engagement is crucial in the governance of ECS. Not only does it help to receive the community's input and support when designing the system, it ensures the community is

aware of and uses the resources available. A quality system that goes unused has the same value as no system at all. In Nevada, for instance, only 48 percent<sup>25</sup> of eligible families utilize the Women, Infants, and Children's (WIC) program, which can help tremendously with a child's nutrition. To address the need for continuous and effective community engagement, ECS may wish to employ unified, targeted, and accessible messaging strategies that actively involve communities. It is essential not only to communicate directives from ECS leadership to stakeholders and the community, but also to establish channels where community feedback and insights flow seamlessly upward to inform decision-making processes. Bi-directional communication ensures that ECS policies and services are responsive to the needs of the communities they serve. By fostering an inclusive dialogue and implementing streamlined communication connections between services, states can enhance engagement and efficacy in delivering early childhood interventions.



#### **OREGON**

Oregon's Early Learning Hubs focus on establishing coordinated early learning systems, enhancing kindergarten readiness, and fostering stable, healthy families. These hubs emphasize integrated services between public and private sector resources for comprehensive support. With 16 hubs operating across county and school district<sup>25</sup> boundaries, they facilitate collaboration among health services, K-12 education, human services, and local businesses. Supported by the Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division, these hubs play a crucial role in preparing the state's youngest learners for educational success and facilitating effective communication with families. Their objectives include ensuring children are ready to learn, can transition effectively between systems, and will achieve proficiency in foundational skills like numeracy and literacy by third grade. Another best practice, which is suggested by the Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center and being implemented in some states, is a comprehensive screening and connection program. These assess the social predictors of health that contribute to long-term child and family well-being, including housing, income support, food security, and health insurance coverage. Screening for indicators of health beyond behavioral and biological issues not only helps families but encourages providers to take a more holistic approach to the many factors affecting a child's health and wellbeing. Addressing risk early is vital for creating a strong foundation for child development. The Center suggests four measures of comprehensiveness for such programs and has found three evidence-based programs that states may wish to adopt: Developmental Understanding and Legal Collaboration for Everyone (DULCE), Family Connects, and HealthySteps. Although the Guinn Center has not analyzed it in detail, First 5 Nevada is a newly implemented screening resource for families that appears to be pursuing a comprehensive approach to screening and connection.<sup>26</sup>

## **GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE**



The objective of early childhood finance governance is to ensure sustainable, adequate, and equitable funding for all early childhood programs and services. This includes securing diversified funding sources, optimizing resource allocation, and prioritizing investments that directly enhance the quality and accessibility of services for children and families. There is an added emphasis on public transparency in funding processes, encouraging stakeholder involvement in financial decision-making, and regularly assessing the impact of funding on program outcomes to ensure continuous improvement and accountability.

In Nevada, the governance of early childhood systems is heavily influenced by funding considerations, which has led to an arrangement that some note is disjointed and lacks coordination. The state relies mostly on federal dollars, with a mix of state and local appropriations, supplemented by private sector grants and contributions. To understand the scope and complexity of the federal role, the National Conference of State Legislatures has compiled a helpful overview of some of the major federal funding streams in this space, focused on the early care and education sectors.<sup>27</sup>

Recently, The Children's Cabinet partnered with the Children's Funding Project to develop an Early Childhood Fiscal Map, highlighting substantial investments that totaled over \$2 billion in Fiscal Year 2021 alone. Approximately 65 percent of those funds came from federal allocations, with a substantial increase resulting from COVID-19 pandemic relief funding. More than 60 percent of these resources were dedicated to child care subsidies and pre-K initiatives. These substantial investments have been helpful, but have also exacerbated challenges in aligning funding streams across early childhood sectors.<sup>28</sup> As detailed under recommendation D.1.d of this report, the Children's Funding Project is also completing a Fiscal Gap Analysis and Revenue Plan to begin addressing what additional funding may be needed to support the ECS and potential strategies to fill the gap.



In Nevada, the governance of early childhood systems is heavily influenced by funding considerations, which has led to an arrangement that some note is disjointed and lacks coordination.



Vermont legislators appropriated \$76 million in new funding in Fiscal Year 2024 and nearly \$125 million in Fiscal Year 2025 to expand access to child care sector services. The state seeks to boost the number of hours per week and weeks per year that three- to five-year-olds can receive free pre-K services. Previously, these children were entitled to 10 hours of free, public pre-K per week for 35 weeks each year. By increasing the subsidy reimbursement rate by 35 percent to match the true cost of running quality child care programs, the new law hopes to help child care providers improve program quality and access. In addition, the legislation aims to increase compensation for early childhood educators and strengthen early childhood governance.





# **GOVERNANCE AND DATA MANAGEMENT**

The objective of early childhood data and information systems governance is to establish and maintain comprehensive, integrated, and secure data systems that support informed decision-making and continuous improvement of early childhood programs and services. This includes collecting and analyzing data on child development, program effectiveness, and family needs, and ensuring data accessibility for all relevant stakeholders. There is also emphasis on the importance of data privacy, the use of technology to streamline data processes, and the development of standardized metrics to facilitate consistent and accurate reporting across agencies and organizations.

In Nevada, the governance of early childhood systems could benefit from the Nevada P-20 to Workforce

Research Data System (NPWR), which is designed to integrate comprehensive data from prenatal to the workforce. This Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) holds promise to make ECS data an incredibly valuable tool. It could be used to enhance the assessment of school readiness, inform the transition of children from pre-K to kindergarten, align the ECS and K-12 data systems, and make the data more accessible and useful to programs and families. With the full integration of early childhood into NPWR, this tool can be utilized statewide to evaluate the most pressing needs of Nevada's young children and their families, and how to best address those needs. By leveraging NPWR's capabilities, Nevada can optimize early childhood programs and services through evidencebased strategies aligned with statewide priorities.



#### **UTAH**

Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems (ECIDS) are critical tools states use to consolidate data from various early childhood programs and services. A fully functioning ECIDS, which Nevada has yet to achieve, underpins an effective early childhood system and helps ensure the efficient spending of public dollars. Benefits include better decision making, more effective programming, and more efficient resource allocation. Utah's ECIDS, which is hosted by its Department of Health and Human Services, integrates data to evaluate long-term outcomes for children participating in ECE programs. The ECIDS in Utah aims to continuously improve child outcomes and ECE program quality through data-driven decision making, address policy questions related to ECE services, and provide accessible, timely, and relevant data to stakeholders. Additionally, ECIDS enhances agencies' ability to participate in funding opportunities requiring comprehensive data on children, ECE professionals, and programs.

In Nevada, the governance of early childhood systems could benefit from the Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research Data System (NPWR), which is designed to integrate comprehensive data from prenatal to the workforce.



### **GEORGIA**

Over the past decade, Georgia has developed its Childhood and Community Data System (CACDS) with substantial support from state and federal grants. The CACDS integrates data from various early childhood programs across the state, including Babies Can't Wait, Georgia's pre-K Program, and Head Start, among others. Administered by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), CACDS operates under a governance structure involving a multiagency executive and research committee to ensure collaboration and data integrity. It enables tracking of child-level data with unique identifiers, facilitating comprehensive assessments across programs, and supporting research through linkages with Georgia's Academic and Workforce Analysis and Research Data System (GAAWARDS), which is similar to NPWR in Nevada.

Despite its robust capabilities, CACDS faces challenges including underutilization, which is attributed to inadequate policy alignment and unclear access protocols. It also struggles to resolve data inconsistencies across agencies and gaps in certain types of data, such as outcomes for non-participating children. Looking forward, Georgia plans to address these issues through its federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) renewal grant, focusing on enhancing usability, refining policies, and improving data consistency while expanding training and community resources to promote greater CACDS utilization statewide.



### GOVERNANCE AND THE WORKFORCE

The objective of early childhood workforce governance is to develop and retain a highly qualified, diverse, and motivated early childhood workforce across all sectors. This includes providing comprehensive professional development, competitive compensation, and supportive working conditions that foster job satisfaction and career growth.

Nevada's early childhood workforce faces challenges despite the passion and dedication of these workers. The Child Care and Development Program of the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services partnered with The Children's Cabinet to design a Nevada Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Framework. Initiated in 2022, the framework aims to support ECE professionals and improve outcomes for the families they serve by focusing on five key priorities. These include promoting a qualified and diverse workforce, ensuring equitable compensation

and access to benefits, strengthening program standards, enhancing data utilization for decision-making, and advancing policy initiatives and public awareness. The framework underscores the critical need for sustained investments to overcome challenges such as low pay, high turnover, and limited professional development opportunities in Nevada's ECE workforce sector.

Even Nevada's more developed and professionalized ECS workforce sectors—such as health care, child welfare, mental health, and others—face critical staffing shortages because of labor supply and demand imbalances, and competition from related professions outside ECS. The state recently created the Nevada Association of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health to address workforce challenges in the mental health sector. All ECS sectors need better workforce planning, support, and funding to function effectively.



### **ILLINOIS**

Illinois increased funding for its Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity program, resulting in an 18 percent increase in early educators who obtained higher education credentials through full scholarships. The consortium, involving 61 public and private higher education institutions, six state agencies, and community partners, aims to enhance early educator access to higher education, align the system, and meet ECE workforce demands. The Illinois Legislature allocated an additional \$250 million for ECE programming and over \$100 million to support current ECE teachers pursuing credentials, encouraging new providers in "preschool deserts" to apply for grants.



#### **KENTUCKY**

Kentucky initiated a program to bolster the early childhood workforce by expanding eligibility for its child care subsidy program to include all staff working at least 20 hours per week in licensed early care and education sector programs. This change provided free child care for their own children regardless of household income, resulting in 3,200 parents and 5,600 children benefiting in the first year alone. The success prompted interest nationwide, with potential benefits for over 234,000 early care and education sector staff if adopted nationally. The program seeks to enhance staffing in child care and facilitate greater workforce participation among parents of young children despite ongoing staff recruitment and retention challenges.

Although the Illinois and Kentucky programs are focused on the ECE sector, their strategies and lessons are transferable to other ECS sectors. For example, they could be applied to professionals who work or aspire to work in the home visiting, early intervention, and childhood mental health sectors.



# **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

The policy considerations resulting from the months of research contained in this report are presented here in two ways.

First, in this section, they appear in three implementation phases intended to help planners discern in which order they may be considered. This section only contains a brief summary of each recommendation. The numbering system refers to the full policy option listed in the next portion (Recommendations, by Category). The phased policy considerations are a condensed version of the categorical considerations and could be used as a guide for the progression of implementation for the recommendations.

Second, the considerations are presented in full detail, by category, in the section that follows. The four broad categories include governance, planning, coordination, and others. The recommendations are presented with much supporting detail to assist planners in this work.







# RECOMMENDATIONS BY PLANNING PHASE

PHASE I	Governance Structure Planning and Implementation
Recommendations	Summary Description
A.1.a	Create an interim office to plan and organize the future of Nevada's ECS. Use this office to convene stakeholders and consider the state's options through the lens of this and other reports.
A.1.b, B.2.c, B.2.d, B.2.e, D.1.d	Use various tools—an ECS planning report, the Early Childhood Legislation Database, national recommendations to governors, a legislative fellow's program, and various reports and plans produced by Nevada-based entities—throughout the governance planning process.
A.4.a, A.4.b, A.4.c	Restructure the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, consider governance changes for early intervention and early childhood special education, and implement a strategic two-way communication plan to engage stakeholders.
PHASE II	Governance Practices
Recommendations	Summary Description
A.2.b, A.2.c, A.2.d	Reconsider the connection between local needs and funding pathways, rethink ECS funding mechanisms, and implement cost-based funding.
A.3.a, A.3.b, A.3.c, A.3.d, A.3.e, A.3.f	Using available tools and research, implement a robust, integrated cross-sector data system to enable evidence-based, data-driven decisions; improve data quality, access, and usage; and use a phased approach to test and roll out the improved system.
C.1.a, C.1.b, C.1.c	Reimagine systems access by developing a simple and reliable single point of entry, a No Wrong Door approach throughout the early childhood ecosystem, and a universal application system to enable the collection of consistent data.
C.1.d	Assess and align systems standards and administrative rules between ECS and later-life systems.
C.2.a, C.2.b, C.2.c	Develop and improve the ECS workforce by improving compensation, refining preparation and training, and professionalizing the work.
C.3.a	Leverage existing resources for family engagement in the state and explore best practices to expand and improve current efforts.
PHASE III	Systems Improvement and Enhancement
Recommendations	Summary Description
A.1.c, A.2.a, B.1.a, B.1.b, B.2.a, B.2.b, D.1.a, D.1.b	Continually improve the new ECS by considering best practices in early childhood, including regular funding reviews, strategic planning, supportive policymaking, and other such measures.



## RECOMMENDATIONS BY CATEGORY

#### A.1.a

Category: Governance - Planning

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Sources: Stakeholder interviews.

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council. 2020. Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council 2022-2024 Strategic Plan.

P-3 Subcommittee. 2015. Building a Comprehensive P-3 Policy in Nevada.

**Recommendation:** Nevada's Early Childhood Systems (ECS) need a governance structure that supports comprehensive coordination, engagement with the full array of stakeholders, and continuous improvement. They also need to more efficiently allocate public resources and streamline government processes for the benefit of the public they serve.

Determining and implementing the necessary changes is a complex task with many options and challenges to consider. It is recommended that the process be initiated by a neutral entity in Nevada's Executive Branch, rather than within or between existing early childhood entities. It is also recommended that this coordinating entity have a temporary mission and not be a part of the long-term governance structure.

Thus, Nevada should consider creating an Office of Early Childhood Systems within the Governor's Office as a temporary vehicle for convening stakeholders and planning a long-term organizational and funding structure for ECS. This office should be granted the full array of necessary authority to complete the task and charged with recommending a path forward for ECS to the governor and Legislature.

If the effort to create such an office is unsuccessful in the legislative process, perhaps the governor and advocates can undertake an alternative path to advancing this recommendation and those offered below.

# **MOTES/LINKS:**

https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ NECAC2022\_2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf





# **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

In the process of drafting a budget proposal or legislation to create the office, the following questions should be considered in planning its mission. We would like to emphasize that these are not questions for further study but are intended to guide bill drafters or planners in the creation of this office.

- What specific elements should be included in the
  office's process for determining the best structure
  for governance of Nevada's ECS? For example, in
  addition to questions of organizational structure,
  would it look at things like communication flow
  between ECS entities, data management and use,
  engagement with stakeholders (parents, providers,
  funders, administrative agencies, subject-matter
  experts, and others), funding effectiveness,
  service access, policymaking practices, et cetera?
- Under what definition of ECS will the office operate? Planners should consider adopting the comprehensive definition created by the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC).
- Should the proposal explicitly require the eventual governance apparatus to be housed outside the Governor's Office?
- What specific authorities or mandates will be needed for the office to complete its mission?
- Should the office be required to convene and consult with specific stakeholders to formulate a governance blueprint? Which stakeholders? Would it be helpful if the convening authority is specific and mandated? The Key Entities document in this report could be helpful in this planning.

NOTE: The Guinn Center encourages ECS planners to remember the important but less obvious role of local government in ECS. While early childhood programs have largely formed at the federal level and are mostly managed by state agencies, services are delivered locally, and local governments often hold policy and funding levers that are vital to the systems overall.

 Additionally, the ECS workforce is often overlooked by policymakers and many service providers experience extreme difficulty in staffing their programs and services. Thus, workforce considerations should be an element of most ECS discussions, and systems leaders should consider engaging workforce development stakeholders whenever possible.

- If the ECAC serves as the office's advisory board, should members of the Legislature be added as members of the ECAC? Should the office submit occasional reports to the appropriate legislative committees?
- What will parents' role be in helping inform the reorganization of Nevada's ECS and the long-term operation of services under the revised structure?
- Can any existing advisory bodies be eliminated, combined, or their role changed in response to a new organizational structure? Which should the office consider in its work?
- Should the office explore federal policy waivers to enable or support the state's new governance structure?
- Should there be a specific sunset date for the
  office's existence to ensure long-term management
  of ECS is not a direct function of the Governor's
  Office? Or, after the implementation of a new
  ECS governance structure, might there be
  an ongoing role for a scaled-down office to
  serve as an ombudsman for early childhood?
- What timeframe is needed for the office to complete its tasks? Is there a need to consider that a new governor could be elected in 2026 and might need time to formulate their vision for ECS?
- What staffing will ensure the office has all the human resources needed to complete its mission (for example, individuals with expertise in cross-sector early childhood services, technology and data systems, organizational restructuring, facilitating complex collaboration, state-level policymaking, research, et cetera)? What specific qualifications and expertise are necessary or preferred for key positions?
- Would the office benefit from contracting for professional consulting or other outside expertise, and what funding would be needed for such help?
- What will be the necessary budgetary and personnel resources to do the job well and efficiently?



#### A.1.b

Category: Governance - Planning

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Sources: Foresight Law + Policy (FL+P). 2020.
Early Childhood Governance: Getting There from Here.

Regenstein, Elliot, and Katherine Lipper. 2013. A Framework for Choosing a State-Level Early Childhood Governance System. The BUILD Initiative.

Recommendation: The report from FL+P and its accompanying Decision Guide could be central tools in Nevada's reorganizing its ECS governance structure. The report was produced to support a field-wide improvement strategy for early childhood systems in U.S. states. It builds on existing resources that describe different state governance models and identifies their benefits and drawbacks. The report also offers a deeper study of the processes for governance change, identifying key questions states should consider and providing better information about the tradeoffs inherent in answering those questions. It draws on early childhood systems theory, behavioral economics, and other education policy resources. It also focuses on identifying capacities that states may need as they consider how to move forward in their governance efforts.

The BUILD Initiative paper illustrates three different ECS governance structures with state examples and practices. It assesses the advantages and challenges of each structure, with considerations for state leaders in determining which might make the most sense in their state.

#### A.1.c

Category: Governance - Planning

Planning Phase: 3 – Systems Improvement and Enhancement

Source: Karila, Kirsti. "A Nordic Perspective on Early Childhood Education and Care Policy." European Journal of Education 47, no. 4 (2012): 584-95.

Recommendation: The Nordic countries began focusing on early childhood care and education in the 1970s. Thus, their systems are well-developed, and they have much experience in what works in serving young children. The following list of planning philosophies is offered for Nevada's ECS leaders to consider in their work:

- There is nothing wrong with thinking about the adults that children will one day become and helping them to grow into productive adults. However, childhood matters too and making happy, well-adjusted children should not be considered any less important a goal in ECS.
- It may be better to focus on making good citizens rather than building a strong workforce; by producing the former, the latter will follow. Doing things that have worked in other places and times is helpful, but they should not be pursued to the exclusion of discovering even better ways of doing things. Following the latest research can help in that endeavor.
- Narrow, standardized, prescriptive approaches may inhibit long-term systems growth and improvement.

#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://www.flpadvisors.com/uploads/4/2/4/2/4242 9949/flp gettingtherefromhere 061120.pdf

#### Decision Guide:

https://www.flpadvisors.com/uploads/4/2/4/2/4242 9949/flp\_gtfh\_decisionguide\_061120.pdf

#### **BUILD** Initiative report:

https://buildinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Early-Childhood-Governance-for-Web.pdf



### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12007

#### A.2.a

Category: Governance - Funding

Planning Phase: 3 - Systems Improvement and

Enhancement

Source: Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund.

Annual Report – 2022. 2022.

Recommendation: Nevada should establish a periodic process for reviewing all funding available through the complex web of federal ECS programming and report on the funding received and not received in Nevada. For state ECS funding, systems leaders should inventory the annual legislatively approved appropriations and end-of-year expenditures.

All this information could be maintained in a publicly accessible database and presented in a way that encourages stakeholders to think about how more federal, state, local, and private money can be brought to early childhood. Possibilities include using existing Nevadabased expenditures to leverage more federal funding or using existing funding streams to encourage business investment in early childhood benefits for employees.

#### **NOTES/LINKS:** -

https://kschildrenscabinet.org/wp-content/uploads/20 22/11/Cabinet-Annual-Report-2022.pdf

An additional tool to use in this endeavor is the Nevada Early Childhood Fiscal Map from the Children's Funding Project:

https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrljoiODk1Nml3Z jQtMmViNS00MWY3LWI2ODEtZWZhMzJmM2M5M <u>Dk11iwidCl6IjBjNzFlYzI1LWViYTUtNGMwMy04MDgz</u> LWQ4Njk3M2VkYzk5ZSIsImMiOjF9

Also see the forthcoming Early Childhood Fiscal Map and Gap Analysis referenced in recommendation D.1.d.





Category: Governance - Funding

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

2022-2024 Strategic Plan.

Recommendation: Early childhood systems in America have tended to grow top-down because they originated in response to prescriptive funding streams, such as federal and state programs. As a result, service delivery has often been designed to meet funding requirements rather than individual family and community needs, which may be different from the vision of funders. Nevada should examine local needs and identify funding pathways and policy changes necessary to meet those needs, in addition to meeting ECS goals. This process should begin with examining the needs of families, then service providers and their workforce, then funding or regulatory bodies, and so on. If needed, policy changes or flexibility can be advocated for or negotiated with funders.



#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ NECAC2022\_2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf

Nevada stakeholders note that examining local needs is important to effectively allocate resources and implement policies that address specific challenges. In larger cities, the focus might be on hiring and retaining skilled labor, which requires the community to consider salaries and benefits. However, in rural areas, funding might look at expanding access to essential services and reducing the need for long-distance family commutes. These allocations have to be based on community needs, and those needs can only be determined through productive communication.





#### A.2.c

Category: Governance - Funding

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Backes, Emily P., ed. Transforming the financing of early care and education. 2018.

"Funding Our Future: Generating State and Local Tax Revenue for Quality Early Care and Education." Children's Funding Project. Accessed July 22, 2024.

Recommendation: The National Academies study of early childhood funding mechanisms should be used as a source of ideas in redesigning structures in Nevada, with an emphasis on requiring high-quality services; ensuring universal access and equitable cost-sharing in keeping with the stated needs of family stakeholder representatives; supporting a well-trained and compensated workforce; coordinating funding from all sources; planning a smooth transition from the existing siloed financing structure; and other vital considerations.

The Children's Funding Project paper catalogs successful efforts in states and localities to close the funding gap in early childhood services. It also introduces potential next-generation tax policies for consideration.



# **ONDITION NOTES/LINKS:**

https://www.nap.edu/catalog/24984/transforming-the-financing-of-early-care-and-education

https://childrensfundingproject.org/resource/fundingour-future-generating-state-and-local-tax-revenue-forquality-early-care-and-education/







#### **A.2.d**

Category: Governance - Funding

Planning Phase: 2 – Governance Practices

Source: Gustafsson-Wright, Emily, and Izzy Boggild-Jones. "Measuring the cost of investing in early childhood interventions and applications of a standardized costing tool." Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 1419, no. 1 (2018): 74-89.

Recommendation: Research suggests a cost-based approach versus a market-based approach is preferable in funding, subsidizing, and reimbursing for many early childhood services, particularly when supported by accurate cost data. Furthermore, there can be significant cost variability depending on the type, extent, quality, frequency, duration, and location of the services provided. Nevada should consider funding early childhood services, as appropriate, based on a standardized and objective measure of the current costs of providing high-quality services—rather than simply gathering provider pricing data. When appropriate, funding levels should be determined using a research-based costing model tested explicitly for funding the service in question. Such an approach is also allowable under certain federal programs with <u>various resources</u> offered.

NOTE: Although the examples below are focused on the early care and education sectors, and they are the domains most likely to have costing tools available, this recommendation is intended to apply universally to all ECS domains, whenever possible and appropriate.



# **MOTES/LINKS:**

https://nyaspubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/nyas.13679

The Nevada Department of Education contracted with WestEd and its Region 15 Comprehensive Center to conduct a cost and equity study to accurately ascertain the gap between the expected levels of funds the state's new pre-K per pupil formula would generate and the funding that sites needed to create extra seats:

https:/webapp-strapi-paas-prod-nde-001.azurewebsites .net/uploads/nrpk\_cost\_and\_equity\_study\_final\_ report\_3eac8ea5e8.pdf

The Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services has engaged Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies to design and implement a new approach to setting child care subsidy rates. More information is available at <a href="https://www.prenatal5fiscal.org/nevada">https://www.prenatal5fiscal.org/nevada</a>. The organization more recently created a 50-state child care cost tool that is customizable for both center-based programs and family child care homes; results are provided at the program level and the per-child level and can be viewed at <a href="https://www.prenatal5fiscal.org/childcarecostmodel">https://www.prenatal5fiscal.org/childcarecostmodel</a>. Costing approaches such as these should be considered in all ECS services whenever appropriate and allowable.

Examples of other child care sector costing tools: <a href="https://pcqc.acf.hhs.gov/">https://pcqc.acf.hhs.gov/</a> and <a href="https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/staffed-family-child-care-network-cost-estimation-tool">https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/staffed-family-child-care-network-cost-estimation-tool</a>

Example preschool costing tool: <a href="http://ceelo.org/cost-of-preschool-quality-tool/">http://ceelo.org/cost-of-preschool-quality-tool/</a>

Nevada stakeholders note that implementing a cost-based model for funding early childhood services would be a big step toward addressing the funding gap in this area. A cost-based model would ensure that funding aligns with the actual cost of providing high-quality services, which supports better outcomes for children and their families.

#### **A.3.**a

Category: Governance - Data

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund. "All in for Kansas Kids – Early Childhood Strategic Plan, 2020-2024." 2020.

Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. 2012. Needs Assessment for Nevada's Early Childhood Data System Project 2012. Reno, NV: Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Recommendation: Nevada must implement a robust, integrated cross-sector data system to enable evidence-based, data-driven decisions. This process has become a part of the service-delivery lexicon in ECS but should also be used in governance and resource allocation decisions at both the state and program levels across all sectors within ECS. It is vital that ECS data be organized in a way that ensures interaction across all ECS service sectors so that service gaps, policy and funding needs, and collaboration opportunities can be identified and addressed.

Additionally, the rapid emergence of Artificial Intelligence tools will give ECS leaders the ability to analyze data deeply and quickly in real time to generate useful and creative ideas for systems efficiency, enhancement, and improvement.

#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://kschildrenscabinet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Strategic-Plan.pdf

Stakeholder feedback has revealed that Nevada's NPWR (Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research) longitudinal data system shows potential as a useful tool but needs extensive expansion and improvement to meet the daily needs of users and the public. Perhaps the early childhood sector can lead the way in leveraging NPWR to its potential.

Although a little dated, in 2012, the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council worked with Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. to assess the state's needs in developing a coordinated data system that links pre-K to K-12 and beyond to support early childhood educators in understanding and utilizing child assessment data to improve programs, curriculum, and environments. <a href="https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ELDS.pdf">https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ELDS.pdf</a>

#### **A.3.b**



Category: Governance - Data

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: "Roadmap for Early Childhood and K-12 Data Linkages: Key Focus Areas to Ensure Quality Implementation. Quality Implementation Roadmaps." Data Quality Campaign. Data Quality Campaign, 2016.

Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. 2012. Needs Assessment for Nevada's Early Childhood Data System Project 2012. Reno, NV: Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

**Recommendation:** The Data Quality Campaign is an excellent resource for designing and maximizing the use of statewide longitudinal data systems. This report offers some helpful insights related to early childhood data that Nevada's system should consider:

- Integrate cross-sector early childhood data into the state research agenda to use the linked data to examine issues affecting children's well-being and school readiness.
- Collect and provide critical data in real time so service providers, parents, and ECS leaders can act on the data as soon as possible.
- Consider including family-level data in addition to child-level data because some early childhood programs provide services to the whole family.
- Determine whether data can be collected and analyzed at various levels to determine how different service delivery environments affect children's success.
- Develop publicly available data reports or dashboards that meet the community's information needs and encourage stakeholders to interact with the data.
- Determine whether and how the state should collect health screening and developmental assessment data.
- Add geographic data to examine how neighborhood and community factors affect children's success.

### NOTES/LINKS:

https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED568710

Nevada stakeholders noted that integrating data is complex, given the different requirements among agencies and programs. However, having an integrated longitudinal data system that is effective, reliable, and accessible would benefit providers, families, and agencies alike.



#### A.3.c

Category: Governance - Data

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Ulmen, Kara, Jing Tang, Katie Richards, Gabriella Guerra, J. Ball, Sara Amadon, Emily Maxfield, Carlise King, and Dale Richards. "The data capacity of state-funded pre-K programs across the United States." (2023).

Recommendation: Nevada should analyze and improve access among ECS administrators to child-, program-, workforce-, and system-level data as outlined in the Nevada report linked below. Additionally, as outlined on page 6 of the report, the state should: track, report, and analyze disaggregated child data to facilitate planning and decision making; collect and monitor community demographics; and coordinate and link data across Nevada's NPWR data system.

With the emergence of Artificial Intelligence tools, it may be possible to develop Generative Pretrained Transformers (GPTs) to assist system users in managing and querying data.

#### A.3.d

Category: Governance - Data

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies (ECLS) Program, 2023.

Recommendation: The ECLS program includes four longitudinal studies that examine child development, school readiness, and early school experiences. Nevada should consider using the ECLS data as a guide for some of the data to be tracked within Nevada's longitudinal data system and for use as a tool for comparing Nevada's outcomes to a broader data set.



### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://nces.ed.gov/ecls/



### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://doi.org/10.56417/4813w330c

Per NRS 232.980 Nevada's governor can direct any public agency to submit data to the statewide longitudinal data system. Should the state's leadership encounter problems collecting needed data, there may be an opportunity to work with the governor to compel data reporting.

Nevada report: <a href="https://cms.childtrends.org/ck-uploads/gates/reports/Nevada.pdf">https://cms.childtrends.org/ck-uploads/gates/reports/Nevada.pdf</a>





#### **A.3.e**

Category: Governance - Data

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office. Special Education: Additional Data Could Help Early Intervention Programs Reach More Eligible Infants and Toddlers. 2023.

Recommendation: If it is not already (Nevada is one of two states that did not respond to the GAO survey for this report), the state should consider collecting demographic data on children throughout the Part C process, reporting this data to the longitudinal data system, and using these data to better identify and rectify gaps in access to the full array of ECS services during the birth-to-5 years age range and to aid in systems-level transition planning between the early childhood years and the school years.



#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106019

The federal government may eventually require states to report this data, and the GAO study shows it is useful for planning and workforce management in both the early childhood and K-12 systems.



#### A.3.f

Category: Governance - Data

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Kelvey-Albert, Michele, and Victoria Taiwo. "The Big Bang vs. Phased Approach: ASCO Standard Implementation within a Large Academic Medical Center." JCO Oncology Practice 19, no. 11\_suppl (2023): 419-419.

Recommendation: In rolling out a data collection, management, reporting, and use system, we recommend a phased approach. For example, building out the ECS portion of NPWR could mean starting with a handful of data points in a single sector. Beginning with limited horizontal data would enable the system to be built more vertically after some initial testing has been done. The limited data could be used to test a unique identifier, dashboard tools, reports, funding recommendations, system communication, decision-making processes, etc. After these systems are proven, additional rollout could be undertaken.

### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://doi.org/10.1200/OP.2023.19.11 suppl.419

In its report, "What Now? A Vision to Transform State Data Systems to Inform People's Pathways through Education and the Workforce," the Data Quality Campaign states, "When investing in new ways to access SLDS (Statewide Longitudinal Data System) [longitudinal] data, state leaders must be thoughtful and intentional in how they plan and roll out new tools and how they inform and support essential stakeholders, like district superintendents and local workforce boards. States must work with agency leaders, local leaders, community advocates, and other trusted intermediaries to help people understand how to use and benefit from these resources."

https://dataqualitycampaign.org/wp-content/ uploads/2023/04/DQC-What-Now\_A-Vision-to-Transform-State-Data-Systems.pdf



#### **A.4.**a

Category: Governance - Organization

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Source: Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council. 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. 2022.

Recommendation: As Nevada's ECS evolve to become comprehensive and coordinated, the systems' oversight and governance will similarly need to be comprehensive and coordinated. The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council is a competent and well-functioning body but, under a new governance structure, it will likely need to:

- Be moved from the Department of Education into a more neutral location in the revised organizational arrangement.
- Have its membership expanded to include an array of ECS and government leaders, including those representing disability issues.
- Perhaps be given auxiliary advisory bodies that include family, program, and communitylevel interests, including those that focus on elevating beneficiary voices across the ECS (the existing Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council is such an example).
- Be vested with substantive oversight, policymaking, and (possibly) regulatory authority; and
- Be allocated a bill draft request for each legislative session.

# **ONOTES/LINKS:**

https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ NECAC2022\_2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf

Stakeholders note that the ECAC could be more effective if its decision-making authority were more linked to its role. Additionally, with the lack of complete representation on the ECAC, some areas of early childhood are unrepresented, such as early childhood mental health.

#### A.4.b

Category: Governance - Organization

Planning Phase: 2 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Source: Kasprzak, Christina, Kathleen Hebbeler, Donna Spiker, Katy McCullough, Anne Lucas, Sharon Walsh, Judy Swett et al. "A state system framework for high-quality early intervention and early childhood special education." Topics in Early Childhood Special Education 40, no. 2 (2020): 97-109.

"Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs." 2023. <a href="www.acf.hhs.gov">www.acf.hhs.gov</a>. November 28, 2023.

Recommendation: Children with disabilities come with an additional set of challenges for ECS and should be given special consideration in all ECS domains. The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center developed a conceptual framework for high-quality state early intervention and early childhood special education sectors. While this report is focused on the education sector within ECS, Nevada could consider this framework for determining how services for children with disabilities across all early childhood sectors will fit into the state's revised ECS governance structure.

The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services have created a policy guide to help states craft policy and practice in support of inclusion. The guide may be helpful in advancing these objectives.

# **ONOTES/LINKS**

http://ectacenter.org/sysframe/

#### Federal guidance:

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/policy-guidance/policy-statement-inclusion-children-disability-early-childhood-programs



#### A.4.c

Category: Governance - Organization

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Source: Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council. 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. 2022.

Recommendation: Vertical communication throughout Nevada's ECS will be essential to program and policy implementation and continual improvement in the long term. Therefore, the ECS should implement a strategic two-way communications plan that will engage and connect families, providers, local governments, and other stakeholders in a manner that is routine and intuitive.

#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ NECAC2022 2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf

This recommendation is included in Phase 1 because it could help state planners receive input and communicate plans during the ECS governance structure overhaul. There may be existing lines of communication that could be leveraged for this communication system (for example, through various stakeholder organizations), or it may be better to develop a new, stand-alone system.

Nevada stakeholders note that ECS communication is significantly lacking in the state. Ideally, there would be systems that talk to each other behind the scenes so that the information is accessible not only to families but to programs and other entities as well. Streamlining this communication would also assist with top-down messaging, so that communication to programs from decision-makers could be more accessible. A strategic two-way communications plan would ensure that all stakeholders are aligned and informed. It could also create a sense of community among those who care about ECS.

#### B.1.a

Category: Planning - Strategic Plan

Planning Phase: 3 - Systems Improvement and

Enhancement

Source: Colorado Office Of Early Childhood, "Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan 2020-2025." 2020.

**Recommendation:** The Colorado Shines Brighter strategic plan may be an example for Nevada to consider in its long-term planning process after a revised governance structure is in place.



https://earlymilestones.org/wp-content/uploads/ 2020/02/Colorado-Shines-Brighter\_Strategic-Plan\_ Full-Report.pdf





#### **B.1.b**

Category: Planning - Continuous Quality Improvement

Planning Phase: 3 – Systems Improvement and

Enhancement

Source: Colorado Office Of Early Childhood, "Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan 2020-2025." 2020.

Recommendation: Colorado's continuous quality improvement process proposes to assess statewide ECS progress and outcomes using predetermined indicator data. This information will guide decision-making by the statewide advisory council, families, advocates, the Governor's Office, and other stakeholders. It will also influence resource allocation and strategy refinement within the state plan. Nevada could consider replicating some parts of this process.

#### **B.2.**a

Category: Planning - Policymaking

Planning Phase: 3 - Systems Improvement and

Enhancement

Source: New America, "From Crawling to Walking." 2015.

"Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs." 2023. www.acf.hhs.gov. November 28, 2023.

Recommendation: Although service delivery policymaking is beyond the scope of this report, good governance should result in thoughtful policy. New America outlines 65 state policy considerations in the pre-K through 3 sectors. Nevada's early childhood planners should review these for possible adoption.

#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://earlymilestones.org/wp-content/uploads/ 2020/02/Colorado-Shines-Brighter\_Strategic-Plan\_ Full-Report.pdf



https://static.newamerica.org/attachments/11902-from-crawling-to-walking/50-State-Scan.fe1ae7082db6418dabeb3eee29cea669.pdf





#### **B.2.b**

Category: Planning - Policymaking

Planning Phase: 3 - Systems Improvement and

Enhancement

Source: Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center, "The Prenatal-to-3 System of Care in Nevada." 2023.

Recommendation: An additional service delivery policymaking tool is the Prenatal-to-3 (PN-3) State Policy Roadmap. States can use it to assess the well-being of infants and toddlers, prioritize PN-3 policy goals, and identify evidence-based policy solutions. State early childhood planners should review this report to identify policy opportunities in Nevada. Pursuing full implementation of a comprehensive screening and connection program, as suggested by the Policy Impact Center, would be beneficial for family engagement and enrolling children.



### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2023/nv/

Nevada also produced its own PN-3 strategic plan in December 2023 and it should be looked to as a source of insight and vision for services in this subsector of early childhood.

https://www.childrenscabinet.org/wp-content/ uploads/2024/01/ECCS-Strategic-Plan-FINAL 12.2023-2-2.pdf



#### **B.2.c**

Category: Planning - Policymaking

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), "Early Childhood Legislation Database." 2023.

Recommendation: In considering possible ECS legislative measures, Nevada should make use of NCSL's Early Childhood Legislation Database, which contains links to bills in other U.S. states from the past several years. The database includes a search tool to filter by topic, year, state, and other criteria. It contains over 600 bills on early childhood governance. Systems-level bills include those offered by Colorado, Minnesota, Vermont, and Virginia.

### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/early-childhood-legislation-database



#### **B.2.d**

Category: Planning - Policymaking

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Source: Walsh, Brittany, Linda Smith, and Katherine Mercado. "Integrated Efficient Early Care and Education Systems." 2023.

Recommendation: The Bipartisan Policy Center compiled information about each U.S. state's specific approaches to organizing, administering, and coordinating early childhood programs. It examined specific structures and policies that influence the integration and effectiveness of ECS. In planning its ECS, Nevada should review the recommendations to governors on page 15 and the structural metrics outlined throughout the report.



#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2023/nv/

Nevada also produced its own PN-3 strategic plan in December 2023 and it should be looked to as a source of insight and vision for services in this subsector of early childhood.

https://www.childrenscabinet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ECCS-Strategic-Plan-FINAL12.2023-2-2.pdf



#### **B.2.e**

Category: Planning - Policymaking

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), "Early Childhood Legislation Database." 2023.

Recommendation: In considering possible ECS legislative measures, Nevada should make use of NCSL's Early Childhood Legislation Database, which contains links to bills in other U.S. states from the past several years. The database includes a search tool to filter by topic, year, state, and other criteria. It contains over 600 bills on early childhood governance. Systems-level bills include those offered by Colorado, Minnesota, Vermont, and Virginia.



### NOTES/LINKS:

https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/BPC\_State-Governance-Report-1.25.23.pdf

#### Nevada Fact Sheet:

https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Bipartisan\_Early-Childhood 50-State-Report NV 2023-2.pdf



#### C.1.a

Category: Systems Access, Single Point of Entry

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Stakeholder interviews.

**Recommendation:** Develop a simple and reliable single point of entry (SPE) to the broadest possible array of ECS programs. This recommendation combines with C.1.b and C.1.c to ease systems access for families and to make the process as simple and efficient as possible.

#### **NOTES/LINKS:**

First 5 Nevada is a new and developing web portal that provides preliminary eligibility screening and then connects families with appropriate ECS programs. It functions as a web-based SPE and holds exciting potential for improving and streamlining family access to services. Nevada should continue to develop this tool and ensure it has the needed resources. Perhaps it can eventually include a universal ECS application (see recommendation C.1.c), can be strengthened through the addition of Artificial Intelligence tools, and can include a direct handoff to participating ECS programs that agree to a collaborative implementation of a Coordinated Intake and Referral System (CIRS). Key components of a CIRS include centralized intake, needs assessment, service referral, tracking and follow-up, and collaboration across agencies.

Nevada 2-1-1 was conceived as an SPE for social services of all kinds. However, stakeholders consistently express concern that Nevada 2-1-1 is under-equipped to effectively serve the community. They say the system software is ineffective at matching resources with caller needs, and staff are not sufficiently trained to adequately help callers. However, there is value in the 2-1-1 phone number and, if operating to its potential, 2-1-1 could be an excellent resource for families needing ECS services. Nevada's ECS leadership could work to train and equip 2-1-1 staff to serve as a go-to resource for initial information on ECS. Such an effort might require assisting 2-1-1 in securing additional funding, maintaining an ongoing dialogue and training with 2-1-1 staff, and regularly testing the system for service quality. If ECS leaders decide 2-1-1 does not merit investment, at the least, 2-1-1 staff should be regularly reminded of First5Nevada as a resource. https://www.nevada211.org/

https://www.first5nevada.org/

https://www.childrenscabinet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ECCS-Strategic-Plan-FINAL\_12.2023-2-2.pdf

#### **C.1.b**



Category: Coordination - Systems Access, No Wrong Door

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Stakeholder interviews.

Recommendation: Even with an effective Single Point of Entry (SPE, see recommendation C.1.a), many families will still have their first interaction with ECS when they contact a program for help. Thus, it is important that a No Wrong Door (NWD) approach be widely implemented throughout the early childhood ecosystem. Under such an approach, when a family contacts any ECS program, they will not only gain access to that program but to all ECS services for which they are eligible. When NWD functions properly, the experience of connecting with ECS should be similar no matter where a family enters the system. This recommendation combines with C.1.a and C.1.c to ease systems access for families and to make the process as simple and efficient as possible.

#### NOTES/LINKS: -

If the SPE functions effectively, NWD becomes an obtainable objective. Program staff throughout Nevada's ECS could be trained in the proper use of the SPE portal and could help their clients enter and navigate the system. This may even include submitting the client's information to the SPE system.

A system of financial incentives could be implemented to encourage programs to participate in NWD and to submit quality data. Additionally, free online training could be developed to ensure participating programs are well-versed in using the system.



#### C.1.c

Category: Systems Access, Universal Application

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Stakeholder interviews.

Hackett, S.E., and King, C. "States' Preschool Development Grant Applications Reveal Priorities for Stronger Data Integration." *Child Trends*, 2023.

Recommendation: Nevada's ECS should strive to implement a universal application system, perhaps using emerging Artificial Intelligence technology, that serves three essential purposes. First, it will make it easier for families to apply for and receive services from all ECS programs for which they are eligible. Second, it will ease the burden on program staff to enter data and process first-level eligibility determinations. Third, it will enable the collection of consistent data for use in Nevada's NPWR longitudinal data system. The universal application should be the central tool in the State's Single Point of Entry portal (SPE, see recommendation C.1.a).

This recommendation combines with C.1.a and C.1.b to ease systems access for families and to make the process as simple and efficient as possible. It may also benefit from a legislative or gubernatorial mandate to motivate action and may need federal waivers or approvals for some programs.

## **ONOTES/LINKS:**

https://doi.org/10.56417/4224m6501x

It may be possible to leverage Artificial Intelligence tools to build a more effective universal application. For example, it could be interactive, could exclude certain programs when it becomes evident a family is not eligible, and could ask only for information that is needed to proceed with the eligibility determinations still pending.

Stakeholders note that some application requirements are more complex and may not fit into a universal platform, but a universal platform could at least get the user into the ECS and past the initial steps. Due to the varied program requirements, a universal application may not be a one-size-fits-all approach. Still, it could streamline the process to benefit families and program staff.

A possible strategy to advance the cause of a universal application is to create a short video documenting the plight of one or a few families as they navigate the existing maze of applications for early childhood services.

#### **C.1.d**



Category: Coordination - Systems Alignment

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council. 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. 2022.

Recommendation: For children to be ready for good health, happiness, and success in their years after early childhood, it is important they be holistically prepared for a smooth transition. To accomplish this, standards and practices in ECS must align with those of companion systems outside of ECS. Therefore, Nevada should establish a plan to assess and align systems standards and administrative rules between ECS and later-life systems—such as child development, K-12 education, health care, disability services, social programs, et cetera. This alignment process may necessitate changes in either the early childhood or later-life systems.

## **ONOTES/LINKS:**

https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/NECAC2022 2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf

The early childhood to kindergarten transition is particularly complex for children with disabilities. Several states have combined their IDEA Part B (K-12 special education) and Part C (early intervention) programs under the same agencyusually the state's Department of Education because the Part B program must be located there under federal rules. In organizing its new comprehensive ECS governance structure, Nevada could explore the experiences of these states to understand how best to locate and coordinate the Part B and Part C programs. It could consult with the federal Office of Special Education Programs to see if the state can delegate any authority or have any flexibility to support desired ECS governance changes. The federal determination letters for Iowa, Maryland, and Oregon are available on the federal Department of Education website and contain contact names for each state to learn about their experiences.

#### C.2.a

Category: Coordination - Workforce Development, Competitive Compensation

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Morrissey, Taryn W, and Kelsey M Bowman. "Early Care and Education Workforce Compensation, Program Quality, and Child Outcomes: A Review of the Research." Early Education and Development 35, no. 5 (2024): 984-1013.

Recommendation: Hiring a qualified workforce is mostly the responsibility of ECS service providers. As such, workforce development might not be considered a governance issue. However, many providers in the ECS space are small operators lacking the resources to competitively compensate their staff, offer comprehensive professional training, and provide a career ladder. This recommendation combines with C.2.b and C.2.c to address the higher-level governance of the ECS workforce.

Research consistently shows that low compensation in some ECS sectors contributes to uncertain work conditions, lower morale and well-being among staff, employee turnover, and potential implications for children's development and even the employment prospects of their parents. Early childhood providers struggle to compete for talent in the general labor market and often cannot generate sufficient revenue to attract and retain personnel.

The governance and funding apparatus of Nevada's ECS must prioritize staff compensation across all ECS sectors and persistently advocate with policymakers and providers for early childhood professionals to be well-compensated.

### **NOTES/LINKS:**

https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2023.2266340



#### **C.2.b**



Category: Coordination - Workforce Development, Professionalism

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Sources: Rhodes, Holly, and Aletha Huston. "Building the Workforce Our Youngest Children Deserve and Commentaries." Social Policy Report 26, no. 1 (2012):

Phillips, Deborah, Lea J. E Austin, and Marcy Whitebook. "The Early Care and Education Workforce." The Future of Children 26, no. 2 (2016): 139-58.

Recommendation: This recommendation combines with C.2.a and C.2.b to address higher-level governance of the ECS workforce.

Research shows a lack of shared purpose in building early childhood as a profession, especially in the early care and education sectors. The Rhodes paper suggests policy integration of these two sectors to create a unified profession in the early care and education sectors with personnel who are well-trained, knowledgeable about child development, skilled in interacting with children, and working in supportive conditions. It also advocates for a unified definition of the profession to provide pathways for advancement, recognition, and increased compensation.

The Phillips paper looks at the early education sector and finds that most teachers of kindergarten through third grade can count on clear job requirements, professional development opportunities, workplace supports such as paid planning time, and a transparent and rational salary structure based on qualifications and experience. These teachers often earn a wage that approaches the median income in their communities. For most preschool teachers, job requirements and qualifications vary widely, professional development is scarce and inconsistent, and compensation often fails to reward educational attainment or training; in fact, many preschool teachers are among the lowest-paid workers.

Those governing Nevada's ECS should explore avenues for professionalizing work in all early childhood sectors and may specifically consider strategies to professionalize the early care and education sectors.

### (I) NOTES/LINKS:

https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2016.0016

https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2379-3988.2012.tb00070.x

#### C.2.c

Category: Workforce Development, Training

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Source: Stakeholder interviews.

**Recommendation:** This recommendation combines C.2.a and C.2.c to address the higher-level governance of the ECS workforce.

Stakeholders describe a vacuum of leadership and resources for the professional development of personnel working in ECS. This is particularly true in the care and education sectors where services are not a public entitlement, as is the case with K-12 education.

It is not enough to simply prioritize staff compensation. Nevada's ECS leaders should work with policymakers to craft laws, regulations, and policies that support the equipping of early childhood personnel to do their jobs well. There is no comprehensive infrastructure to prepare and train early childhood professionals, so a system must be created. State government is best positioned to accomplish this in Nevada.



#### C.3.a



Category: Coordination – Parent and Family Engagement

Ingagemeni

Planning Phase: 2 - Governance Practices

Sources: Acar, Serra, Huichao Xie, and Ching-I Chen. "Family Engagement Practices in Early Intervention: A Review of Three Countries." In Family, School, and Community Partnerships for Students with Disabilities, 141–52. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2019.

Underwood, Kathryn, and Isabel Killoran. "Parent and Family Perception of Engagement: Lessons from Early Years Programs and Supports." Canadian Journal of Education 35, no. 4 (2012): 376–414.

Beltrán, Erika and Nclr. "Preparing Young Latino Children for School Success: Best Practices in Family Engagement." 2012.

Reynolds, Arthur J., Sangyoo Lee, Lauren Eales, Nishank Varshney and Nicole E. Smerillo. "Parental Involvement and Engagement in Early Education Contribute to Children's Success and Well-Being." Research on Family-School Partnerships 2021.

Recommendation: Interaction with individual families in ECS usually occurs when and where services are provided and thus might not be considered a systems governance concern. However, engagement with families is a vital systems-level responsibility in planning and improving services, in addition to securing family agreement with the goals of the services being provided. Therefore, establishing a culture of family engagement, ensuring accountability for productive family interaction at the service level, and soliciting family input at the systems level are all essential objectives in ESC governance.

Nevada's ECS leaders should leverage existing resources for family engagement in the state and explore best practices to expand and improve current efforts. Several research resources are provided here for that purpose. Leaders must also intentionally and extensively engage with families in designing and, later, governing Nevada's comprehensive ECS.

## **ONOTES/LINKS:**

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-6307-8\_11

https://www.jstor.org/stable/canajeducrevucan.35.4.376

https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Preparing-Young-Latino-Children-for-School-Success%3A-Beltr%C3%A1n-Nclr/f33c7615436e4a355a05f26906fc9f69fb918690

https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Parental-Involvement-and-Engagement-in-Early-to-and-Reynolds-Le e/4421e34b49867883ba80f73a1e069cf962172341

#### D.1.a

Category: Other - Continuous Improvement

Planning Phase: 3 – Systems Improvement and

Enhancement

Source: Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Recommendation: Nevada's ECS will need a mission, vision, and strategic plan to keep them moving forward into the future. The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) has been at the forefront of systems building and improvement in Nevada's early childhood space, and its past and ongoing efforts can be a basis for future macro planning.



#### NOTES/LINKS:

#### https://nvecac.com/

Nevada stakeholders note that a collective mission is critical. There needs to be input and buy-in from all sectors to ensure that everyone is on the same page for building successful early childhood systems in Nevada.



#### D.1.b



Category: Other - Policymaking

Planning Phase: 3 - Systems Improvement and

Enhancement

Sources: Various resources from research and other

jurisdictions.

Recommendation: The scope of this report does not include recommendations related to non-governance policy. However, during our research, we encountered resources and ideas that struck us as useful in ECS policy. These are provided here for additional inspiration and perspective.

### **OPPORTUNITIES/LINKS:**

Nevada has one of the nation's highest rates of infant and toddler homelessness. Access to high-quality early childhood development programs can address, mitigate, and even reverse some of the effects of homelessness on these children. School House Connection suggests seven policies that can improve the access and outcomes of ECS for young children experiencing homelessness, and Nevada can improve on at least three of them.

<u>Infant and Toddler Homelessness Across 50 States:</u> 2021-2022

Nevada should consider maximizing allowable transfers between TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and the CCDF (Child Care and Development Fund) if it does not negatively impact other needs. It might also consider subjecting all federal and state child care funds to CCDF standards as a quality assurance measure. The state could also look for opportunities to leverage existing or additional state child care sector spending to fulfill its TANF maintenance of effort requirements.

The Intersection of TANF and Child Care
Intersection of TANF and Child Care and Early Learning

Nevada could pursue state-level policy and funding measures to support the formation of parent and employer-assisted child care cooperatives. Such models can be affordable, sustainable, and effective when thoughtfully implemented.

<u>California Center for Cooperative Development</u> <u>Co-opLaw.org</u>

Parent Cooperative Preschools International University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives



#### **D.1.c**

Category: Other - Service Delivery

Planning Phase: 3 - Systems Improvement and

**Enhancement** 

Source: Various resources from research and other jurisdictions.

**Recommendation:** The scope of this report does not include recommendations related to service delivery. However, during our research, we encountered resources or ideas that struck us as useful in ECS service delivery. These are provided here for additional inspiration or perspective.



#### **OPPORTUNITIES/LINKS:**

In addition to the state best practices in governance outlined in this report, North Carolina compiled some helpful best practice insights related to service delivery:

Report on Best Practice States by North Carolina ECS Advocates (2024)

The Center for the Study of Social Policy has created toolkits for assessing and measuring the performance and effectiveness of local ECS components. This could be a useful resource as Nevada implements best practices in ongoing systems improvement:

Early Childhood System Performance Assessment Toolkit



#### **D.1.d**

Category: Other - Existing Planning Documents

Planning Phase: 1 – Governance Structure Planning and Implementation

Source: Various Nevada reports and plans.

**Recommendation:** For the benefit of readers who will use this report as a tool in their work, we offer these links to various reports and plans produced by or through Nevada-based entities for access to recommendations related to ECS governance or service delivery.



#### LINKS

#### **EXISTING REPORTS:**

P-20W Council Report and Recommendations (2015)

Nevada PDG B-5 Needs Assessment (2019)

Nevada Ready! B-3 Policy Analysis and Recommendations (2019)

Nevada Title V MCH/MIECHV Programs Needs Assessment (2020)

Nevada Maternal and Child Health Services Title V Block Grant Application (2021)

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council 2022-2024 Strategic Plan (2022)

Northern Nevada Early Childhood Roundtable 2022 Report (2022)

<u>Health Status of Children Entering Kindergarten in</u> Nevada (2023)

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council Reports and Documents

Nevada Prenatal to Age 3 (PN3) Strategic Plan (2023)

Early Childhood Network Analysis (2023)

<u>Early Childhood Workforce Framework - Child Care</u> <u>Sector (2023)</u>

<u>Early Childhood System Asset and Gap Analysis –</u> <u>Revised Summary (2024)</u>



# PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES IN PROGRESS (as of July 2024)

Child Care and Development Fund Cost Modeling Analysis – This project is developing a cost and implementation model for an alternative methodology in setting the State of Nevada's child care subsidy rate based on the true cost of care rather than 75 percent of the state median price of care. The model will include care costs by provider type (family, friend and neighbor, licensed family care, licensed group family care, center-based care, and out-of-school programs), region, and care level (infant, toddler, pre-school, and school-age). The project is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund through the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) and is managed by The Children's Cabinet.

Child Care and Development Program Data System Modernization – The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, The Children's Cabinet, and the Las Vegas Urban League are working with the Centerfor Applied Management Practices to modernize case management, training, and technical assistance data systems so these agencies' data can be integrated with other programs and agencies to move toward an integrated early childhood data system. The project is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund through the DWSS Child Care and Development Program; it is managed by The Children's Cabinet.

Child Care Facility Cost Modeling and Revenue Plan – ACCESS Community Capital Fund is creating a cost modeling plan to expand access to child care throughout Nevada, focusing on facility and space expansion. ACCESS is conducting an in-depth analysis of funding opportunities and fiscal strategies available for child care businesses. This work involves examining existing programs, grants, and initiatives to identify potential sources of financial support, as well as strategies to leverage and sustain funding allocations for capital development. ACCESS will also identify and address any policy barriers or limitations that may hinder the elective utilization of funds for child care business development. The project is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund through the DWSS and is managed by The Children's Cabinet.

Coordinated Intake and Referral System Workgroup – Coordinated Intake and Referral System (CIRS) is a bi-directional technology platform that connects health care, early learning, and family support service partners. The intention is to improve the health and well-being of young children and families by offering shared risk assessment and screening, real-time closed-loop referral management, collaborative care coordination, standardized metrics, and data analysis and reporting functions. A workgroup has been established to assess the feasibility and key functions of a CIRS for Nevada's early childhood system. This work is coordinated by The Children's Cabinet.



# PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES IN PROGRESS CONTINUED (as of July 2024)

Early Childhood Fiscal Map and Gap Analysis – The Nevada Early Childhood Fiscal Map is a tool developed in partnership with the Children's Funding Project to visualize funding streams affecting young people in Nevada. The initial fiscal map, covering ages 0 to 24, is complete and was followed by an early childhood (ages 0 to 8) fiscal map, which is available at www. nvecac.com. The gap analysis will look at how much funding is needed to provide equitable access to early childhood programs and services and will be followed by a revenue study to identify potential funding sources. The project is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund through the DWSS and the Children's Advocacy Alliance's Pritzker Children's Foundation Grant and is managed by The Children's Cabinet.

Early Childhood Marketing and Outreach Campaign – This campaign was launched in January 2023 to raise awareness of the importance of early childhood services and ensure that parents, families, and service providers are aware of and connected to available resources and supports. The first year of the campaign focused on access to child care (www.NevadaChildCareFund.org). In 2024, the campaign's focus expanded to include comprehensive early childhood systems through the new www.First5Nevada.org website, which launched in April 2024. The project is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund through the DWSS and the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five through the Nevada Department of Education. The project is managed by The Children's Cabinet.

Employer Child Care Development Program - The Employer Child Care Development Program provides comprehensive support and consultation for businesses by analyzing current benefits, conducting an employee needs assessment, generating an analysis report, and offering support to implement findings. Not all employers can offer on-site child care, but businesses have many options to support the work-life balance of employees with young children. The project is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund through the DWSS and is managed by The Children's Cabinet.



Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Health Integration Project – The Health Resources Services Administration's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant is a five-year grant (through July 2026) administered by The Children's Cabinet. The purpose is to build an integrated maternal and early childhood system of care in Nevada that is equitable, sustainable, and comprehensive and that promotes early developmental health and well-being. The project also seeks to increase family-centered access to care and engagement of the prenatal-to-age-three population. The Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council was established as part of this initiative to ensure that parents and families of young children have a voice and decision-making power in the early childhood system.

Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five – In 2023, the Nevada Department of Education's Office of Early Learning and Development was awarded a three-year \$30 million federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through 5 (PDG B-5) Renewal Grant. The purpose of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant is to strengthen Nevada's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems through collaborative partnerships with stakeholders and families.

Strong Start Nevada Prenatal-to-3 Initiative – The Strong Start Nevada Prenatal-to-3 (PN-3) Initiative aims to expand services to low-income infants, toddlers, and their families. The PN-3 coalition uses a coordinated, cross-sector policy agenda to advocate for maternal and child health programs, early care and education sector programs, family support services, and comprehensive systems improvements. The initiative is funded through a grant from the Pritzker Children's Initiative to the Children's Advocacy Alliance.





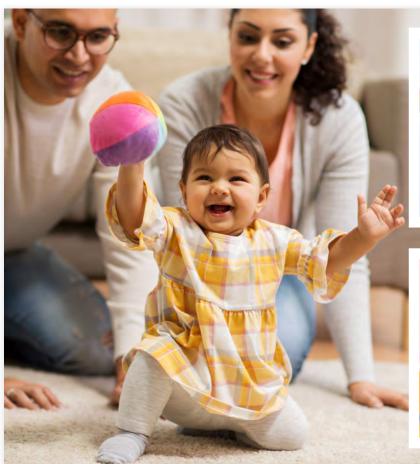
# CONCLUSION

Nevada's ECS are at a critical stage, where action is necessary to overcome the challenges of fragmentation and inefficiency that currently hinder its effectiveness. The complex web of programs, funding streams, and governing structures not only poses significant challenges for state leaders in terms of coordination but also creates an overwhelming and often inaccessible system for the families it is designed to serve. As evidenced by the experiences of other states and nations, a well-coordinated ECS is vital to ensuring that young children receive the support they need to thrive and that caregivers can balance work and caregiving responsibilities without undue stress.

This report highlights the complexity and inefficiency of Nevada's Early Childhood Systems (ECS), which are governed by numerous programs, statutes, and funding streams. The fragmented nature of the system creates significant challenges for both administrators and families seeking services. Key findings reveal low participation rates, a workforce struggling with inadequate compensation and turnover, and a complicated funding structure that limits effective resource allocation. The recommendations aim to address these issues through a phased approach. First, by establishing a centralized governance structure that coordinates

services and integrates stakeholders across all levels of government and the private sector, the system can be streamlined for greater efficiency. Second, implementing a single point of entry for families would simplify access to services and improve participation. Third, reforming funding mechanisms to align with actual service costs would promote more equitable and effective distribution of resources. Fourth, enhancing workforce development through improved wages and career opportunities is critical to ensuring high-quality services. Finally, greater family engagement is necessary to ensure that services are used effectively, and that the system remains responsive to community needs.

The next steps involve moving from analysis to action. Nevada should prioritize the creation of a centralized governance body, as this is the foundation for broader system reforms. Concurrently, efforts to simplify access for families, reallocate funding, and enhance workforce support should begin through targeted legislative and administrative changes. These steps will ensure that Nevada's ECS is equipped to meet the needs of its youngest citizens, ultimately contributing to a stronger workforce, economy, and society.









# **APPENDICES**

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Nevada ECS Literature Review

### **KEY ENTITIES DOCUMENT**

Overview of Nevada's ECS Entities

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR POLICYMAKING IN A STATE GOVERNMENT CONTEXT



# APPENDIX A.

## LITERATURE REVIEW





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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Research into Early Childhood Systems (ECS) is both broad and deep. In recent decades, policymakers have come to understand the profound importance of a strong foundation for building a child's K-12 education and how pre-K care and education are essential. Thanks to all the research in recent decades, we have much better insights into the process of brain development in early childhood, the importance of vocabulary acquisition before beginning school, the interplay between physical health and cognitive growth, and the value of basic social and emotional skills as a child begins their kindergarten schooling.

There is also a growing body of evidence about the economic value of comprehensive early childhood services. It is shown to reduce the future costs of remedial education, behavioral interventions, involvement in crime, and other individual challenges that come with high societal price tags. It also yields economic benefits for years to come in the form of well-adjusted adults, engaged citizens, and a more productive taxpaying workforce.

This literature review, however, is focused on how a state can strengthen its ECS through a welldesigned system of governance. It looks to other states that are further along than Nevada in the development of their early childhood systems, other nations that have strong early childhood programming, and academic literature that has analyzed what works best in organizing the policymaking, administration, accountability, and other key elements of an effective early childhood governance structure.

Some research is theoretical and of more interest to those in academic settings; this literature review intends to be more practical. It explores findings and recommendations from more than 40 studies, articles, plans, and other documents related to early childhood governance. Each document summary includes a link to the source material and a condensed overview of the document.

### What can you expect to find in these pages? Here are some of the highlights.

#### DO LOOK BACK

Any critique of the ECS in Nevada should begin with understanding the progress made in recent years and the excellent foundational work already completed. It can be helpful to look at the early childhood recommendations the National Governors Association put forth on page 107 and compare those to the current state of the system in Nevada. Much has been accomplished.

#### **OTHER STATES**

As Nevada moves forward, other states offer examples of effective ECS governance. Nevada can look to their trailblazing work for ideas about what may or may not work for its governance. Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Tennessee, Utah, and Vermont are all explored in some detail. Elements of the ECS in several other states are also included. In particular, Colorado (page 18), Kansas (24), and Utah (34) may be helpful examples for Nevada. The New Mexico (27) strategic plan could also be a model for Nevada to review in its future planning.



#### INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

On the international front, the Nordic countries became serious about their early childhood systems in the 1970s; they are now well-developed and offer practical and philosophical insights for ECS everywhere. See more about the Nordic perspective on page 49.

The Global Guidelines Assessment (page 105) is an evidence-based instrument designed to help early childhood professionals systematically examine and improve program quality worldwide. Introduced in 2003, a fourth edition of the tool is currently under development.

#### SPECIFIC STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The research also offers a variety of data-supported strategies worth considering in designing an ECS governance structure:

**Vertical alignment is critical**. To successfully transition a child from the ECS to kindergarten, a state's academic standards and other vital elements must be aligned between the two systems. See "Early Childhood Utah" (page 34); "A Systems Focus to Improve School Readiness" (69); and "Governing Early Learning Among the American States" (65) for research about vertical alignment.

Quality data and ongoing research are vital. The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) offers a variety of research and tools for states thinking about their pre-K through 12 data systems. A DQC paper reviewed on page 96 shows Nevada could benefit from more comprehensively linking early childhood and K-12 data systems to inform policy decisions, monitor children's progress, and support students' success in school. It also shows states can benefit from using data to answer crucial questions about children's school readiness, the effectiveness of early childhood education programs, and the alignment between early childhood and K-12 policies. Someone in the state must also continue research on behalf of the ECS, to ensure state-ofthe-art knowledge is incorporated into programming and administration.

There is research in support of Nevada's existing consolidated approach to ECS governance. A doctoral dissertation on page 103 offers helpful research into the benefits of the consolidated model. An infographic overview of early care and education governance in the states on page 73 shows where the various models are currently being used; it also offers key questions for policymakers considering governance changes.

Should state ECS policymaking be centralized or dispersed among multiple agencies? A study in the Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory on page 94 argues that the dispersion of policymaking authority among a handful of agencies can be more effective than centralized or broadly dispersed policy governance.

It is also important to consider the structure of ECS governance in local jurisdictions. Research on collective impact organizations (page 78) offers one model for strengthening local ECS governance.

Children with disabilities may merit special consideration in ECS governance. Because of their unique risk factors and challenges, a programmatic sub-system has been developed in the ECS for children with disabilities with its own performance and compliance requirements. The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center has created a system framework and companion self-assessment (page 85) to help with this part of the larger governance discussion.



#### THE BIG PICTURE

The body of research shows state-level ECS governance should provide foundational supports and values—things such as standards alignment, a comprehensive data system, research support, workforce development, etc.—but then leave enough room for localities and providers to innovate for improvement and to be flexible in meeting local needs. Early Childhood Systems should focus on children's developmental growth and readiness for K-12 education while also being responsive to individual family needs for flexibility in receiving services; it should also encourage the involvement of a child's parents or guardian.

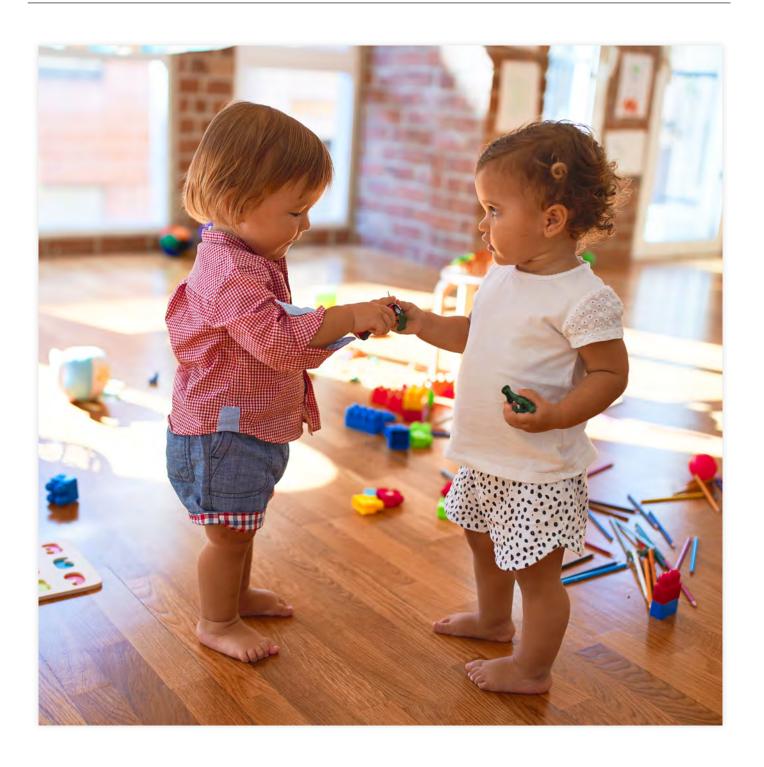
Education Commission of the States (Commission) is a national, non-partisan organization that compiles data and research on education policies from early childhood through workforce entry to help state policymakers make informed decisions. They also provide advice on policy plans, consult on proposed legislation, and testify before legislative bodies as third-party experts. The Nevada Department of Education and the Legislative Counsel Bureau have been Commission members in the past and may still be. Through these memberships, the organization may be available for technical assistance. Six different documents from the Commission related to early childhood systems and governance are included herein.

Finally, a study on page 76 titled "What Predicts Legislative Success of Early Care and Education Policies?" offers strategic thoughts on how to frame legislative proposals for a greater chance of success. These insights could help craft legislation for ECS governance in Nevada.



# **NEVADA LITERATURE REVIEW**

# Literature Specific to Nevada





### Nevada—Northern Nevada Early Childhood Roundtable (2022)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Burnham, M., Easton-Brooks, D., & Stepina, R. (2022). Northern Nevada Early Childhood Roundtable. College of Education and Human Development and Nevada Department of Health and Human Services.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

The College of Education and Human Development, in partnership with the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, organized a half-day Early Childhood Roundtable for northern Nevada. The event focused on identifying key needs for families with young children in the region. Leaders and practitioners from various sectors attended, while the Governor of Nevada and President of the University of Nevada expressed their commitment to a strong early childhood system. Small groups discussed available services, challenges, and ways to improve collaborative efforts. The report summarizes the results and themes from the discussions held virtually and in-person.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

- When early childhood grant funding expires, the programs, processes, supports, and people involved necessarily shift to the next funding opportunity. This way of working is counterproductive to long-term progress.
- The group emphasized the importance of Nevada creating a proactive plan to address the needs
  of young children and their families. They suggested seeking funding for programs and services that
  specifically target those needs.
- The pursuit of funding opportunities should be in line with the needs of Nevada's systems and, most importantly, the needs of its young children and families.
- Two groups specifically mentioned the need for a coordinated statewide office.
- The group would like to see a smooth transition in services:
  - A child identified with a disability at birth should be served by one entity for the first three
    years of life, then transitioned to a school district that coordinates the provision of services.
  - One strategy mentioned is to redefine early intervention as serving children aged 0-5 rather than stopping at age 3.
- The other transition that needs to be improved is the transition to kindergarten; it is often blunt and unsupported for many of Nevada's children and families.



- The report emphasizes the need for a comprehensive system that includes private providers, improved
  connections with tribal and rural communities, stronger regulations for child care licensing, better
  alignment and coordination of services, co-located services for families, and the development of a
  high-quality workforce in allied therapy, education, and mental health. The goal is to rebuild and
  strengthen the existing system to meet the needs of young children and families in Nevada.
- The report highlights the importance of effective communication between systems, fostering continued
  collaboration, and ensuring outreach to all regions of the state. It emphasizes the value of actively
  listening to communities and families to better understand their needs and creating a responsive
  approach to serving them.
- Six of eight participating groups emphasized the significance of sustainable funding or increased investment as crucial for effectively addressing the identified needs.
- Nearly every group raised concerns about data-related issues. These include the importance of
  collecting standardized data, effectively utilizing the collected data, promoting data sharing, and
  basing decisions on data-driven insights.



### Nevada—Nevada Ready! B-3: Policy Analysis and Recommendations (2019)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Kauerz, K., Burnham, M., & Waugh, S. (2019). Nevada Ready! B-3: Policy Analysis and Recommendations. https://nationalp-3center.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Policy\_Nevada-Ready-B-3\_FINAL.pdf

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This document reviews previous literature and recommendations for birth through 3rd grade (B-3) policy. The goal is to take the B-3 policy discussion from the conceptual to a discrete and practical form. This policy analysis reviews publicly available state-level documents and contrasts how key topics and recommendations are addressed. Silos are evident in many documents, and the objective is to make specific recommendations where different documents offer conflicting information in B-3 policy. Literature Reviewed Included in Document:

- The Early Learning and Family sections of the <u>Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)</u> <u>Strategic Plan 2018-2021</u>;
- Nevada Department of Education's (NDE) Guidance Document for Nevada K.I.D.S. Read—Nevada's Read by Grade 3 Program (Read by Grade 3 Guidance Document);
- Nevada Department of Education's State Improvement Plan (STIP) 2018; and
- Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan for Nevada FY 2019-2021.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Some recommendations are more general, whereas others are specific to previous policy documents.

Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to cross-sector work:

- The Nevada Department of Education should hold meetings at least quarterly for key leaders within NDE to discuss and align vision, strategies, and governance structures. These meetings would be explicitly focused on increasing children's access to, and the quality of, instruction provided in learning and development programs and services (e.g., pre-K, special education, child care, family child care, K-3 education, and out-of-school time) for young children, birth through age eight.
- Read by Grade 3 and the STIP explicitly recognize the importance of pre-K and other high-quality early learning opportunities (e.g., child care and Head Start); The CCDF and ECAC expressly recognize the importance of providing early academic and social-emotional skills.
- It is also necessary to streamline and align duplicate efforts. The goal is to identify and promote
  effective strategies that braid and blend private and public funds across projects and initiatives.



#### Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to administrator effectiveness:

- All policy documents should explicitly state the roles and responsibilities of administrators.
- Policy documents should be aligned by suggesting skills and behaviors for administrators (regardless of sector affiliation).
- Previous plans should be reviewed to include administrator support, specifically in 0-5 and K-12 administrator collaboration to support shared professional learning for teachers.
- Opportunity gaps must be closed by focusing on instruction alignment using engaging learning strategies and supporting relationships between teachers and children.
- Nevada should consider creating state-level and aligned statewide professional learning opportunities targeted to administrators across the B-3 continuum.

#### Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to teacher effectiveness:

- Expectations for educator effectiveness should be similar in the 0-5 and K-12 systems.
- Policy recommendations for teachers should be unified across the birth-through-8 continuum.
- A B-3 license could be offered to both 0-5 and K-12 teachers, reducing gaps and duplications within the current licensing structure.
- Pre-K programming and administration should be integrated through multiple NDE divisions.
- The Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs) could integrate professional learning opportunities for 0-5 and K-3 teachers.
- Teacher training for 0-5 and K-3 professionals should be aligned and include the "whole child."

#### Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to instructional tools:

- Learning strategists for Read by Grade 3 have such a reading endorsement.
- Align the system of screening and assessment.
- Highlight how 0-3 early learning guidelines and pre-K standards are precursors to and supportive of the Nevada Academic Content Standards and social-emotional competencies in K-12.
- Standards should include the 0-5 system and not just K-3, with statements about the primary purposes and intentions of standards, curricula, and assessments to create coherence.
- Create a shared definition of 0-5 and K-3 education and embed it into education plans.
- Consider adopting a common, integrated curriculum for pre-K to 3rd grade.
- Adopt B-3 implementation guidelines in partnership with the Office of Safe and Respectful Learning and aligned with K-12 social-emotional learning competencies.



#### Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to learning environments:

- Create an integrity walkthrough for early learning environments.
- Align program standards with K-3.
- Create a common description of the ideal learning environment.
- Establish and fund a B-3 position through NDE that works across multiple divisions.
- Adopt a "ready school" definition and framework.

#### Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to data-driven improvement:

- Collect data focused on multiple subject domains.
- Ensure all documents reference the use of the Brigance assessment.
- Have an integrated, high-quality data source that can be examined at the program, classroom, educator, and child level.

#### Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to engaged families:

- Created a shared approach to engage families (one was being developed through NDE during the creation of this report).
- Create family-friendly language to inform parents of testing results.
- Extend the focus on family engagement.

#### Recommendations for increasing B-3 alignment related to continuity and pathways:

- The ECAC's Strategic Plan includes a recommendation for the development of specific implementation guidelines.
- Provide children with high-quality care and education experiences informed by developmental science as they transition from pre-K to K-3 education
- Remove barriers that exist in B-3 transitions.
- Provide adequate funding for care and education subsidies so they are available for all B-3 children.



# **STATE REPORTS**

# National Literature and State Reports





# States—State Early Childhood Governance Structures Landscape Analysis: Recommendations for California (2020)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Long, Ashley. "State Early Childhood Governance Structures Landscape Analysis: Recommendations for California." (2020).

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This document reviews policies in four states and offers recommendations for California. Numerous studies have demonstrated that when early childhood education (ECE) systems lack cohesion, it leads to significant missed opportunities for foundational learning and financial incentives. It is common for there to be a diverse range of funding sources that support ECE services, as well as varying eligibility requirements, program guidelines, and workforce needs. The complexity of ECE systems becomes even more challenging when fragmented across multiple state departments.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

When ECE systems are aligned and coordinated, it creates opportunities for programs to collaborate effectively and learn from each other's experiences. Additionally, financial benefits can derive from aligning staffing and achieving programmatic savings by reducing the number of systems that need to be navigated. An essential aspect of aligned governance is the facilitation of integrated data systems, which play a crucial role in informed decision-making.

- Best Practices in State Early Childhood Governance Structures
  - Model: Creation Method
    - Coordinated: Collaboration and coordination across different agencies
    - Consolidated: Consolidation of existing programs and divisions into one state agency
    - New Independent Agency: Creation of a dedicated early childhood agency

#### Structures

- Coordinated: Formal agreements across agencies, a governor's coordinating office, and/or a children's cabinet
- Consolidated: Focused on bringing primary funding sources into one agency—e.g., bringing multiple existing funding streams under the Department ofEducation or Human Services
- New Independent Agency: Authority over and accountability for many services and programs—typically an executive branch entity or new department with a board or commissioner reporting to the governor
- Identified State Examples
  - Coordinated: Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin
  - Consolidated: California, Florida, Maryland, Michigan
  - New Independent Agency: Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Massachusetts, Washington



### States—Colorado Shines Brighter (2020)

Document Link
Supporting Link

#### Citation:

Room, South Carolina Confederate Relic. "Strategic plan 2020-2023." South Carolina State Documents Depository (2020).

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

Since 2008, Colorado's early childhood system has been guided by the Early Childhood Colorado Framework. This framework promotes a shared vision of valuing, ensuring health and well-being, and supporting the thriving of all children in Colorado. It facilitates integration and alignment across learning, development, health, well-being, and family support. The framework serves as a resource for state and local stakeholders to identify needs, guide planning, and build partnerships for access, quality, and equity in the early childhood system. The responsibility for caring for Colorado's young children is shared among various stakeholders, including parents, caregivers, professionals, administrators, policymakers, and advocates.

The Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan, developed in partnership with these stakeholders, aligns with the Early Childhood Colorado Framework to support coordinated efforts for children's well-being. The plan is endorsed as the statewide strategic plan for birth through five systems, and its implementation and support are described in the Governance section.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Colorado adopted a mission statement for its birth through 5 early childhood system, which includes:

- Colorado families have meaningful and equitable access to quality formal early care and education settings that best meet the needs of their child and family, especially those who are vulnerable, as well as infants and toddlers.
- Informal early care and education environments (parents, friends, family, and neighbor care) are enhanced to enrich and support children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- Colorado's birth through five early childhood state system is coordinated and aligned to enhance the
  resources available to families and to improve the quality of relationships among families, caregivers,
  and children.

#### System goals include:



- Goal 1: Align and Coordinate Systems. Colorado's birth through five early childhood system is
  coordinated and aligned to enhance resources available to families and to improve the quality of
  relationships between families and providers.
- Goal 2: Innovate Service Delivery. Early care and education providers practice trauma-informed care, use practices informed by early childhood mental health, and incorporate inclusive practices as part of their service delivery.
- Goal 3: Maximize Family Knowledge and Engagement. Children and families that enter the system through one program are offered meaningful and relevant services.
- Goal 4: Increase Meaningful and Equitable Access. The number of available early care and education programs matches the demand for programs in age, type, specialized supports, and place.
- Goal 5: Strengthen Business Practices. Strong and sustainable business models support Colorado's mixed-delivery system.
- Goal 6: Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education Environments and the Workforce. Formal
  early care and education providers are rated Colorado Shines Levels 3-5, using a quality rating
  system based on the most recent research to reflect outcomes. Colorado recruits and retains a
  qualified and diverse early childhood workforce. Informal early care and education providers
  and families have access to professional development, training, and other resources to provide
  appropriate, responsive care that supports optimal child development and social-emotional growth.

The following are potential opportunities identified by the State of Colorado within its Early Childhood work:

- Opportunity 1: Increase the availability of affordable, convenient, and quality care, especially for infants and toddlers.
- Opportunity 2: Provide more equitable and culturally relevant care.
- Opportunity 3: Increase inclusivity and access for children with special needs.
- Opportunity 4: Continue investing in quality-enhancing professional development and workforce recruitment and retention across the early care and education landscape.
- Opportunity 5: Continue to develop a diverse early childhood workforce.
- Opportunity 6: Increase knowledge and support around child care licensing and offer essential business support to providers.
- Opportunity 7: Centralize and increase parent and caregiver access to early childhood information.
- Opportunity 8: Increase transition knowledge and associated supports.
- Opportunity 9: Expand access to early childhood mental health consultation.
- Opportunity 10: Invest in rural outreach.
- Opportunity 11: Integrate disparate data sources.
- Opportunity 12: Enhance cross-sector collaboration to build data systems that support coordinated care and capture long-term outcomes.



### States—Kansas Children's Cabinet Annual Report (2022)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Moore, Kim, and Melissa Rooker. "Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund."

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

Kansas has implemented the "All in for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan." This annual report explores the progress of the original strategic plan.

#### Documents Reviewed or Referenced:

- Kansas Early Childhood Systems Building Needs Assessment
- 2021 Needs Assessment Update
- All in For Kansas Kids Strategic Plan

#### Objectives:

- The 2022 report uses the 2019 evaluation to review the state's progress and what areas need continued focus.
- Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the report finds three areas for critical work: workforce education, community engagement, and K-12 alignment.
- Achieving alignment requires bringing together state agencies, regional organizations, and local
  programs to work toward common goals while avoiding duplication of effort. This will require
  consistent and clear communication.
- Funding sources and allocations within early childhood need to be reviewed.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

During the last two years under the strategic plan, Kansas has continuously reviewed its progress and how best to improve its system cohesively. Strategies have included:

- Adopting a two-year transfer approach that allows for strategic investment decisions and balances the
  risks associated with one-time funding increases for local programs;
- Building early childhood infrastructure to support the long-term vision of the All in for Kansas Kids strategic plan while helping the Kansas Children's Cabinet fulfill its statutory responsibilities as the coordinating entity for the early childhood system;
- Increasing access to work and family support programs that help children and families meet their basic needs;
- Contributing State General Fund dollars to fully draw down matching Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds from the federal level;



- Using the best available data and evidence-based research drive decisions about regulations safeguarding the health and well-being of children;
- Recommending Kansas adopt the Nebraska Core Competencies for use by the Kansas early childhood workforce, professional development, and higher education systems; and
- Supporting the Every Child Can Read Act third-grade literacy policy goal and the Kansans Can vision
  for kindergarten readiness by increasing investments in programs that support the Kansas Early
  Childhood Blueprint vision, which says, "All children will have their basic needs met and have equitable
  access to quality early childhood care and education opportunities, so they are prepared to succeed in
  kindergarten and beyond.



### States—All in for Kansas Kids, Early Childhood Strategic Plan (2020)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

All in for Kansas Kids. (2020).

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

Kansas has recognized the importance of high-quality early childhood programs and their positive effect from birth to 5 years old. In December 2018, Kansas completed a deep analysis of its practices and systems to understand better the current system's opportunities and gaps. They found Kansas families continued to face difficulty with accessibility, availability, and navigation in their efforts to seek high-quality care and education in children's early years. They also found obstacles affecting the availability and quality of care and education. This needs assessment offers specific recommendations to improve services.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The needs assessment offers the following recommendations in five functional categories.

- State-Level Coordination:
  - Streamline state-level early childhood decision-making structures and processes.
  - Strengthen relationships between state agencies to inform and align policies, improve practices, and maximize resources.
  - Implement an integrated set of tools and practices at the state level that support families and providers connecting to the right service at the right time.
  - Develop an early childhood integrated data system.
  - Measure the effectiveness and impact of early childhood services over time and use this
    information to improve outcomes for children.
- Community-Level Coordination:
  - Develop localized and comprehensive resource and referral networks that meet communityspecific needs to drive quality referrals, coordinate care, and ease navigation for families.
  - Build meaningful and inclusive family engagement into community decision-making about programs and services.
- Family Knowledge and Choice:
  - Provide families with tools and information to support their children's interests, health development, and learning.
  - Build a culture throughout the early childhood system that respects and strengthens family voices.



#### • Private Sector Collaboration:

- Promote and formalize agreements between the public and private sectors to generate financial support for the strategic plan.
- Promote family-friendly workplaces throughout the public and private sectors.

#### • Capacity and Access:

- Support initiatives and policies that contribute to economic security for families.
- Increase capacity and equitable access to early childhood programs and services through policy and administrative directives.
- Build community capacity for providing high-quality early childhood programs and services.
- Support communities, educational environments, families, and children to ensure that each child entering kindergarten at age five is socially, emotionally, and academically prepared.



### States—New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department Florecer (2022)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

New Mexico Early Childhood and Education and Care Department. (2022)

#### Document Objective or Overview:

Florecer, ECECD's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, has six main components: improving school readiness, building family and community engagement, fostering strong government-to-government relationships, aligning the early childhood ecosystem, ensuring organizational excellence, and improving transparency through the visualization and use of actionable data.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The strategic plan has many specific and measurable goals:

- 5,000 additional children enrolled in high-quality New Mexico pre-K;
- 20,000 more families receive affordable, high-quality early care and education;
- 33 counties in New Mexico supported by an active and engaged local early childhood coalition;
- Five regional equity councils are established;
- 23 tribes, pueblos and nations have improved early childhood facilities supported by a dedicated funding source and technical assistance;
- 80 percent of families and babies with plans of care will be supported;
- 2,000 additional infants and toddlers will have access to high-quality, inclusive child care;
- 500 indigenous early childhood educators are supported in achieving higher credentials; and
- 5,000 additional families engage in evidence-based home visiting.



### States—The New Mexico Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2021-2024 (2021)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

New Mexico Children's Cabinet. 2021. "The New Mexico Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2021-2024."

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

The New Mexico Early Childhood Strategic Plan builds upon the findings of the Early Childhood Needs Assessment conducted in 2019. By combining these two reports, New Mexico gains a comprehensive understanding of the early childhood landscape and a cohesive strategy to advance toward the state's overarching vision. This vision aims to ensure that every child in New Mexico, from prenatal to age 5, and their families have fair and inclusive access to high-quality early learning opportunities. The plan seeks to support children's development, health, and overall well-being, with the goal of preparing them for success in kindergarten and their future endeavors.

The New Mexico Early Childhood Strategic Plan is a culmination of an extensive process intended to address the needs of key populations in the state requiring equitable access to high-quality early childhood programs. The plan sets clear goals, objectives, and measures to track progress toward achieving this vision. It incorporates the engagement and insights of 23 tribes, pueblos, and nations, with special consideration given to independent nations in goal 6. The process involved the participation of nearly five thousand residents, ensuring diverse perspectives were considered.

This strategic plan coincides with establishing the cabinet-level Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) in July 2020, making New Mexico one of only four states with such a department. The initial activities of the ECECD focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly impacted lives, livelihoods, and early education and care systems.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

- GOAL 1: FAMILIES
  - Recognize all families in New Mexico as key decision-makers and ensure they have access to the resources they need to thrive.
  - OBJECTIVE 1A. Ensure that 70 percent of early childhood programs and services are designed
    to support multilingual, multi-generational, culturally diverse households with children with
    developmental delays or disabilities by December 2024.
  - OBJECTIVE 1B. Provide full program access to recipients by addressing languages, availability, delays and disabilities, and other barriers to accessing needed programs and services.
  - OBJECTIVE 1C. Increase parent and caregiver awareness of early childhood services by 15 percent annually.



#### GOAL 2: GOVERNANCE

- Create a cohesive governance system that supports an aligned, efficient, and responsive system of high-quality early childhood programs and services.
- OBJECTIVE 2A. Develop an aligned consumer support process recognizing and celebrating New Mexico's diversity.
- OBJECTIVE 2B. Align state-funded early childhood program requirements across the mixed delivery systems.
- OBJECTIVE 2C. Strengthen partnerships at the state and local levels to effectively use all available resources across the mixed-delivery system by December 2024.

#### GOAL 3: WORKFORCE

- Ensure that New Mexico's early childhood workforce is supported to meet the needs of all
  families and young children through an aligned professional development system and through
  compensation that reflects the level of experience and training.
- OBJECTIVE 3A. Support and adequately compensate the workforce to ensure workers' physical and social well-being.
- OBJECTIVE 3B. Increase, by 10 percent annually, the number of degreed and credentialed professionals within the early childhood workforce.
- OBJECTIVE 3C. Align professional development training and technical assistance.

#### GOAL 4: FUNDING

- Provide sustainable and secure funding to support New Mexico's youngest children and their families.
- OBJECTIVE 4A. Maximize and leverage all funding.
- OBJECTIVE 4B. Create flexible funding opportunities to incentivize outcomes rather than process measures.
- OBJECTIVE 4C. Identify the actual cost of care and increase collaboration and funding available to increase access to quality programs

#### GOAL 5: DATA

- Develop a statewide, integrated data system to better inform planning and decisionmaking for all stakeholders.
- OBJECTIVE 5A. Ensure alignment and sharing of data across state-level departments and systems,
  plus medical practice and insurance data, while maintaining the ethical use of data and total privacy
  and confidentiality of individuals.



- OBJECTIVE 5B. Promote accountability, enhance practice, and guide continuous quality improvement.
- OBJECTIVE 5C. Define, design, and integrate data into a unified public interface to allow transparency of aggregate information throughout the system.

#### • GOAL 6: TRIBAL

- Strengthen ongoing government-to-government relationships with tribal communities to foster mutual trust, understanding, and partnerships that respect tribal sovereignty.
- OBJECTIVE 6A. Ensure 100 percent of children in tribal communities have access to facilities that
  promote the integration of education, language and culture as identified and defined by tribal
  communities by 2023.
- OBJECTIVE 6B. Support knowledge and respect of the culture, sovereignty, self-determination, and governance of tribes and programs.
- OBJECTIVE 6C. Adhere to existing laws relating to tribal nations.



# States—Effects of the Tennessee Pre-Kindergarten Program on children's achievement and behavior through third grade (2018)

# **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Lipsey, Mark W., Dale C. Farran, and Kelley Durkin. "Effects of the Tennessee Prekindergarten Program on children's achievement and behavior through third grade." Early Childhood Research Quarterly 45 (2018): 155-176.

# Document Objective or Overview:

This study looked at the effects of state-funded pre-K programs. In 2014–2015, the U.S. Department of Education allocated millions of dollars to states to expand pre-K, citing a white paper asserting that high-quality early education narrows achievement gaps, boosts adult earnings, and results in savings of \$8.60 for every \$1 spent (Executive Office of the President of the United States, 2014). In 2015, 67 percent of Tennessee children four and older who were not in kindergarten were enrolled in preschool programs.

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Higher-income families were more likely to enroll their children in privately run and funded programs, and low-income children were more likely to be enrolled in public programs such as Head Start and state-funded pre-K programs.

Results showed existing state-funded preschool programs did not demonstrate the quality results expected.



# States—Early Childhood Utah (2021)

## **Document Link**

### Citation:

Utah Early Childhood. 2021. "Early Childhood Utah 2021 Annual Report."

# Document Objective or Overview:

H.B. 47 is a bill that proposes the creation of an annual report in Utah. The report would cover several important topics related to child health, development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services. Firstly, it aims to identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination among federallyfunded and state-funded programs, including cooperation between state agencies responsible for administering these programs. Secondly, it calls for a Statewide Strategic Report. Additionally, the report would provide professional development and career advancement recommendations for early childhood educators and service providers throughout Utah. It would also analyze the capacity and effectiveness of programs in higher education institutions that support the development of early childhood educators. Furthermore, the report would include recommendations to improve Utah's Early Learning Guidelines and Standards. It would conduct a statewide assessment of the availability of high-quality prekindergarten services for children from low-income households. Finally, the report would evaluate the overall participation of children in existing federal, state, and local child care programs, as well as early childhood health, development, family support, and education programs.

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Early Learning Standards for Ages 3 to 5 aims to offer guidance and resources to administrators, early childhood professionals, and families of preschool-aged children. These standards are designed to establish developmentally appropriate goals and benchmarks for cognitive, physical, language, and socialemotional development.

- Contribution to School Readiness: By promoting comprehensive early childhood education, the standards aim to enhance school readiness and lay the foundation for children's future academic and social achievements. Implementing these standards in early childhood programs is expected to improve kindergarten readiness and minimize achievement gaps among children.
- Development and Approval Process: The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) led the revision committee for the Early Learning Standards (3-5). The committee consisted of subject matter experts and stakeholders from across the state, aiming to develop research-based and aligned standards with Utah's K-12 standards. The Board approved the new standards in May 2020.
- Professional Development: The Office of Child Care (OCC) collaborated with USBE to provide professional development opportunities for early childhood professionals, enabling them to implement the new standards effectively.
- Focus on Vertical Alignment: The OCC approved USBE's new revision process for the Early Learning Standards, ensuring that the content areas are revised in conjunction with the K-12 standards and are vertically aligned. The document is being revised one content area at a time rather than all at once, which is seen as a better approach for the field and the revision committee.



- Early Learning Guidelines for Birth to Age 3: The OCC published Utah's Early Learning Guidelines
  for Birth to Age 3, adapted from Minnesota's Early Learning Guidelines more than ten years ago.
  Plans are underway to update this document to ensure vertical alignment with the new Early Learning
  Standards for ages 3 to 5, released in 2020, providing a seamless progression of learning and
  development from birth to age 5.
- Incorporation into Professional Development Curriculum: The OCC incorporates Early Learning
  Guidelines and Standards, taught by Care About Childcare agencies statewide, into its professional
  development curriculum. The curriculum is updated to align with the new standards and content areas.
- School Readiness Grant Funding: Programs receiving School Readiness Grant funding must implement the new Utah Early Learning Standards and report on children's progress. Companion documents were released to support program implementation.
- Collaborative Approach for Comprehensive Services: The Department of Child and Family Services
  (DCFS) collaborates with local service providers to ensure comprehensive developmental and
  educational services for children in its care. Child & Family Teams guide decisions, including academic
  and developmental goals, with educators and providers contributing to the teams' discussions.



# States—2019-2020 Utah Preschool Development Grant

### **Document Link**

### Citation:

2019-2020 Utah Preschool Development Grant. 2019. Utah Department of Workforce Services.

# Document Objective or Overview:

Utah's Preschool Development Grant–Birth through Five (PDG B-5) allowed state leaders to collaborate, pool resources, and direct assistance to the state's most vulnerable and underserved children. In 2019, Utah's PDG B-5 facilitated the completion of a statewide needs assessment, explicitly focusing on Utah's mixed-delivery early childhood system and how improved coordination can better meet the needs of children and families. The PDG B-5 needs assessment was a foundation for formulating an early childhood strategic plan.

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Often, early childhood systems operate independently, missing valuable opportunities to optimize children's overall health, well-being, and early learning outcomes. Ultimately, a well-functioning early childhood system that is coordinated and aligned across various agencies and systems provides families better programs and services to aid in healthy child development.

The recommendations through the PDG B-5 are broken down into short-term, medium-term, and longterm goals, as follows:

- Family Support and Safety
  - Short Term
    - Increase parent engagement, including soliciting parental input.
    - Integrate more strengths-based language and people-first language and vocabulary into systems and programs.
    - Explore additional ways to engage the public and providers and solicit their input (i.e., traveling to communities and proactively reaching out vs. requiring parents to travel to state events).
  - Medium Term
    - Increase cross-sector collaborations to bolster public awareness campaigns of available services and resources.
    - Create localized connection services specific to local geographies and services; tailor approaches to serving children and families in rural areas.
    - Create intentional opportunities for parents to engage and give input.



## Long Term

- Increase support for children with developmental delays, particularly social and emotional needs, by promoting the completion of developmental screenings with public service announcements.
- Create a statewide, universal application for Early Childhood System (ECS) services and resources.
- Utilize developmentally appropriate practices in creating outcome metrics for children enrolled in ECS programs.

#### Medium Term

- Increase cross-sector collaborations to bolster public awareness campaigns of available services and resources.
- Create localized connection services specific to local geographies and services; tailor approaches to serving children and families in rural areas.
- Create intentional opportunities for parents to engage and give input.

## Health and Development

#### Short Term

- Increase parent engagement, including soliciting parental input.
- Strengthen relationships with state policymakers and regional or local collaboratives to build political and public will for prioritizing ECS services for children and families.
- Identify programs and services supported with time-limited funds and advocate for more stable ongoing funding.

## Medium Term

- Provide uniform information on early childhood developmental milestones, including to assess social-emotional development.
- Expand coordination with medical providers to educate families on available services and the appropriate intervention timeframes.
- Engage higher education partnerships, particularly in workforce training opportunities, including medical schools and other child development schools.
- Coordinate data and the resulting insights to ensure children are served in the best settings.

# Long Term



- Increase support for children with developmental delays, particularly in their social and emotional needs, by promoting the completion of developmental screenings through public service announcements.
- Coordinate and align with funders the desired outcomes and reporting requirements for grantees.
- Facilitate cross-training on developmentally appropriate milestones and practices, including social-emotional development tools.

# Early Learning

## Short Term

- Increase public awareness of the importance of early childhood development and parents' and caregivers' roles.
- Determine leadership priorities, values, and statewide early childhood objectives that require increased coordination.
- Identify programs and services supported with time-limited funds and advocate for more stable ongoing funding.

## Medium Term

- Increase cross-sector collaborations to bolster public awareness campaigns for available services and resources.
- Engage higher education partnerships, particularly in workforce training opportunities, to include medical schools and other child development schools.
- Engage stakeholders to explore a more holistic definition of kindergarten readiness beyond the KEEP Assessment. Have the new definition reviewed by the Governor's Early Childhood Commission.

## Long Term

- Adopt a system-wide definition of high-quality care and education programs.
- Require participation in Utah's workforce registry as part of the hiring process and incentivize
  ongoing participation among the current early childhood workforce to inform retention
  policies and other workforce planning.
- Engage stakeholders to explore a more holistic definition of kindergarten readiness beyond the KEEP Assessment. Have the new definition reviewed by the Governor's Early Childhood Commission.
- Support a system of rewards and increased compensation for educational attainment and training.
- Establish a clearly articulated statewide career pathway for early child care professionals connected to system standards.
- Align credentials across all early childhood providers, including Head Start and Early Head Start, private and family home child care, and public schools.



# Economic Stability

#### Short Term

- Determine leadership priorities, values, and statewide early childhood objectives that require increased coordination.
- Strengthen relationships with state policymakers and regional or local collaboratives to build political and public will for prioritizing ECS services for children and families.
- Identify programs and services supported with time-limited funds and advocate for more stable ongoing funding.

## Medium Term

- Create localized connection services specific to local geographies and services; tailor approaches to serving children and families in rural areas.
- Continue to expand discussions of typical early childhood services to include employment, financial assistance, and housing issues and how these impact children 0-5 in Utah.

# Long Term

- Coordinate and educate staff on eligibility requirements across programs.
- Facilitate cross-training on developmentally appropriate milestones and practices, including social-emotional development tools.



# States—Vermont Child Care and Early Childhood Education System Analysis (2022)

### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Elliot Regenstein, Nasha Patel. "Vermont child care and early childhood education systems analysis." (2022)

# **Document Objective or Overview:**

This state of Vermont highlights a lack of coordination between human services and education in early childhood. This made it difficult for families to navigate the system. The document analyzes Vermont's early childhood system and offers recommendations for system improvement.

## **Current System Structure:**

- The Vermont Agency of Education's (AOE) Early Education Division is responsible for universal pre-k in collaboration with the Agency of Human Services (AHS) and early childhood special education.
- The Child Development Division (CDD) of the AHS Department for Children and Families is responsible
  for child care subsidies, licensing, quality ratings, early intervention, and Children's Integrated
  Services. Other related services are also housed within the Department for Children and Families,
  including the Family Services Division and the Economic Services Division.
- The Maternal & Child Health Division of the AHS Department of Health partners with CDD to lead the state's home visiting work.
- The Department of Mental Health at AHS partners with CDD on Children's Integrated Services and early childhood and family mental health service delivery.

The problems identified in Vermont concern the system's structure, including differing definitions of service quality, inconsistent oversight of early childhood providers, and conflicting expectations and support for professionals in different settings.

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The paper recommends creating a new unit of state government focused entirely on early childhood, with a single empowered leader overseeing a core cluster of critical early childhood programs. This new unit should not be administered solely by the AHS or the AOE. This new entity should:

- Establish the state's vision for early childhood;
- Manage different program funding streams and work to knit them into a coherent system;
- Set standards for service quality and ongoing program improvement;
- Support professionals throughout the system; and
- Engage and regularly communicate with stakeholders, including families and providers.



# Governance of the new entity should include:

- A leader responsible for a significant cluster of programs, staff, and funding related to services before kindergarten;
- A charge to unify a fragmented early childhood system to improve experiences for children and families—and the policy, funding, structure, and accountability to ensure it occurs; The Maternal & Child Health Division of the AHS Department of Health partners with CDD to lead the state's home visiting work.
- An oversight structure that allocates roles between state and local governments in a manner that provides each with the best chance to succeed;
- Local control that remains functions within the state vision; and
- A set of metrics for success developed by a diverse group of stakeholders, supported by a carefully conceived data collection and analysis system.



# States—50-State Comparison: State K-3 Policies (2023)

### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Education Commission of the States. "50-State Comparison: State K-3 Policies 2023."

# **Document Objective or Overview:**

Following a high-quality early care and education experience, the kindergarten-through-third-grade years set the foundation upon which all future learning builds; strengthening this continuum creates opportunities for long-term success. Education Commission of the States researched the statutes and regulations that guide the key components of effective early childhood systems in all 50 states to provide this comprehensive resource.

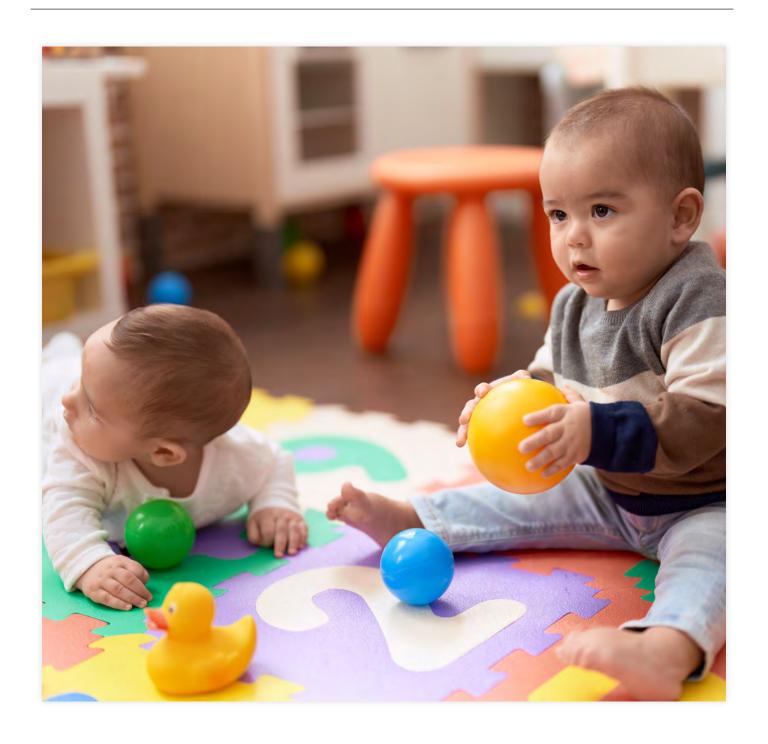
## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

- 17 states and the District of Columbia require that children attend kindergarten.
- 16 states and the District of Columbia require school districts to offer full-day kindergarten, and 44 states and the District of Columbia require at least half-day kindergarten.
- 39 states and the District of Columbia require assessments outside the federally mandated third grade assessments, including screening, diagnostic, summative, and formative assessments.
- 45 states have policies related to pre-service training or in-service professional development in reading instruction for K-3 educators.
- 17 states and the District of Columbia specify requirements for districts or schools around reading curricula or instructional materials.
- 16 states and the District of Columbia require grade retention for nonproficient third graders with good cause exemptions, and an additional 10 states allow for grade retention as determined at the local level.



# **COUNTRY REPORTS**

Literature on Other Countries' Early Childhood Systems and Practices





# Countries—Reforming Australian early childhood education and care provision, 2009-2015 (2016)

# **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Tayler, Collette. "Reforming Australian early childhood education and care provision (2009–2015)." Australasian Journal of Early Childhood 41, no. 2 (2016): 27-31.

# **Document Objective or Overview:**

In 2007, Australia began a national, systems-wide change to governing the quality of its provision of early childhood education and care (ECEC). The federal, state and territory levels of government agreed on a national vision for early childhood, a new learning framework, a national quality standard and a collective governance process for all child care services, preschool-kinder programs and outside-school-hours care services that receive government funding. This paper provides an overview of the context of ECEC provision in Australia, a summary of the core components of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and an argument about the necessity of these reforms.

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

- The National Quality Framework (NQF) aims to improve the quality of ECEC services and programs, influencing outcomes for children, families, service providers, and governments. The paper outlines the Australian ECEC system, provides background reasoning for the NQF, and discusses the National Quality Standard (NQS) and its development process.
- Concerns about revising early childhood provision and achieving the intended outcomes arose before
  implementation research could demonstrate the reform effects.
- The structural quality of ECEC programs, including funding, staff qualifications, health and safety, and curriculum, shapes the programs but does not guarantee improved child outcomes.
- The processes within ECEC programs, such as interactions between adults and children and nurturing experiences, directly predict children's outcomes and are critical for assessing service quality.



# Countries—Childcare policy in the Czech Republic and Norway: two countries, two paths with many possibilities (2017)

## **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Horák, Pavel, and Markéta Horáková. "Childcare policy in the Czech Republic and Norway: two countries, two paths with many possibilities." Central European Journal of Public Policy 11, no. 2 (2017): 43-60.

# **Document Objective or Overview:**

This study compares child care policies in Norway and the Czech Republic, focusing on their traditions, governmental philosophies, and approaches to gender roles and family support. The two countries serve a similar proportion of families with preschool children and face challenges with at-risk families or children with special needs. However, the Czech Republic also faces issues related to women's status and reduced employment opportunities that affect the provision of early childhood care. In contrast, Norway promotes and benefits from gender equality in the labor market and child care responsibilities of both men and women.

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

- A nation's or state's social service philosophy, benefit systems, child care structures, and governance can affect how it delivers early childhood services.
- The study highlights differences in maternity leave systems, public and private child care services, and public financing mechanisms. Norway offers more developed and accessible child care focusing on educational goals, while the Czech Republic struggles with limited accessibility and lower quality, particularly for the youngest children. Norway's child care services fees are low, whereas the Czech Republic has high costs for private facilities.
- Norway's family and child care policy is comprehensive and accessible and promotes the involvement of both parents.
- Norway is highly responsive to the needs of its target group, resulting in policy adjustments to support family needs. The Czech Republic's family policy response is less family-focused, and policies are shaped by government philosophy, thus limiting family life choices and support for flexible arrangements.



# Countries—Family daycare in Germany—the gap between vision and reality (2015)

## **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Schoyerer, Gabriel, and Nina Weimann-Sandig. "Family Day Care in Germany-the gap between vision and reality." Journal of Early Childhood Education Research 4, no. 1 (2015): 2-21.

# Document Objective or Overview:

This report provides an overview of developments in family daycare in Germany after the significant expansion of the program. It explores the paradigms of qualitative improvement, emphasizing existing public structures for family daycare and the need to improve equity across the expanded program. The overview is based on qualitative and quantitative data from research at the German Youth Institute over five years.

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Note: Childminders are individuals who provide professional child care services in their own homes or in the homes of the children they care for, offering an alternative to traditional daycare centers. Family daycare is a specific type of childminding arrangement that involves multiple childminders working together under a coordinating agency's supervision.

## Background:

- The German child care system has traditionally focused on children aged three to six years old, but there has been an expansion of the system as more families have working mothers, particularly since the 1970s.
- Family daycare has become an established alternative form of care in Germany, mainly for well-educated families with higher incomes.
- The number of children in family daycare has significantly increased in both the eastern and western parts of Germany, but the growth rate of childminders has been restrained.
- Qualifications and care permits for childminders are crucial in ensuring quality in family daycare.
   A qualifying exam is required, and childminders must meet certain criteria, including expertise, willingness to cooperate with parents, and suitable facilities for children.



# System Strategies:

- Quality assurance measures, including qualification examinations, help evaluate potential childminders' personal and social competencies and contribute to family daycare's pedagogical quality.
- Family daycare varies in terms of forms and group sizes, with significant differences compared to daycare centers.
- In Germany, there are four forms of family daycare: within the parents' household, in the childminder's
  household, in rented spaces, and in group family daycare where multiple childminders work
  cooperatively.
- Childminders in the parents' household are employed by the parents and are called "nannies."
- Home-based childminders provide a suitable space for child care, with a maximum of five children if
  they do not provide education services and fewer if they offer education.

# Findings:

- There are concerns about the impact of group family daycare on existing standards in daycare centers; informal systems can degrade standards.
- In western Germany, there is a trend towards small-scale family daycare with one or two children. At
  the same time, in eastern Germany, there is a trend toward caring for several children in group family
  daycare, thus offering an opportunity to compare the two approaches.
- As of the study date, family daycare in Germany is mainly organized independently by families, with only a small percentage of childminders having employment subject to social security deductions.
   Thus, childminders bear economic responsibility for social security contributions, health insurance, and taxes on their income.
- Childminders' qualifications and vocational training vary, with different qualification structures
  throughout Germany. However, despite lower formal qualifications, studies show that childminders'
  pedagogical quality is comparable to daycare centers. Thus, providing foundational early childhood
  education without degree-level requirements for early educators may be possible.
- Because of better adult-to-child ratios, childminders have quality educational and cognitive development outcomes compared to their counterparts in daycare centers.
- Advisory and support systems are crucial in ensuring quality in family daycare and providing professional guidance and coordination. Thus, increasing the scale of service-provision scale necessitates additional support and oversight.



# Countries—A Nordic Perspective on Early Childhood Education and Care Policy (2012)

## **Document Link**

## Citation:

Karila, Kirsti. "A Nordic perspective on early childhood education and care policy." European Journal of Education 47, no. 4 (2012): 584-595.

# **Document Objective or Overview:**

This article describes the key features of Nordic Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) policies and their current trends. It looks in more detail at issues such as using highly trained staff and providing universal services. Legislation regulating early childhood education institutions had recently been renewed in all the Nordic countries. Therefore, this article focuses on emerging policy orientations, the main criticisms, and the future of the Nordic model in a constantly globalizing and standardizing environment.

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

# Background:

- The Nordic welfare state project, initiated in the 1970s, emphasized investment in childhood with a
  focus on family and labor issues.
- ECEC became an integral part of the labor market and family policy in response to the growing participation of women in the labor force.
- The Nordic countries have a social democratic welfare regime where the state plays a significant role
  in providing universal welfare services.
- Nordic ECEC policies promote sharing child education and care between families and public institutions, primarily driven by gender equality goals.
- The Nordic countries have laws and institutions that support the provision of universal, institutionalized ECEC services.
- Finland grants the right to day care for all children under school age, while Sweden provides free preschool for 1- to 5-year-olds.



## The current state of Nordic ECEC:

- The Nordic countries prioritize well-trained ECEC staff, with a significant percentage of workers having tertiary education qualifications.
- Recent trends in Nordic ECEC policies include a focus on quality assurance and evaluation, standardization, lifelong learning, increasing individualization, and promoting parent and child participation.
- The article highlights the potential challenges and risks associated with evaluation practices, standardization, "schoolification," and future-oriented ECEC policies.
- The role of research in policy development has increased, with research results influencing the formulation of revised ECEC policies.
- ECEC policy development involves multiple agents and interest groups, and research is needed to examine the roles of different actors at various levels.
- The article questions the implications of viewing ECEC as an investment in the future and raises concerns about defining evidence and sources used for evaluation.



# Countries—Norway: Early Childhood Education and Care Policy Review (2015)

## **Document Link**

### Citation:

Engel, Arno, W. Steven Barnett, Yvonne Anders, and Miho Taguma. "Early childhood education and care policy review." Norway: OECD (2015).

## **Document Objective or Overview:**

Norway participated in the Thematic Review of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in 1999, which prompted significant policy reforms in the country's ECEC sector. These reforms primarily aimed to expand access to and enhance the quality of ECEC services. In 2014, Norway requested another review by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to assess the changes made to its ECEC systems. This review's main objectives were to examine the system evolution, evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented changes, and explore viable policy options to improve access and quality in ECEC.

The review provides an independent analysis of key aspects of the system such as governance, funding, access, and, particularly, the quality of kindergarten provision in Norway. It examines past and present policy initiatives and proposes potential approaches for the future. Additionally, the report aims to facilitate the understanding of Norwegian ECEC systems for other OECD member and non-member countries. This report is part of the broader project on "Review of policies and practices for monitoring quality in early learning and development."

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The report outlines specific strengths, challenges, and policy recommendations that would be beneficial to compare and investigate:



Table 2.1 Strengths, challenges and policy recommendations regarding governance, funding and access

	Strengths	Challenges	Policy recommendations
Governance & Finance	National education governance bridges ECEC and schooling.	National policy implementation is difficult to ensure in an equal manner.	Improve policy implementation through financial incentives and closer supervision.
	Stakeholder involvement in ECEC policy decisions increases ownership and facilitates implementation.	The funding of the sector is complicated and creates unintended incentives for municipalities.	Simplify funding formula for private providers and render their revenues more stable.
	Municipalities have the funds and the responsibility to adapt ECEC provision to local needs.		
Access	Strong legal entitlement and expansion of places in kindergarten.	Participation of families with lower socio-economic status, ethnic minorities and children at risk is still hindered:  • Affordability continues to be an issue for some;  • A lack of information and competing incentives render decisions about participation more difficult.	Increase the attractiveness of participation for ethnic minorities and families with low levels of income and education:  Increase affordability for those with the lowest incomes and least financial benefit from participation;  Improve outreach to low-income and minority families;  Limit unintended consequences of national cash-for-care scheme.
	Increased affordability of kindergarten.	Supply constraints limit access to kindergarten, especially for children who turn age one after the autumn enrolment cut-off and those who move to a new location.	Address territorial inequity in supply and render admissions more flexible:  • Ensure equal access nationwide, especially in disadvantaged areas;  • Achieve a more flexible system for admission to kindergarten.
	Increased responsiveness to children's needs and parental choice with diversified kindergarten provision.		•



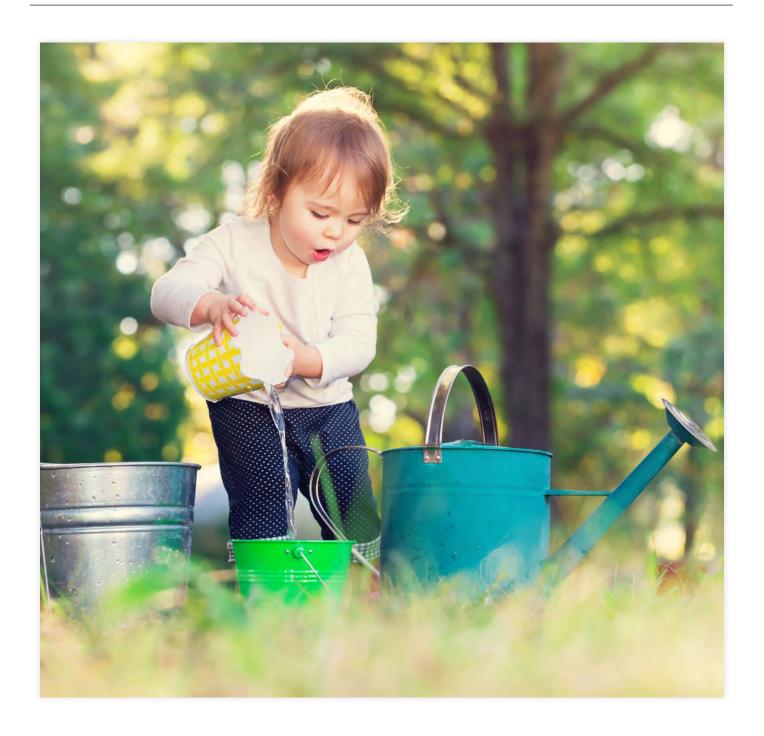
Table 3.1 Strengths, challenges and policy recommendations regarding quality

	Strengths	Challenges	Policy recommendations
	National and local strategies foster improvements in the workforce.	Persistent shortages of qualified staff.	Raise qualifications of all ECEC staff working with children and across the territory:  Set up a road map and define quantitative goals to increase workforce qualifications and skills.
Workforce		Insufficient status, pay and career opportunities to render profession more attractive and increase structural quality.	Align working conditions and pay of kindergarten and primary school teachers and differentiate by skills, experience and education:  Strengthen professional networks as learning communities.
	New kindergarten teacher education framework aligns teacher education with the Framework Plan for Kindergartens and European standards, and strengthens the link between theory and practice.	Kindergarten staff training system does not fully meet the need for specific skills.	Encourage shorter and specialised qualifications for those without high-level qualifications and maintain specific skills training of kindergarten teachers.
Regulations	The Norwegian ECEC system is highly regulated and provides detailed guidance with regard to structural quality standards.	Not all structural standards are adequate and precise enough.	Revise structural quality standards to ensur high quality staff-child interactions.
Standards & Regulations	The national Framework Plan for Kindergartens shares a broad understanding of education and development	The regulations regarding monitoring of staff quality and process quality are insufficient.	Set requirements for monitoring and developing process quality.
	National guidelines for inspection available.	Dual role of municipalities create a conflict of interest and can hamper independent inspections.	Strengthen and establish institutions to ensure independence and objectivity of external monitoring.
Monitoring	Many local monitoring practices in place to foster quality.	Lack of common understanding regarding the goals, scope and procedures for monitoring.	Define purpose and scope of monitoring clearly.
	Increased awareness of the importance of monitoring a wide range of quality aspects.	Monitoring practices are insufficient to assess process quality and capture children's development and well-being.	Strengthen procedures to monitor process quality.
	Increase in research funding and activities	Research and practice are not sufficiently linked	Strengthen the work of the Directorate in disseminating research among stakeholders and co-operation with research centres
Research	Increase in longitudinal studies on the effects of ECEC on children's development	Much research has limited generalisability and there are still few findings on process quality from large-scale research using reliable and valid instruments	Strengthen and utilise large-scale research projects on process quality



# **SYSTEM REPORTS**

# Literature on Early Childhood Systems





# System—Untangling the Evidence on Preschool Effectiveness (2019)

## **Document Link**

## Citation:

Meloy, Beth, Madelyn Gardner, and Linda Darling-Hammond. "Untangling the evidence on preschool effectiveness." Learning Policy Institute, Palo Alto (2019).

# **Document Objective or Overview:**

This document examines two different preschool programs to determine if there is an effective and positive relationship between preschool programs and positive educational outcomes.

#### Documents Reviewed or Referenced:

- Head Start
- Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The study evaluated if children entering kindergarten after attending preschool had better, unchanged, or worse outcomes than those who entered the school system without preschool experience. In the areas of literacy, math, and social-emotional skills, most preschool students had better outcomes, and none had worse outcomes.

Researchers also completed a longitudinal analysis of students' K-12 outcomes, looking at literacy, math, grade retention, and special education. In literacy, seven of the 15 programs evaluated had better literacy outcomes for children attending preschool. The remaining eight showed no difference. In math, 10 of the 13 preschool programs evaluated showed benefits, one showed no difference, and two showed worse outcomes for children who attended preschool than those who did not. In grade retention, six of 10 programs had better outcomes, and four showed no difference. Lastly, in special education, four of seven programs had better outcomes, one showed no difference, and two had worse outcomes.

The weight of a sizable body of evidence indicates that preschool programs make a substantial difference in preparing children for school. The evidence of continued effects beyond school entry is also positive but less consistent.

To generate meaningful outcomes, early learning experiences need to be rich and engaging. Implementing high-quality preschool programs includes offering compensation and support to attract and retain a highly qualified workforce and a program day that provides adequate, productive learning time and activities. The study also noted that even the highest quality preschool cannot inoculate students from the detrimental effects of poverty.



# System—Effective State Offices of Early Learning: Structural Features, Enabling Conditions, and Key Functions in Four States (2021)

## **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Connors-Tadros, Lori, Kaitlin Northey, Ellen Frede, Katherine Hodges, and Tracy Jost. "Effective state offices of early learning: Structural features, enabling conditions, and key functions in four states." National Institute for Early Education Research. Retrieved June 10 (2021): 2021.

# **Document Objective or Overview:**

This report presents the findings of case studies conducted on four State Offices of Early Learning (SOELs). The report begins by discussing prior research that contributed to the conceptual framework and discusses the methodology used in the study. The report also provides individual case studies for each of the four SOELs.

Each case study starts with an overview of the specific SOEL and its parent agency. This includes information on the history of early education in the state, the establishment of the Office of Early Learning, funding sources for the SOEL, and details about its structure and staff. The case studies then present the findings for the three research questions. The report summarizes the main conclusions from the four states and provides a cross-state summary of the insights gained from the case studies.

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Below are the case study characteristics for Alabama, Michigan, New Jersey, and West Virginia:

- Alabama
  - Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE)
  - Separate state agency
  - Led by a secretary who reports to the governor
  - Long-standing commitment of governor(s) to ECE
  - Stable state funding, with steady expansion of state and federal funds
  - State policy pay parity pre-K program
  - Staffing @100 FTE
- Michigan
  - Office of Great Start (OGS) in MI Department of Education (MDE)
  - Housed in the Division of P-20 Systems and Transition Services, 1 of 3 MDE divisions
  - Led by an assistant superintendent who reports directly to the superintendent
  - Long-standing support for the Great Start School Readiness Program, which has been operating for more than 30 years



- In FY2012, the governor moved child care subsidy and quality (but not licensing) and Head Start collaboration to OGS
- Local decisions for pay parity, pre-K program
- Staffing @66 FTE

## New Jersey

- Office of Great Start (OGS) in MI Department of Education (MDE)Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) in NJ Department of Education (NJDOE)
- 1 of 6 NJDOE divisions
- Led by an assistant commissioner who reports directly to the commissioner
- 1998 Abbott court case required a high-quality preschool program funded by the state
- DECE was established to oversee the implementation of Abbott and other funding for preschool
- Beginning in 2018, the governor increased funding to expand preschool
- State policy pay parity, pre-K program
- Staffing @14 FTE

## West Virginia

- Office of Early and Elementary Learning Services (EELS) in the Department of Education (WV DOE)
- 1 of 5 WV DOE offices
- Led by executive director who reports to the WV DOE assistant superintendent
- WV Universal pre-K, established in 2002, was mandated to be universal by 2012; the signature program of EELS
- EELS began as the Office of School Readiness and, in 2012, was expanded to encompass pre-K through grade 5
- Staffing @6.5 FTE



# System—Improving Early Childhood Education Systems (2020)

# **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Education Commission of the States. Improving Early Childhood Education Systems. (2020)

## **Document Objective or Overview:**

In 2018, 46 states and territories were awarded Preschool Development Grant, Birth Through Five (PDG B-5) grants to complete needs assessments and strategic plans. Twenty-three of those states were awarded renewal grant funding in late 2019 and early 2020 to further invest in existing B-5 programs, governance systems, and the infrastructure that supports them. States were encouraged to coordinate service applications, strengthen infant/toddler programs, and improve transitions. Some states are leading ambitious early childhood reform efforts that renewal grants could directly accelerate; other states are focusing on targeted projects, such as piloting new programs or initiatives, updating regulations or requirements, or engaging consultants to review programs or data capacity and make recommendations.

This policy brief provides a high-level summary of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) analysis of the proposed plans of states that received renewal grants.

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The Commission's analysis included reviewing states' needs assessments and strategic planning processes and identifying trends across applications with a focus on:

- Collaborative transitions and alignment from birth to the early grades;
- Parent engagement and maximizing parental choice;
- Workforce and professional development;
- Ensuring program quality across all settings;
- Data systems and governance;
- Coordinated early childhood services application processes; and
- Supports for infants and toddlers.



# System—Integrated Efficient Early Care and Education Systems-Revisiting a State-by-State Analysis (2023)

# **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Walsh, Brittany, Linda Smith, and Katherine Mercado. "Integrated Efficient Early Care and Education Systems." (2023).

## **Document Objective or Overview:**

In 2018, the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) set out to examine how states manage federal early childhood programs. Congress and state officials offered different perspectives. Congress claimed that more children and families could be served if the states used federal funds more efficiently, and state officials complained that the federal government was the source of inefficiencies because of over-regulation. In taking on this work, BPC wanted to better understand if efficiencies were to be gained and where they occurred.

In this 2023 update, given the critical nature of the state-federal partnership in early childhood, BPC revisited the 2018 study to learn if states made significant progress.

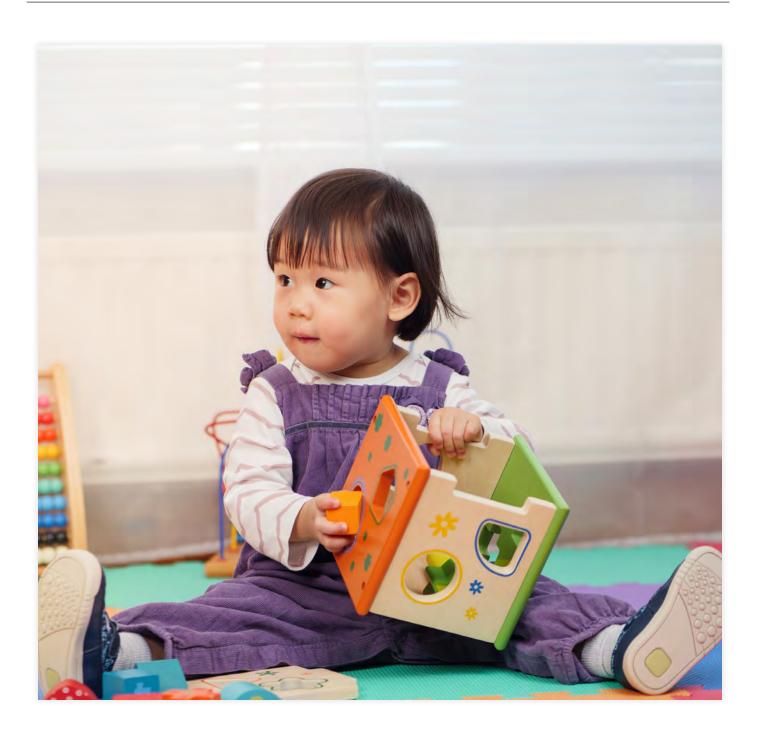
## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The report's recommendations for governors may be relevant to Nevada's early childhood leaders:

- Create a family stakeholder group to provide consistent feedback on barriers to services.
- Use allowable set-aside funding to commission an independent review board that develops concrete recommendations for improving early childhood education (ECE) program administration and governance. Ensuring program quality across all settings;
- Support or create an early childhood integrated data system.
- Review the placement of and requirements for the State Head Start Collaboration Office to ensure maximum alignment of Head Start services with other state ECE efforts.
- Ensure that licensing is the foundation for the state's quality rating improvement system.
- Ensure monitoring efforts are coordinated between the child care licensing agencies, Child and Adult Care Food Programs, and QRIS systems.
- Ensure that the SAC for early education and care is conducting a statewide needs assessment on the quality and availability of early care and learning programs.



# Academic and Research Literature





# Academic Research—Governing early learning among the American states (2022)

## **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Griffard, Megan Rauch, James Sadler, Michael Little, and Lora Cohen-Vogel. "Governing early learning among the American states." Children and youth services review 143 (2022): 106625.

# Document Objective or Overview:

Researchers have posited explanations for the variability in pre-K program quality and student outcomes, including an uncoordinated pre-K delivery system and misalignment between the pre-K and K-12 sectors. This study investigates how states attempt to resolve challenges resulting from mixed delivery and vertical misalignment: their governance structures. By collecting and analyzing documents from all 50 states, this study describes how early learning is governed. It also organizes state governance structures into a five category taxonomy. It analyzes each state's early childhood council's mission statement, scope, and goals. It finds only a small subset of states address issues related to vertical alignment.

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The report's recommendations for governors may be relevant to Nevada's early childhood leaders:

- Governance Structures:
  - The study examines Early Childhood Education (ECE) governance structures across all 50 American states.
  - Most states (24) use the Facilitated Coordination approach.
  - The next most common approach is Non-Facilitated Coordination (10), followed by
  - Created (6), Consolidated Inside (6), and Consolidated Outside (4).
- Early Childhood Councils:
  - All states except South Carolina have established early learning councils.
  - The age range focus of most councils is birth through kindergarten or age five.
  - Only 11 councils extend beyond kindergarten.
  - Most councils prioritize resolving issues related to mixed delivery rather than cross-sector vertical alignment.
- Variation and Challenges:
  - The study reveals wide variation in ECE governance structures across states.
  - State governments play a significant role in education policy development and implementation.
  - State-level governance models differ from national-level models in countries like the UK and Australia.
  - States' organization and governance of early childhood education can impact student performance.



## • Future Research:

- Further research is needed to understand why states adopt different governance structures.
- The effectiveness and impact of different governance structures should be explored.
- Comparative studies with other countries can provide insights into national versus state level governance models.
- The study suggests limited efforts to bolster alignment between early childhood and K-12 education sectors.



# Academic Research—Building a National Early Childhood Education System that Works (2021)

**Document Link** 

#### Citation:

Building a National Early Childhood Education System That Works. (2021).

## **Document Objective or Overview:**

This whitepaper highlights the critical importance of early childhood education (ECE) in children's development and the challenges they face in accessing high-quality early learning experiences. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive and inclusive ECE programs before kindergarten and points out the inadequate public investment in program quality. It also highlights the disparity in qualifications and low wages of early educators and the inconsistent governance and administration of ECE programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these challenges, leading to the closure of many ECE providers and the potential loss of numerous early learning opportunities. In recognizing the shared responsibility of the federal government, state and local governments, businesses, and communities, the paper emphasizes the need for a national plan to address the field's deficits and establish an equitable ECE system. The paper advocates for a long-term vision and presents additional recommendations based on the expertise of national experts.

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

- Ensure Access to Integrated, Inclusive Programs
  - Increase federal support for access to high-quality child care.
  - Incentivize and support states in moving towards universal preschool programming in a way that supports socioeconomic, racial, and linguistic diversity.
  - Create more seamless alignment between Head Start and state preschools to promote socioeconomically integrated classrooms without compromising quality.
  - Encourage inclusive special education programs that promote continuity of care.
- Ensure All Programs Are of High Quality
  - Require and provide funding to meet higher levels of quality in subsidized child care programs.
  - Require that federally supported preschool programs meet minimum quality standards.



- Develop and Support a Well-Qualified Workforce
  - Improve early educator compensation.
  - Provide financial and academic support to new and current early educators as they move up the career ladder.
  - Support institutions of higher education in developing excellent ECE preparation programs.
  - Ensure access to coaching and other job-embedded supports for all ECE providers.
- Build a Coherent, Easily Navigated System of EVE Governance
  - Identify and invest in a coordinating strategy to improve the alignment of federal ECE programs and related policies.
  - Support comprehensive referral services for families.
  - Support comprehensive, publicly available federal and state ECE data collection systems.



# Academic Research—A Systems Focus to Improve School Readiness (2021)

## **Document Link**

### Citation:

Education Commission of the States. Early care and education governance. (2021)

## **Document Objective or Overview:**

State education leaders have been developing and requiring their states to employ new definitions of school readiness. These definitions help agencies set goals and benchmarks tied to early learning and development standards. Traditional definitions of school readiness have focused on the skills, knowledge and abilities children need for educational success. However, these definitions have evolved to encompass a multidimensional view in recent years. While 16 states plus the District of Columbia currently have statutory definitions of school readiness, these vary in comprehensiveness.

This Education Commission of the States report looks at the adjustable and transformative components of early childhood educational and health services (and their intersections) and how they impact school readiness. It provides examples of innovative state programs and policies, highlights new federal financial supports and offers state-level policy takeaways.

## Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Pre-k to kindergarten transition research reveals several key takeaways that can inform policy:

- The existing mixed-delivery early childhood system plays an important, albeit confusing, role as the sending side of transitions to kindergarten; this requires attention to the variability across programs such as Head Start, state-funded pre-K, and child care when designing effective programs for transition to kindergarten.
- The K-12 system has widely variable approaches to support transitions, often linked to school and district leadership or logistical processes.
- Effective implementation of transition policies, plans, and practices requires joint buy-in from, and inperson collaboration between, early childhood and K-12 leaders and staff.
- Practitioners and families benefit from having a clear definition of readiness for kindergarten that accounts for multiple dimensions of children's learning and development.
- Examining various features of early childhood and kindergarten programs and pedagogy through
  the lens of vertical alignment provides a more complex and accurate perspective on how learning
  environments can best support children's development over time.



The following are steps state policymakers may consider for improving the school readiness of young children in their state:

- Assess whether the state's definition of school readiness is comprehensive, equitable and responsive
  to the diverse needs and characteristics of young children and families, focusing on mitigating rather
  than perpetuating existing gaps.
- Adopt a systems-level view of the factors that impact school readiness, keeping in mind the state's
  early childhood governance structure may or may not support a comprehensive, equitable and
  responsive vision of school readiness.
- Reach out to Preschool Development Grant, Birth through 5 (PDG B-5) staff to access robust data about state needs and plans for improving early childhood systems.
- Frame school readiness as a measure of success for the state's early childhood system. In a 2019
  technical report, the American Academy of Pediatrics states, "Children's readiness for kindergarten
  should become an outcome measure for a coordinated system of community-based programs and
  supports for the healthy development of young children."
- Use a kindergarten entry assessment data and other sources to determine where gaps exist and for whom, providing targeted support and services to create a system with equity at its core.



# Academic Research—Early Care and Education Governance (2021)

## **Document Link**

### Citation:

Education Commission of the States. 2021. "Early Care and Education Governance".

## **Document Objective or Overview:**

State education leaders have been developing and requiring their states to employ new definitions of school readiness. These definitions help agencies set goals and benchmarks tied to early learning and development standards. Traditional definitions of school readiness have focused on the skills, knowledge and abilities children need for educational success. However, these definitions have evolved to encompass a multidimensional view in recent years. While 16 states plus the District of Columbia currently have statutory definitions of school readiness, these vary in comprehensiveness.

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# Academic Research—Early Care and Education Governance (2021)

## **Document Link**

## Citation:

Education Commission of the States. 2021. "Early Care and Education Governance".

# Document Objective or Overview:

The oversight and governance of early care and education is critical to supporting the development of young children and their families. However, because U.S. state agencies involved in this support are often siloed, this can result in less-than-optimal delivery of services—especially in an equitable and targeted manner. This policy outline provides examples of innovative practices from around the country and an essential set of questions for state leaders to consider.

# Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

This document is a one-page infographic. (See page 61.)

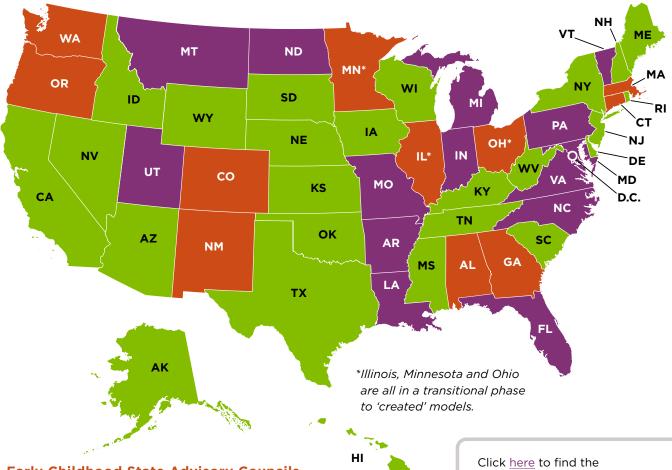


# **Early Care and Education Governance Models**

discussions and reform draw attention to these fragmented systems.



Governing early care and education (ECE) systems is complex as multiple agencies oversee several programs and services that are funded at the state and federal levels. These programs and services all contribute to early development yet are often siloed — making alignment, coordination and funding distribution difficult. This fragmentation impacts states' abilities to provide equitable, cohesive and high-quality supports for young children and their families. While there is no evidence on the efficacy of various governance models, policy



#### **Early Childhood State Advisory Councils**

A critical aspect of ECE governance is the early childhood state advisory council. This group sets the optimal vision for ECE in the state and creates accountability. State advisory councils are typically formed through statute or executive order as required by the Federal Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007 (joint statement).

Nearly all states have confirmed advisory councils that meet at least quarterly. Currently, only 26 states require or mention administrative staffing in their stated policies. Click <u>here</u> to find the definition for each model.

- Coordinated (25)
- Consolidated (14 + D.C.)
- Created (11)

Previous counts from 2021: Coordinated (29), Consolidated (13 + D.C.), Created (8).

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# Academic Research—Findings from the Kids in Communities Study (KiCS): A mixed methods study examining community-level influences on early childhood development (2021)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Goldfeld, Sharon, Karen Villanueva, Robert Tanton, Ilan Katz, Sally Brinkman, Billie Giles-Corti, and Geoffrey Woolcock. "Findings from the Kids in Communities Study (KiCS): A mixed methods study examining community-level influences on early childhood development." PLOS one 16, no. 9 (2021): e0256431.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This study explores community-level factors associated with early childhood development (ECD) outcomes in disadvantaged local communities. The researchers identified foundational community factors (FCFs) that differentiate areas with better ECD outcomes from those with poorer outcomes.

The study involved 25 disadvantaged communities. Through qualitative and quantitative data analysis, researchers identified 13 differentiating FCFs linked to better ECD outcomes and eight important FCFs consistently related to ECD across communities. The differentiating FCFs were primarily associated with socio-economic, local governance, service, and social domains.

- There are positive effects of gentrification and economic diversity, which seem to promote better ECD outcomes through neighborhood ascendency.
- However, the gentrification of housing and residents is more impactful than other physical domain elements, like parks or commercial property.
- Disadvantaged communities with better ECD outcomes tend to have better reputations (less stigma). A stigma attached to areas within the community may affect children's aspirations.



### Academic Research—What predicts legislative success of early care and education policies? (2021)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Park, Soojin Oh, and Nail Hassairi. "What predicts legislative success of early care and education policies?: Applications of machine learning and Natural Language Processing in a cross-state early childhood policy analysis." Plos one 16, no. 2 (2021): e0246730.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

While states have introduced much legislation on early care and education (ECE) in recent decades, what influences the successful passage of ECE bills has been left unexplored. Policymakers know little about how legislative content and the success of ECE bills are related. This study aims to determine if big data can predict the likelihood of early childhood state legislation passing into law.

Utilizing the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) method of topic modeling to analyze a large-scale dataset of early childhood state legislation, this study identifies two broad areas of policy priorities in early childhood legislation: finance and services. Three key finance topics are identified—revenues, expenditures, and fiscal governance—focusing on funding sources, resource allocation, and fiscal mechanisms. Three key service topics are also identified—pre-kindergarten, child care, and health and human services—representing governance mechanisms for coordinating programs to support young children.

- The study suggests that a bill's text alone can have predictive power in determining legislative success.
- The success rate of passing early childhood legislation at the state level is higher than that of passing federal legislation.
- Legislative effectiveness, measured by a legislator's record of accomplishment, strongly predicts bill
  passage.
- The study highlights the importance of legislative specialization and the role of effective legislators in advancing early childhood policy priorities.
- Using big data and machine learning approaches, such as LDA, can provide insights into legislative processes and inform evidence-based policymaking in early childhood education.
- The study acknowledges the limitations of text modeling methods and emphasizes the need for careful
  and thoughtful analysis by researchers.
- The findings can guide advocacy efforts by identifying suitable primary bill sponsors and understanding the challenges associated with different policy priorities.
- The study suggests several directions for future research, including the application of topic modeling to predict voting patterns and the analysis of other text data sources, such as legislative debates and social media data.



### Academic Research—A Collective Impact Organization for Early Childhood: Increasing Access to Quality Care by Uniting Community Sectors (2020)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Tilhou, Rebecca, Angela Eckhoff, and Brittney Rose. "A collective impact organization for early childhood: Increasing access to quality care by uniting community sectors." Early Childhood Education Journal 49 (2021): 111-123.

#### Document Objective or Overview:

This research study furthers understanding of the role of early childhood community organizations and the power of collective impact (CI) models to aid in the healthy development of young children. It focuses on understanding how one early childhood CI initiative brought together stakeholders from different sectors throughout their region to create a more cohesive, supportive early care system for local families and children. The five guiding principles that emerged from the participant interviews offer more profound insight into the driving forces of an early childhood CI.

- The study finds five guiding principles within the studied CI initiative and demonstrates how they
  synchronize with a CI organization's research-based phases and tenets. The five principles include
  advocating for early childhood health and education, implementing strategies for developing
  partnerships, planning for collaboration, integrating resources and expertise, and developing strategies
  for supporting participants and stakeholders.
- The studied initiative emphasizes advocacy for early childhood health and education, focusing on
  involving community partners and stakeholders. The study highlights how the initiative was founded
  through outreach efforts, feasibility studies, and the identification of community needs. The initiative's
  advocacy efforts extend to the regional level, addressing specific issues and challenges through
  collaborative partnerships and a unified voice.
- The study also discusses implementing strategies for developing partnerships, which involve bringing
  together diverse individuals and organizations associated with early childhood work. The inclusive
  nature of the partnerships contributes to the recruitment and retention of participants.
- The initiative strives to unite different groups of people and maintain effective communication among
  organizations and individuals through planned collaboration. Various tools, such as shared online
  platforms, facilitate communication and information sharing between face-to-face and virtual meetings.
  The collaborative efforts extend beyond the local level to engage stakeholders in the broader early
  childhood landscape.
- Integrating resources and expertise is emphasized to avoid duplication of efforts. The initiative brings
  together diverse resources and facilitates shared services, allowing participants to pool their resources
  and reduce costs. The integration of resources is complemented by sharing knowledge and relevant
  information between partners, enhancing the understanding of current practices and programs in the
  region.
- Strategies to support participants and stakeholders include providing streamlined professional training, organizing community events, and offering accessible resources for parents. The initiative aims to create small successes that benefit families and raise awareness of the initiative and its partner organizations.



#### Academic Research—Early Childhood Governance, Decision Guide (2020)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Elliot Regenstein. Early childhood governance, decision guide. (2020)

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This guide is a complement to the report "Early Childhood Governance: Getting There from Here," which provides more detail on each of the issues in the guide. The structure of both documents is the same to enable easy cross-referencing. This guide articulates critical questions that states may benefit from asking and presents considerations for answering those questions. Like the report, this guide functions on the premise that there is no single ideal governance structure, and states should consider weighing multiple tradeoffs in defining a governance structure that will best meet the state's needs.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The guide offers six key questions for states to consider, along with important sub-questions and other considerations:

- Is the state clear on its overall priorities for the early childhood system?
- What process should the state use to determine whether a governance change is needed to meet its objectives for the early childhood system?
- What functions will the state need to perform to achieve its priorities?
- How should various levels of government work together to execute critical functions?
- What personnel capacities does the state need to succeed at its priority functions?
- Given the capacities needed at the state level to achieve the state's goals, what is the ideal configuration of that capacity?



#### Academic Research—Early Childhood Governance: Getting There from Here (2020)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Elliot Regenstein. Early childhood governance: Getting there from here. (2020)

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This report was produced to support a field-wide improvement strategy for early childhood systems in U.S. states. It builds on existing resources that describe different state governance models and identifies their benefits and drawbacks. In addition to updating those analyses, the report offers a deeper study of the processes for governance change, identifying key questions states should consider and providing better information about the tradeoffs inherent in answering those questions. It draws on early childhood systems theory, behavioral economics, and other education policy resources. It also identifies capacities states may need as they consider moving forward in their governance design.

- The report uses the terms "comprehensive early development" (CED) services and "early childhood education and care" (ECEC) to describe the array of services, with ECEC referring to developmental and educational services and CED including general health, welfare, and protective services.
- Early childhood investment has been undervalued despite its importance in brain development and long-term impact on children's success.
- States' underinvestment in early childhood services and lack of subsidies for low-income families result in a regressive tax and hinder workforce participation in the long run.
- Expanding early childhood services has revealed challenges in state policy and service delivery infrastructures, with disparate programs scattered across different agencies.
- The current system makes it difficult for families to access early childhood programs due to complex eligibility requirements and fragmented providers.
- Governance is essential for developing improved early childhood systems, involving planning, coordination, resource allocation, public outreach, quality enhancements, and accountability.
- The definition of governance includes public and private sector efforts, encompassing the creation and distribution of authority, accountability, and sustainability.



#### Academic Research—State Policies to Enhance Transitions into Kindergarten (2020)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Adrienne Fischer and Matt Weyer. Early Care and Education: 20-21 State Legislation Update. (2021).

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

Transitioning to kindergarten is a crucial and potentially stressful time for young students and their families. Children come to kindergarten from divergent backgrounds, bringing diverse assets, needs, and experiences. Research indicates that well-designed and ongoing transition activities can significantly impact children's kindergarten experience and address existing inequities. This policy guide from Education Commission of the States looks at the 23 states and the District of Columbia with policies to guide the transition from pre-K to kindergarten.

- Policymakers should address the needs of children and support effective transition planning for better teaching and learning environments.
- Strategies include data sharing, engaging families, involving all adults interacting with children, and improving coordination among systems.
- Inequitable access to health services and supports can affect transition experiences, and state leaders should ensure equitable service delivery.
- Certain student populations, such as students of color and those living in poverty, may face more significant health challenges affecting learning.
- Critical health services include screenings, treatment, or referrals for physical and mental wellness, such as oral health, asthma, vision, hearing, and social-emotional support.
- State statutes and regulations vary in addressing health screenings and training for school staff on mental health and trauma-informed practices.
- States can provide guidance and technical assistance, including professional development, to support better coordination, equity, and authentic family engagement.
- Attention should be given to desired outcomes and addressing system-level deficits to create effective and meaningful transitions.



### Academic Research—A State System Framework for High-Quality Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education (2019)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Kasprzak, Christina, Kathleen Hebbeler, Donna Spiker, Katy McCullough, Anne Lucas, Sharon Walsh, Judy Swett, et al. "A State System Framework for High-Quality Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education." Topics in Early Childhood Special Education 40, no. 2 (2020): 97–109. https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121419831766.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) used a rigorous 2-year collaborative process to develop, test, and revise a conceptual framework for high-quality state early intervention (EI) and early childhood special education (ECSE) systems. The framework identifies six critical components of a state system and what constitutes quality in each element, addressing the vital need to articulate what constitutes quality in state EI and ECSE systems. This article describes the contents of the framework and the processes used to ensure that the framework incorporated current research, was relevant to all states, and was helpful in systems improvement.

- In 2018, states provided EI services to 388,694 children and ECSE services to 773,595 children under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- The state infrastructure is essential for ensuring high-quality services under IDEA, including monitoring implementation, establishing personnel requirements, planning for fiscal sustainability, providing policy guidance, and delivering technical assistance.
- A framework for state EI and ECSE systems was developed through a rigorous process involving literature reviews, state partners' input, and technical workgroup feedback. It comprises six interrelated components: governance, finance, personnel/workforce, data system, accountability and quality improvement, and quality standards.
- Each component has subcomponents, quality indicators, and elements of quality that specify the key content areas and operationalize the implementation of a high-quality state system.
- Stakeholder engagement, policy establishment, collaboration, data utilization, effective communication, family leadership, and coordination across early childhood services are crosscutting themes.
- The framework guides states in evaluating their EI and ECSE systems, identifying areas for improvement, and developing a more effective and efficient state system.
- The framework fills a gap in previous conceptualizations of state early childhood systems, providing a common language and shared understanding for system improvement efforts and research.
- The report provides a self-assessment tool that incorporates the framework and allows stakeholders to
  evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their state systems. The results can be used to prioritize areas
  for improvement and develop an improvement plan.
- The framework has been well-received by states, and feedback is being incorporated to improve its
  usability and content.



### Academic Research—Education Trends: Governance in Early Childhood Education (2018)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Atchison, Bruce, and Louisa Diffey. "Governance in Early Childhood Education. Education Trends." Education Commission of the States (2018).

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

Creating a governance strategy for early childhood education aims to enhance coordination, coherence, sustainability, efficiency, and accountability. State leaders establishing a governance entity should consider empowering it with decision-making and enforcement authority, visibility, durability across political administrations, adaptability, and interdependence. The strategy should focus on improving outcomes for children and families through a comprehensive educational continuum rather than simply rearranging positions; this involves implementing high-quality programs and services.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The report looks at core strategies for building effective system governance:

- Coordination: Connecting the distinct parts and programs of the early childhood education system, reflecting its comprehensive nature.
- Alignment: Providing coherence across systemwide tasks—such as data collection, quality standards and outcome measurement—and breaking down silos associated with the administration of funding and the oversight of programs.
- Sustainability: Withstanding political and administrative changes and accounting for the full range of programs and services in the state's early childhood system.
- Efficiency: Allocating resources wisely, reducing duplication of effort, and providing a significant return on investment.
- Accountability: Holding programs and services responsible for quality, equality, and outcomes.

States have pursued three different general approaches to early childhood governance, as follows:

- Creation of a dedicated early childhood agency:
  - Alabama
    - The Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education replaced the Department of Children's Affairs, overseeing programs through four offices.
    - The Alabama Children's Policy Council coordinates services across the state.



#### • Georgia

- Bright From the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning was established in 2004 by merging various entities.
- It oversees the state's pre-K program, child care licensing, federal nutrition programs, and the childcare rating system.
- The department collaborates with the Georgia State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care and the Georgia Children's Cabinet to guide policies and initiatives.

#### Massachusetts

- The Secretary of Education oversees three state agencies: the Department of Early Education and Care, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Higher Education.
- The Department of Early Education and Care, established in 2005, aligns services from infancy to preschool, including after-school programs, foster care, and home visits. It licenses child care facilities, houses the Head Start collaboration office and Quality Rating Improvement System, and collaborates with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for early learning initiatives.
- Consolidation of existing programs and divisions into one state agency:
  - Maryland
    - In 2005, the state consolidated early childhood programs under the Division of Early Childhood Development within the State Department of Education.
    - The division comprises an office of child care, an early learning branch, and a collaboration
      and improvement branch. It handles licensing, credentialing, subsidies, pre-K and kindergarten
      programs and promotes collaboration among early learning programs.
    - Recent initiatives include a family engagement website for parents, families, and educators statewide.
- Collaboration and Coordination across different agencies:
  - Colorado
    - The state coordinates early childhood programs across various offices and agencies.
    - Colorado H.B. 13-1117 (2013) aligned child development programs and moved the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and Head Start from the Governor's Office.
  - Pennsylvania
    - The state's early childhood programs are jointly overseen by the Department of Human Services and the Department of Education.



### Academic Research—Investing Early: Taking Stock of Outcomes and Economic Returns from Early Childhood Programs (2018)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Cannon, Jill S., M. Rebecca Kilburn, Lynn A. Karoly, Teryn Mattox, Ashley N. Muchow, and Maya Buenaventura. "Investing early: Taking stock of outcomes and economic returns from early childhood programs." Rand health quarterly 7, no. 4 (2018).

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This study examines the outcomes, costs, and benefits of early childhood programs. It focuses on evaluations of 115 programs serving families with children from prenatal to age 5, including preschool, home visiting, parent education, health-related visits, and government transfer programs. The researchers found that most early childhood programs improve outcomes for children; when formal benefit-cost analyses were conducted, most programs showed positive economic returns. The study highlights the types of programs that have been rigorously evaluated, the varied approaches and outcomes of these programs, and the associated costs and benefits.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

#### **Program Approaches:**

- The study identified four primary approaches to early childhood programs: early care and education (ECE), home visiting, parent education, and transfers (economic benefit programs).
- Of the 115 programs reviewed, 78 percent fell into one of these four approaches, while the rest combined multiple approaches.

#### Costs and Benefits:

- Out of the 115 programs, 25 had formal economic evaluations (cost analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, or cost-benefit analysis).
- Cost estimates varied widely, ranging from about \$150 per family to nearly \$48,800 per family.
- Cost-benefit ratios for early childhood programs were typically between \$2 to \$4 for every dollar invested, although higher ratios were possible.
- Positive economic returns were demonstrated for three of the four main program approaches and many combination approaches.
- The benefits of early childhood programs accrued over time, with adult earnings being a significant source of benefits.
- Programs that did not show positive returns either had no significant impacts or affected outcomes that could not be valued in dollars.
- There is considerable uncertainty in estimates of economic return due to measurement precision and the inability to assign an economic value to all affected outcomes.



#### Improvements in Outcomes:

- Less than one-third of all outcome types measured showed demonstrably positive results, which is statistically significant.
- The magnitude of improvements in outcomes varied across different program approaches.
- Early care and education programs had greater effects than other approaches.
- The size of program effects declined over time, with more recent evaluations showing less significant outcomes.

#### Application of Economic Evaluation:

- The study highlighted the challenges in conducting economic evaluations for early childhood programs, including the lack of expertise and difficulties in measuring program costs, and assigning monetary values to outcomes.
- Improvements in the quality and comparability of economic evaluations are needed to enhance decision-making regarding early childhood programs.

#### Implications for Stakeholders:

- Policymakers can have confidence in the effectiveness of well-designed and well-implemented early childhood programs to improve the lives of children and their families.
- The study provides insights for policymakers and practitioners on different program approaches and their outcomes, costs, and benefits.
- The findings underscore the importance of evidence-based decision-making and efficient resource allocation in early childhood interventions.



### Academic Research—Dispersed vs. Centralized Policy Governance: The Case of State Early Care and Education Policy (2016)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Jenkins, Jade Marcus, and Gary T. Henry. "Dispersed vs. centralized policy governance: The case of state early care and education policy." Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory 26, no. 4 (2016): 709-725.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

Policy and public management scholars have long theorized about the fragmentation of policy governance across numerous agencies, yet the effects of concentrated or dispersed governance on outcomes of the target population are unknown. Child policy is a field where dispersion has raised concerns, leading several states to consolidate governance for children's programs in recent years. After presenting arguments for and against the dispersion of policies across agencies, this study estimates the effect of the dispersion of state-level early childhood education policy governance on children's reading skills. The findings indicate a significant positive effect of dispersed governance on children's reading skills in kindergarten, with diminishing returns above four agencies.

- The findings suggest a positive effect of state ECS (Early Childhood System) governance dispersion on children's reading skills.
- However, the study also found diminishing returns at higher levels of dispersion, and the inflection
  point is around 4.5 agencies. The effects were robust across different samples and covariates and may
  apply to other measures of children's skills.
- The study tested the impact of concentrated and dispersed governance approaches on policy outcomes in ECS. More dispersed governance in state ECS policy was associated with policysignificant improvements in child reading skills in kindergarten.
- The relationship between policy dispersion and outcomes was found to be nonlinear, with the effect decreasing for highly dispersed states.
- The study challenged the dominant hypothesis that dispersion of governance is detrimental to children's well-being, as it found a positive association between dispersion and child skill development.
- The research considered potential mechanisms underlying the positive effect, including the greater effectiveness of horizontally dispersed approaches in policy implementation and the potential for better coordination and collaboration in more dispersed governance systems.



# Academic Research—Roadmap for Early Childhood and K-12 Data Linkages: Key Focus Areas to Ensure Quality Implementation. Quality Implementation Roadmaps (2016)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

"Roadmap for Early Childhood and K-12 Data Linkages: Key Focus Areas to Ensure Quality Implementation. Quality Implementation Roadmaps." Data Quality Campaign. Data Quality Campaign, 2016.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This paper from the Data Quality Campaign discusses the importance of securely linking early childhood and K-12 data systems to inform policy decisions, monitor children's progress, and support their success in school. The authors show that states can benefit from data linkages to answer crucial questions about children's readiness for school, the effectiveness of early childhood education programs, and the alignment between early childhood and K-12 policies.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The paper outlines seven key focus areas for successfully implementing data linkages.

- <u>State Capacity</u>: Ensuring the state has the necessary structure and staffing to effectively manage, analyze, and share linked data to support children's success.
- <u>Data Governance</u>: Developing a clear structure defining roles and responsibilities for data collection, reporting, and accountability for data quality and security.
- Privacy, Security, and Transparency: Establishing robust and transparent processes to safeguard data.
- <u>Linking, Matching, and Sharing</u>: Creating a deliberate and staged process for securely linking data from different early childhood and K-12 systems to achieve a broad link between the two sectors This process includes accurate and secure matching of individual children's data and sharing it with authorized users.
- <u>Data Quality</u>: Implementing a process to ensure the linked data are accurate and useful for decision-making.
- <u>Data Access and Use</u>: Determining which entities can access the linked data and how they will address critical policy questions, enhance program quality, and support children's success.
- <u>Stakeholder Engagement</u>: Involving a wide range of internal and external stakeholders to foster a transparent data culture that values linking and sharing data between early childhood and K-12 systems.



## Academic Research—Best Practices in Data Governance and Management for Early Care and Education: Supporting Effective Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (2014)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Best Practices in Data Governance and Management for Early Care and Education: Supporting Effective Quality Rating and Improvement Systems. (2014). Targeted News Service.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

As a centerpiece of state early care and education (ECE) activities, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) exemplify how an effective ECE data system can support planning, operations, service delivery, monitoring, and evaluation. Implementing strong ECE data governance and management practices ensures the quality of QRIS data and, thus, the integrity of the QRIS itself. This brief illustrates the need for and benefits of building strong ECE data governance structures and implementing systemwide data management policies and practices using the example of QRIS.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The brief offers the following recommendations:

- Establish a governance body responsible for managing the ECE data system.
- Create multiple levels within the governance body, such as an Executive Council and Strategic Committee, to support implementation and decision-making.
- Engage partners and stakeholders regularly to provide input and feedback.
- Address challenges related to "turf, trust, technical issues, and time" through collaboration, agreed-upon standards, and clear roles and responsibilities.
- Carefully plan the membership of the governance body, including agency directors, IT staff, data stewards, subject matter experts, analysts, and users.
- Develop partnership and data-sharing agreements with relevant programs and agencies.
- Create comprehensive documentation for the databases used in the ECE data system, including variables, data sources, and quality assurance practices.
- Establish common data standards, including data elements, syntactic representation, and semantics.
- Have a policy for database updates and ensure documentation of all changes for future reference.
- Determine unique identifiers for children, workforce members, and facilities to avoid duplicate records and facilitate data linkage.
- Provide training for data management staff and ensure a protocol policy book is available.
- Strive for a paperless system and leverage technological advances to improve data integration and reduce errors.
- Establish consistent security and backup policies to protect data and ensure its availability.



### Academic Research—2023 Data Capacity of State-funded Pre-K Programs Across the United States (2023)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Amadon, S., Tang, J., Richards, K., Ulmen, K., Guerra, G., Ball, J., Maxfield, E., King, C., & Richards, D. "2023 Data Capacity of State-funded Pre-K Programs Across the United States." Child Trends, 2023. https://doi.org/10.56417/4813w330c

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

From December 2022 to March 2023, the Early Childhood Data Collaborative conducted the nationwide state-funded Pre-K Data Survey to better understand states' capacity to access, use, and link data. The survey includes data on 43 states, including data from direct survey respondents in 35 states and secondary data collected from eight states. They used the survey results to contribute information about the pre-K data landscape and inform the creation of the System Transformation for Equitable Preschools (STEP Forward with Data) Framework.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Significant findings from the research included:

- Almost all states had access to child- and program-level data.
- About three-quarters of states had access to workforce-level data.
- Most states could report on the characteristics of their pre-K systems.
- Less than half of states reported the capacity to disaggregate data by income, tribal affiliation, and country of birth.
- Access to data about community demographics and family engagement is limited.
- Most survey respondents reported that pre-K data were silved across database systems.
- More than two-thirds of states could link pre-K and K-12 data.
- Establish consistent security and backup policies to protect data and ensure its availability.



### Academic Research—Special Education: Additional Data Could Help Early Intervention Programs Reach More Eligible Infants and Toddlers (2023)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

"Special Education: Additional Data Could Help Early Intervention Programs Reach More Eligible Infants and Toddlers." Policy File. Government Accountability Office, 2023.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

Early intervention services like speech therapy can help children with developmental delays.

The U.S. Department of Education funds states to identify children who need services and refer them to care. However, this survey found that children of some backgrounds—such as Native Americans—were not evaluated for services as often as others. The Department does not collect children's demographic data before they enroll in the program, but many states do. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommends that the Department encourage states to use their data to ensure all children can access services and that Congress consider giving the Department authority to collect this data from all states.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

States use different definitions of "developmental delay" and different program eligibility criteria for their early intervention programs, which serve infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth through age 2. These differences reflect the flexibility provided to states under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which assists states in operating a statewide program of early intervention services. GAO surveyed 56 Part C programs, and 54 responded. When asked to name their top challenges serving eligible families, 48 states identified a lack of qualified service providers, and 23 cited staffing challenges at the state level.

According to GAO's survey, 53 percent of children referred for Part C services ultimately enrolled. To better understand the characteristics of children moving through each stage of the process, GAO analyzed demographic data for the 16 states that reported this information on the survey. GAO found notable variations at different points in the enrollment process. For example, the percentage of children referred who received an evaluation ranged from 59 percent of American Indian or Alaska Native children to 86 percent of Asian children (a 27-point spread). In contrast, the percentage of children deemed eligible who enrolled ranged from 91 percent of American Indian or Alaska Native children to 95 percent of Asian and White children (a 4-point spread).



### Academic Research—Exploring the potential of consolidated approaches to governance for bringing coherence to early childhood education systems (2014)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Gomez, Rebecca Elizabeth. "Exploring the Potential of Consolidated Approaches to Governance for Bringing Coherence to Early Childhood Education Systems." ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2014.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This doctoral dissertation explores consolidated governance (as opposed to centralized governance) in early childhood education (ECE), particularly at the state level, and its influence on ECE system development. It finds consolidated governance can improve system functioning and coherence, program quality, workforce development, and services for families in the ECE field.

- Consolidated governance helps increase an ECE system's adaptive capacity and influences productive development. There is also evidence of isomorphism under a consolidated model— where programs and organizations within the system tend to normalize around a core set of values and approaches.
- Because consolidated entities possess a more unified authority, state policymaking can become more integrative when system players collaborate.
- Consolidated systems, which are coordinated but not dependent on one entity, are also more durable and sustainable.
- Governance functions such as resource allocation, accountability, planning, collaboration, regulation, standard setting, outreach and engagement, and quality improvement are generally strengthened under consolidated governance.
- The study emphasizes the role of state culture, values, and existing policy structures in shaping an innovative approach to governance.



### Academic Research—Global Guidelines Assessment for the Education and Care of Young Children (2011)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Review of ACEI Global Guidelines Assessment, Third Edition. 2011. Association for Childhood Education International.

https://earlyglobalchildhoodblog.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/b0216-ggaenglish.pdf

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

The Global Guidelines Assessment (GGA) is an evidence-based instrument designed to help early childhood professionals systematically examine and improve the quality of their program services. The GGA was developed for use in early childhood programs worldwide. It is based on a document called the Global Guidelines for Early Childhood Education and Care (Global Guidelines), which was developed in 1999 by educators from more than 27 countries at a forum sponsored by Childhood Education International (then known as the Association for Childhood Education International [ACEI]).

In 2003, ACEI separately developed and released the first edition of the GGA. The third edition was released in 2011, and a fourth edition is under development. Childhood Education International encourages Early Childhood System (ECS) stakeholders to use the GGA either to design new early childhood programs or to improve existing programs.

- The GGA is appropriate for ECS programs serving children in the birth to six age range. The GGA is
  designed for applicability in any group setting, including services in a child care center, school, home,
  etc.
- The GGA contains 76 indicators of ECS program quality in the following five content areas:
  - Environment and Physical Space;
  - Curriculum Content and Pedagogy;
  - Early Childhood Educators and Caregivers;
  - Partnerships With Families and Communities; and
  - Young Children with Special Needs.
- The GGA balances sensitivity to cultural variations and promotes meaningful, globally applicable
  early care and education constructs. Therefore, for each of the 76 indicators, the GGA includes a
  5-point rating scale (excellent to inadequate) and a space to record examples supporting each rating.
  The ratings help professionals gauge the quality of their ECS program services within the context of
  recommended practices, and the written examples provide evidence for the ratingsn grounded in the
  program's local culture and context.



- The GGA can be administered at specified checkpoints (e.g., beginning and end of the year) or
  used for ongoing improvements. It can also be used throughout the year to examine incremental
  improvements once the initial administration has taken place.
- Results of the GGA can be applied to:
  - Assist ECS programs in meeting requirements for quality services;
  - Provide specific information for identifying program areas that need improvement;
  - Guide professionals in the establishment of new program services;
  - Train teachers, paraprofessionals, clinicians, and parents on quality program practices;
  - · Research early childhood programs; and
  - Help states, municipalities, and other stakeholders responsible for the operation of ECS programs reform current regulations and establish general policies toward quality evaluation.



### Academic Research—Building Ready States: A Governor's Guide to Supporting a Comprehensive, High-Quality Early Childhood State System (2010)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Demma. (2010). Building Ready States: A Governor's Guide to Supporting a Comprehensive, High-Quality Early Childhood State System. In NGA Center for Best Practices. NGA Center for Best Practices

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

With more than 60 percent of all children from birth to age five spending time in the care of someone other than their parents, publicly supported early childhood programs must provide safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate experiences that foster healthy growth and learning. Governors are uniquely positioned to communicate their vision for an effective system and prioritize this work over time. To ensure they are leading "ready states" where young children are supported by a comprehensive, highquality early childhood system, The National Governors Association recommends six foundational actions states should pursue.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

Below are recommendations from the report. It is instructive to read this list and appreciate Nevada's progress since the report's publication in 2010

- Coordinate early childhood governance through a state early childhood advisory council that the
  governor designates, represents the full range of early childhood programs, and implements a
  strategic plan for comprehensive services statewide.
- Build an integrated professional development system that reflects aligned and research-based professional development standards, supports recruitment and retention through career pathways, and uses a professional development registry.
- Implement a quality rating and improvement system that measures various aspects of program quality, applies standard metrics to all early care and education programs, and incentivizes program improvement.
- Develop a longitudinal and coordinated early childhood data system that tracks results, protects
  child and family privacy, and drives improvement by continually collecting, analyzing, and reporting
  information.
- Align comprehensive early learning guidelines and standards for children from birth to age 5 with K-3
  content standards to bridge early experiences with the early elementary grades.
- Integrate federal, state, and private funding sources to support and sustain the core components of a comprehensive, high-quality early childhood system.



#### Academic Research—Intersection of TANF and Child Care and Early Learning (2023)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Smith, Linda K, Victoria Gibney, and Olivia Rotolo. "Intersection of TANF and Child Care and Early Learning." Policy File. Bipartisan Policy Center, 2023.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This paper examines the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. It urges Congress to reauthorize the program with the following critical reforms:

- Require all child care spending to be transferred to each state's Child Care Development Fund.
- Increase the TANF transfer limits.
- Strengthen data reporting and analysis of tribal TANF programs.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

There are three recommendations from this report that relate to funding governance in Nevada:

First, states may transfer up to 30 percent of their federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) to increase the amount of child care subsidies available to low-income families. Funds transferred from TANF to CCDF are subject to the same rules and reporting requirements as CCDF, ensuring children are served in child care programs that meet the minimum health and safety requirements established under CCDF. Nevada should consider maximizing such transfers.

Second, separate from CCDF, states may allocate any amount of their federal TANF funds directly to early childhood services, including child care, pre-K, and Head Start. Importantly, under federal rules these expenditures are not subject to the minimum health and safety standards required by CCDF, which can result in the State funding sub-par programs. Nevada should consider subjecting all federal and State child care funds to CCDF standards.

Third, states must maintain a specific level of State funding for TANF-related activities, known as State maintenance of effort, or MOE. States may count spending on child care as contributions to their TANF MOE. Additionally, a limited amount of State expenditures to meet separate CCDF MOE requirements may also count towards the State's TANF MOE requirements. Nevada should examine these requirements and possible opportunities to maximize resources for child care services.



#### Academic Research—Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education (2018)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Allen, LaRue, and Emily P. Backes, eds. Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education. Washington, D.C: The National Academies Press, 2018.

#### Document Objective or Overview:

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine appointed one of its committees to prepare a report outlining a funding strategy framework to provide reliable, accessible, high-quality early care and education for young children from birth to kindergarten entry. The committee's charge included funding for a highly qualified and adequately compensated workforce consistent with the vision outlined in the 2015 Institute of Medicine and National Research Council report "Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation."

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

The report suggests the following goals for an effective system of early care and education (ECE):

Financial support for early care and education will be based on covering the total cost of high-quality ECE (i.e., service delivery costs with a highly qualified and adequately compensated workforce and systemlevel supports, including mechanisms for accountability and improvement). It will hinge on consistent quality standards applied across a mixed delivery system.

All ECE providers meeting quality standards will have access to core institutional support based on the cost of recruiting, retaining, and professionally supporting a well-qualified workforce and meeting the developmental needs of all children.

Families from all socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds who choose ECE programs will pay either no fee or an amount they can afford, with a systemwide combination of assistance mechanisms that do not leave gaps for any income groups and that are easy to navigate.

Ongoing investments are made in an infrastructure for support and accountability in attaining quality goals, ensuring access, and spending funds effectively.

Public funding is substantially increased and is phased in over a transition period to enable the building of an adequate, equitable, and sustainable system.



### Academic Research—Measuring the Cost of Investing in Early Childhood Interventions and Applications of a Standardized Costing Tool (2018)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Yousafzai, Aisha K, Frances E Aboud, Milagros Nores, Pia R Britto, Emily Gustafsson-Wright, and Izzy Boggild-Jones. "Measuring the Cost of Investing in Early Childhood Interventions and Applications of a Standardized Costing Tool." Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 1419, no. 1 (2018): 74–89. https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.13679.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This paper analyzes the need for consistent and accurate cost data from early childhood development (ECD) interventions to increase and improve services. It establishes the key components necessary in a costing model and presents a new standardized tool for use across a broad range of stakeholders and contexts; it also shares experiences from piloting the tool. Providing a standardized methodology for costing ECD is a valuable contribution to the field and can potentially improve the volume and effectiveness of ECD financing.

#### Results, Findings, or Recommendations:

This research suggests a cost-based approach versus a market-based approach is preferable in funding, subsidizing, and reimbursing for early childhood services, particularly when supported by accurate cost data. Furthermore, there can be significant cost variability depending on the type, extent, quality, frequency, duration, and location of the services provided.



### Academic Research—Head Start Impact Study: Final Report, Executive Summary (2010)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (January 2010). Head Start Impact Study. Final Report. Washington, DC.

#### Document Objective or Overview:

A national legislative mandate requires that Head Start look at a specific series of questions about its programming:

- What difference does Head Start make to key outcomes of development and learning (particularly the multiple domains of school readiness) for low-income children?
- What difference does Head Start make to parental practices contributing to children's school readiness?
- Under what circumstances does Head Start achieve the greatest impact?
- What works for which children?
- What Head Start services are most related to impact?

This specific document aims to answer these questions and report on the effects of Head Start on children and families during the children's preschool, kindergarten, and 1st-grade years.



### Academic Research—Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise (2005)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Karoly, Kilburn, M. R., & Cannon, J. S. (2005). Early childhood interventions: proven results, future promise. Rand.

#### **Document Objective or Overview:**

This study examines the value of investing in early childhood interventions for children at risk of adverse developmental outcomes, particularly from birth to age 5. It explores the roles played by key factors in supporting or compromising healthy child development during these years.

- The period from birth to age 5 is crucial for healthy physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development. Factors like early relationships, cognitive stimulation, nutrition, healthcare, and a safe environment can support or compromise healthy child development.
- Many children face risks that can limit their development before school entry. Disadvantaged children
  often have lower school readiness and face persistent achievement gaps.
- Early childhood intervention programs aim to counteract stressors and promote healthy development, and rigorous evaluations of early childhood interventions show positive outcomes in various domains.
- Cost-benefit analysis can be used to compare the net effect of early childhood interventions, considering both monetary and non-monetary outcomes.



### Academic Research—Investing in Our Children: What We Know and Don't Know About the Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Interventions (1998)

#### **Document Link**

#### Citation:

Karoly. (1998). Investing in our children: what we know and don't know about the costs and benefits of early childhood interventions. Rand.

#### Document Objective or Overview:

This 1998 study examines targeted early intervention programs and their evaluations to determine whether they benefit participating children and their families. It acknowledges the debate surrounding the costs and benefits of such interventions and highlights the potential economic benefits, citing examples like childhood immunization and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programs.

It employs cost-benefit methodologies to evaluate government savings resulting from intervention programs. While the report focuses on specific programs funded by the government, it recognizes there are broader aspects to consider, such as program implementation and integration. The report presents an analysis of two programs, demonstrating that savings to the government can exceed program costs. However, the payoff may occur years after the intervention and depends on the intervention's targeting.

- The study suggests that carefully targeted early childhood interventions can have measurable benefits in the short term, and some benefits can persist long after the program ends. However, the findings are based on limited and mostly smaller-scale programs implemented decades earlier, raising concerns about their generalizability to larger programs.
- Summary figures (Tables 2.2 and 2.3) show most studies produced at least one significant benefit for children receiving services, with more favorable and statistically significant results than insignificant or mixed results.
- Many of the effects measured are significant. For example, some programs showed IQ differences exceeding 10 points.
- Early intervention programs have shown benefits beyond cognitive development, including educational outcomes such as academic achievement and school performance.
- While the cognitive effects of early intervention programs may fade over time, educational outcomes have longer-lasting benefits.



- There were still (as of 1998) many outcomes that had not been measured or observed due to limited follow-up periods, suggesting the potential benefits of early intervention programs may be understated.
- Early intervention programs have shown favorable results in reducing criminal activity and delinquency among youth, especially when combining high-quality daycare or preschool programs with family support services.
- Limited follow-up periods make it difficult to observe economic benefits, such as employment, income, and welfare participation. The Perry Preschool program stands out as promising in producing positive economic outcomes.
- Few programs have measured health benefits for children, and long-term follow-up is lacking to assess
  other health outcomes.
- Questions remain about the factors contributing to program success and failure, the timing and duration of interventions, the intensity and quality of services, and whether interventions should vary based on individual needs.

#### **Artificial Intelligence Reference**

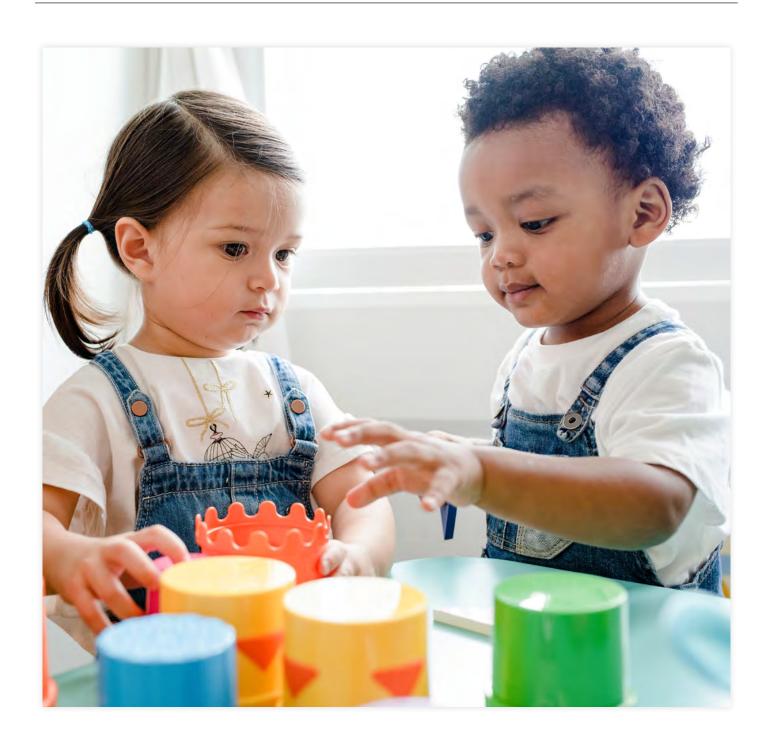
Beyond the sources cited in each entry, artificial intelligence software was used to summarize the content of some studies and reports, and those summaries were then edited for clarity and brevity.

OpenAI. (2023). GPT-3.5 "ChatGPT" [Computer software]. Retrieved from https://openai.com



### APPENDIX B.

### **OVERVIEW OF KEY ENTITIES**





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#### A note to the reader...

Each entry in this document contains the following information:

#### Name of Entity

Overview: This information was generally taken from materials produced by the agency or organization.

**Statutory Authority:** This shows if the entity is created, empowered, or funded by federal or state statute. This information can be helpful in determining if statutes may offer an opportunity for, or a barrier to, future change. There are links to many sources throughout the document.

**Funding:** There is a brief note about funding sources and links to the Nevada Executive Budget where relevant.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: This helps to understand who might exercise authority or influence over the entity, or vice versa. These relationships may be levers for future change or improvement.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** It can be helpful to know if an entity is compelled to work with other people or organizations. Sometimes this coordination does not happen, it needs to be improved, or additional entities need to be added to the interaction.

**Reporting:** This item notes reports that may be required or regularly issued. These can be a source of insight about a program or can be used by advocates to assist in accountability efforts.

Authority to Issue Regulations: If an entity is empowered or required in statute to adopt regulations, this may be a vehicle for creating needed "laws" in the early childhood arena. Statutes can be challenging to pass through the legislature, but regulations have the same effect and can be adopted with a relatively straightforward administrative process if the regulating agency agrees with the need.

**Website:** Each entry includes a website link. In many cases, those websites contain helpful links to additional resources.

ADDITIONAL NOTE: After completing this document, the Guinn Center reviewed legislation related to early childhood enacted during the 2023 Nevada Legislature. Information from two bills materially affecting the information herein is on the appropriate pages.

Additional bills related to this document include:

<u>Assembly Bill 116</u> allows the State Board of Health to adopt regulations related to providing information to families about Down syndrome.

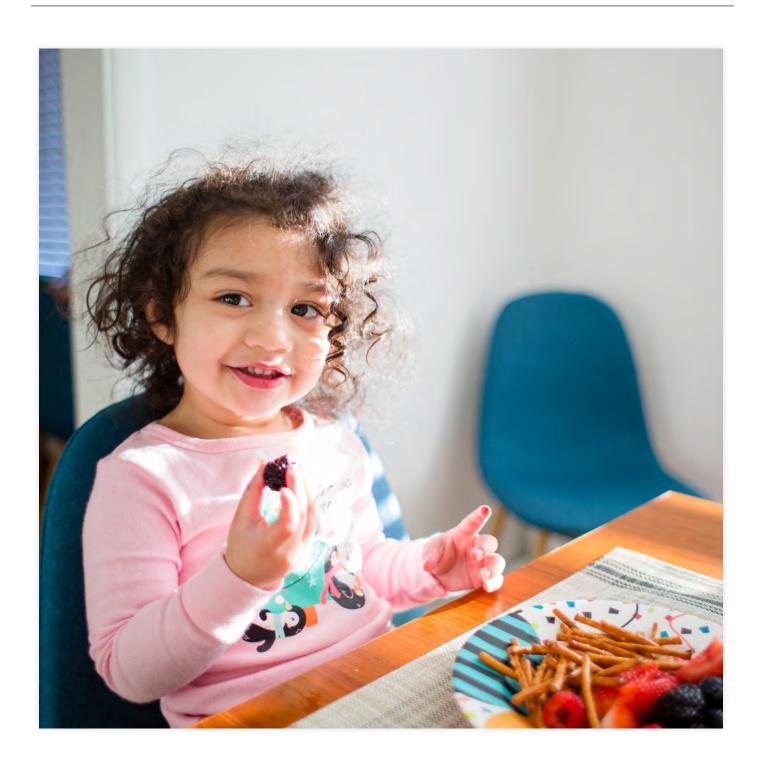
<u>Assembly Bill 136</u> adds licensure and regulatory requirements for qualified residential treatment programs serving children.

Assembly Bill 400 creates the Early Childhood Literacy and Readiness Account.



# OVERVIEW OF NEVADA'S KEY ECS ENTITIES

Part I - Entities Focused On Early Childhood Services





#### Office of Early Learning and Development – Nevada Department of Education

Overview: The goal of the Office of Early Learning and Development is to coordinate birth through 3rd-grade programs at the state level to improve the access and quality of early childhood education programs across various settings. The focus is building strong connections between learning experiences during these critical years and necessitates well-aligned educational standards, curricula, assessment, instruction, and professional development across programs. The office oversees and coordinates quality improvement funds received through the federal Child Care Development Fund grant. Agencies and programs funded through the office include: The Children's Cabinet, Child Care Resource and Referral; Division of Child and Family Services, Early Childhood Mental Health Services; Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Nevada Early Intervention Services and Child Care Licensing; NevAEYC, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Nevada; University of Nevada, Family Care Contract Network; and Washoe County School District, Nevada Registry and Early Learning Guidelines. Also located within the office is the Head Start Collaboration Office.

**Statutory Authority:** <u>42 USC Ch. 105-I §9801</u> and <u>42 USC Ch. 105-IIB §§9858, et seq; NRS 387.652 - 387.658; Nevada Executive Order #2013-16.</u>

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 2709, K-12 Education.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Per Executive Order #2013-16, the office receives oversight from the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education. The Superintendent receives advisory support from the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The office's central objective is coordinating state-level early childhood programs.

**Reporting:** See the reporting requirements below for the Nevada Ready! State Pre-K program.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** See the corresponding section below for the Nevada Ready! State Pre-K program.

Website: <a href="https://doe.nv.gov/Early\_Learning\_Development/">https://doe.nv.gov/Early\_Learning\_Development/</a>; <a href="https://doe.nv.gov/Early\_Learning\_Development/">https://doe.nv.gov



#### **Nevada Head Start Association**

Overview: Head Start and Early Head Start programs support families facing difficult circumstances and seek to mitigate obstacles to early learning. Programs are based in centers, schools, or family child care homes. They take a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of young children through four major components: Education—a variety of learning experiences are offered to help children grow intellectually, socially and emotionally; Health—early health problems are identified and immunizations, dental, medical, mental health and nutritional services are provided; Family involvement—parents are involved in the planning and implementation of activities while serving on policy councils and committees that make administrative decisions. They also participate in classes and workshops on child development and volunteer in the program; and social services—family needs are identified and connections made to needed services.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 105-II §§9831, et seq.

**Funding:** The federal Office of Head Start (OHS) provides grants to operate both Head Start and Early Head Start programs directly to public and private agencies in Nevada.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Head Start programs receive oversight from the federal OHS. They receive advisory support from local committees made up of parents and stakeholders.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Under federal law, program grantees must coordinate with parents and other early childhood system stakeholders.

**Reporting:** Grantees must submit various periodic reports to the OHS.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="https://nvhsa.org/">https://nvhsa.org/</a>



#### Nevada Ready! State Pre-K - Department of Education

Overview: The 2001 Nevada Legislature established a comprehensive early childhood education program across Nevada by authorizing the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) to offer competitive grants to school districts and community-based organizations to initiate or expand pre-Kindergarten education programs. In 2015, Nevada received a federal Preschool Development Grant to improve and expand the state pre-K program, including providing full-day services. This improved program became known as Nevada Ready! State Pre-K.

Statutory Authority: NRS 387.652-658.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>2709</u>, K-12 Education.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program provides oversight to agencies and organizations to which it provides grant funding. It receives oversight from the Office of Early Learning and Development, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the State Board of Education. It receives advisory support from the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Program grant recipients must coordinate with parents and other early childhood system stakeholders.

**Reporting:** Per NRS 387.658, by November 1 of each odd-numbered year, NDE must submit to the governor and the director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, for transmittal to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education, a report concerning the effectiveness of pre-kindergarten programs supported by grants awarded under NRS 387.652 during the immediately preceding biennium.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** The State Board of Education is required to adopt regulations under NRS 387.656. As of June 2023, none appear to have been adopted in NAC 387 specifically for the Pre-K program. However, the NRS (linked above) and the program website (linked below) include program quidelines.

Website: https://doe.nv.gov/Early\_Learning\_Development/Nevada\_Ready\_State\_Pre-K/



## **Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program**

Overview: Nevada law calls for the creation of three regional professional development programs (RPDPs) for teachers and administrators. Within those programs, the Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP) trains teachers in grades K through 3 on methods for teaching fundamental reading skills.

Statutory Authority: NRS 391A.100 et seq.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 2618, K-12 Education.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Under NRS 391A.150, each regional training program must have a governing body with members representing school districts and teachers in their region, higher education and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). Additionally, per NRS 391A.135, a Statewide Council for the Coordination of the Regional Training Programs serves in an advisory and oversight role to the three regional programs.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** State law requires coordination with school districts, teachers, higher education, NDE, the Teachers and Leaders Council, and the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement.

**Reporting:** NRS 391A.190 requires the regional program governing bodies to evaluate and report on the outcomes of the program and the NELIP.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://www.rpdp.net/; https://www.nnrpdp.com/; https://www.nwrpdp.com/



## **Early Childhood Advisory Council – Department of Education**

Overview: The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council is the state advisory council on early childhood education and care as required under federal law. Under state law, the council is tasked with strengthening state-level coordination and collaboration among the various sectors of early childhood education programs, including: conducting periodic statewide assessments; identifying opportunities for and barriers to coordination among early childhood education programs; and developing a wide variety of recommendations related to the early childhood system in Nevada.

The governor must appoint council members, including representatives of state agencies and private-sector early childhood stakeholders.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 105-IIB §9837b(b)(1)(A)(i); NRS 432A.076 (plus AB114, 2023); Nevada Executive Order #2013-16

**Funding:** There is no dedicated funding for the council. It has received some funding from the Child Care Development Fund through the Office of Early Learning and Development (OELD) to support strategic planning and a subscription to OnStrategy for reporting. The OELD also has two full-time positions to support the council through its Preschool Development B-5 Grant.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Although the council primarily works with the OLED, Executive Order #2013-16 requires the council to provide advisory support to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and work in coordination with the State Board of Education.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: Federal law requires the council to identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among federally-funded and state-funded child development, child care and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among state agencies responsible for administering such programs. State law requires the council to strengthen state-level coordination and cooperation between the various sectors and settings of early childhood education programs funded by federal, state, or local government.

**Reporting:** Under federal law, the council must submit a statewide strategic report addressing certain activities to the state director of Head Start Collaboration and the governor. Per NRS 432A.076, on or before December 1 of each year, the council must submit a report to the governor and the director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Health and Human Services and the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education. The report must include a summary of council activities and recommendations for improvements to the early childhood system.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="http://nvecac.com/">http://nvecac.com/</a>



# Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: The Nevada Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program, within the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH), ensures all children receive screenings for hearing loss at birth by hospitals or obstetric birthing centers. It also ensures timely and appropriate audiological, educational, and medical interventions when needed. It promotes national EHDI goals and timelines developed by the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, which are: before one month of age, every child receives a hearing screening; before three months, an audiologist conducts a hearing evaluation if the child did not pass the hearing screening; and before six months, early intervention services begin if the child is diagnosed with hearing loss. In addition to ensuring screening and intervention for children with hearing loss, the EHDI program advocates for children and families through partnerships with community programs that create awareness, ensure access to services and support families.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 6A-2P §§280g et seg; NRS 442.500 to 590.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3222, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight and advisory support from DPBH leadership, the State Board of Health and the federal Health Resources and Services Administration. The program gives nominal oversight to licensed hospitals and obstetric centers through an annual written report required by DPBH.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Federal law requires three different federal agencies to coordinate with state and local agencies, families, and other stakeholders in service delivery and public policy related to hearing screenings.

**Reporting:** NRS 442.550 requires DPBH to annually submit a report to the governor on hearing tests for newborn children. The report must include: a summary of the results of screenings administered; an analysis of the effectiveness of NRS 442.500 to 442.590 in identifying hearing loss in newborn children; and any related recommendations for legislation.

Within state regulations, <u>NAC 442.850</u> requires an annual written report to DPBH by licensed hospitals and obstetric centers concerning the hearing screenings of newborn children they conduct.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 442 requires the State Board of Health to adopt regulations related to the EHDI program.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/EHDI/EHDI-Home/



# Advisory Committee on Language Development for Children Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind or Visually Impaired

Overview: The committee was established by state law in 2019 to recommend to the State Board of Education criteria for use by parents or guardians to evaluate the development of language and literacy skills by children under six years of age who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or both deaf and blind. The criteria must be appropriate for use to evaluate the development of language and literacy skills by children who communicate using primarily spoken or written English, with or without visual supplements, or American Sign Language, or who read using braille. The committee issued a report in December 2020 and has not continued to meet.

Statutory Authority: NRS 388.518 et seq.

NOTE: NRS 427A.601 to 610 includes additional provisions related to children who are Deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired; these include: criteria for developing an individualized family service plan; a program to negotiate discounts and rebates for certain costs; and a program to obtain hearing aids at no charge.

Funding: The Department of Education (NDE) provided funding for the committee's functions.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Under state law, the committee must make recommendations to the State Board and, where appropriate, the Aging and Disability Services Division.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: The statute requires no specific coordination.

**Reporting:** Per NRS 388.5195, on or before July 31 of each year, in collaboration with the Aging and Disabilities Services Division, NDE must compile and post on the Internet (see link below) a report of aggregated data comparing the development of language and literacy skills by children covered by the statute with the development of children who do not have a disability.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** The committee has no authority to issue regulations, though the statute requires the State Board of Education to adopt regulations related to the committee's work. The State Board of Education adopted the committee's proposed criteria in January 2021.

Website: https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive\_Education/Early\_Childhood/Language\_and\_Literacy\_Skills/



## IDEA Part C Office – Department of Health and Human Services

**Overview:** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C office oversees the development and implementation of a statewide, family-centered, community-based, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency service delivery system for infants and toddlers (birth through age two) who have disabilities and their families.

Statutory Authority: 20 USC Ch. 33 §§1400 et seq.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3276, DHHS – Director's Office.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Under federal law, the office receives advisory support and assistance from the Interagency Coordinating Council. The office oversees the state's Early Intervention Services under IDEA.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: The office's central function is coordinating and overseeing Early Intervention Services. Its federal grant requires the office to promote collaboration of Part C services with: personnel, providers, instructors, families, and public stakeholders in attracting and retaining qualified personnel; Head Start and Early Head Start programs; and state and federal programs providing services for young children related to public awareness, service delivery, and identifying children needing assistance. The grant also requires the office to coordinate all available resources for early intervention services within Nevada, including those from federal, state, local, and private sources.

**Reporting:** Under federal law, the office must submit annually to the Office of Special Education Programs: a grant application, a report, and an update to its State Systems Improvement Plan.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/PartC/



## Early Intervention Services - Department of Health and Human Services

Overview: Early Intervention Services (EIS) are provided to children from birth to three years of age who have known or suspected developmental delays in cognition, communication, physical development (including vision and hearing), social and emotional development or adaptive skills. These services are required under federal law by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and may include: service coordination; occupational, physical and speech therapy; vision and hearing services; specialized instruction; parent support; assistive technology; pediatric diagnostic evaluations; nutritional services; and family training and counseling. Services are primarily provided in the home, child care and preschool settings, and Early Head Start programs. In collaboration with local hospitals, early intervention state programs provide follow-up developmental and pediatric services for hospital neonatal intensive care nurseries and follow-up hearing evaluations for the newborn hearing screening program. When feasible, the agency supports specialty clinics for children related to genetic and metabolic disorders and craniofacial anomalies. Services are provided throughout Nevada; regional offices are in Reno, Carson City, Winnemucca, Elko, Ely, and Las Vegas.

Statutory Authority: 20 USC Ch. 33 §§1400 et seq; NRS 427A.878; NAC 427A.555.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3208, DHHS-ADSD.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The agency and its programs must generally comply with the State Board of Health regulations for service delivery. It also receives oversight from the IDEA Part C Office and the Interagency Coordinating Council.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Federal law requires EIS to coordinate with other agencies and providers serving their target population. They must also work with the pre-K through 12 education system to transition children from EIS to successfully begin their education.

**Reporting:** Under NAC 427A.557, on or before August 31 of each year, the Division of Public and Behavioral Health must report to the Aging and Disability Services Division data concerning each person with autism spectrum disorder receiving services from the divisions or one of their contractors or grantees. Other reporting for EIS is generally handled by the IDEA Part C Office, including a performance report card for each EIS provider.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/Early Intervention Programs/



## Interagency Coordinating Council - Department of Health and Human Services

Overview: Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires each state to have an Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The Nevada ICC was established by executive order in 1987. The council's primary mission is to advise and assist the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in developing and implementing a statewide system of early intervention services for children under age 3 with developmental delays or disabilities. Members represent providers and state agencies involved in early intervention services, the state Department of Education, Head Start, state legislators, higher education, child care services, parents of children with special needs and other members selected by the governor.

Statutory Authority: 20 USC Ch. 33 §§1400 et seq; Nevada Executive Order (1987)

Funding: Funding and fiscal support is provided to the council by the IDEA Part C Office from federal funds. [NOTE: Under federal law, subject to the approval of the governor, the council may prepare and approve a budget using federal funds to conduct hearings and forums, reimburse members for reasonable expenses for attending ICC meetings and performing council duties (including child care for parent representatives), compensate members if not employed or forfeiting wages when conducting official council business, hire staff, and obtain the services of professional, technical, and clerical personnel as may be necessary.]

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The ICC's primary mission is to advise and assist DHHS in developing and implementing a statewide system of early intervention services. It receives advisory support from its Family Support Resource Subcommittee, comprised of parents of young children with special needs and other interested parties.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The diverse membership of the ICC enables coordination between families, providers, and policymakers.

**Reporting:** The ICC does not have statutory responsibility for any reports but provides input on early intervention reports submitted by others.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ICC/Home/">https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ICC/Home/</a>



#### **Project ASSIST – Department of Health and Human Services**

Overview: As federal law requires, Project ASSIST is Nevada's early intervention central information and referral resource directory for anyone seeking information about organizations, programs or agencies that provide services and supports for children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. It is operated by the IDEA Part C Office and can be contacted by phone (1-800-522-0066) or email (<a href="mailto:ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov">ProjectAssist@dhhs.nv.gov</a>).

Statutory Authority: CFR §303.301.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3276</u>, DHHS – Director's Office.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Oversight is provided to Project ASSIST by the IDEA Part C Office. It does not provide oversight or advisory support to other entities.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: None.

**Reporting:** The IDEA Part C Office includes the activities of Project ASSIST in its annual report to the federal government.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ProjectASSIST/



## The Nevada Registry

Overview: The Nevada Registry is a workforce data system that captures essential information about Nevada's Early Care and Education (ECE) workforce through career ladder placement, workforce support, training approval and data collection. It is a statewide effort geared toward reducing staff turnover, increasing wages, heightening professionalism, and increasing advancement opportunities. It is also a recognition and professional development system to support the careers of ECE educators. Participation in the registry by ECE professionals is mandatory.

Statutory Authority: NAC 432A.

**Funding:** The registry is funded through the federal Child Care and Development Fund's Quality Improvement dollars and administered by the Washoe County School District through a contract with the Nevada Department of Education.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The Nevada Registry Advisory Committee serves as a body to guide, advise and make recommendations to registry personnel related to Nevada's professional development and training approval systems. Committee members include representatives of public and private early childhood programs.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Under state regulation, the registry is required to coordinate a comprehensive professional development system, including approving and tracking all informal training offered and providing a statewide clearinghouse of information for the field of early childhood care and education.

**Reporting:** The registry publishes a biennial membership and training approval system report as a snapshot of registry members and approved trainers. It has historically issued quarterly reports with frequently-requested program statistics; quarterly reports have been discontinued and are being replaced with a website tool to generate real-time reports on pre-determined data points.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://www.nevadaregistry.org/



#### **Quality Rating and Improvement System**

Overview: The Silver State Stars Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the quality of early and school-age care and education programs. It works to equitably improve and sustain the early childhood system through quality coaching (provided by The Children's Cabinet), accurate assessment, financial support, community engagement and advocacy for the early childhood community. The QRIS quality indicators include policies, procedures, and administrative practices optimal for the workforce, families, and children. This includes ageappropriate materials, suitable professional-to-child ratios, proper developmental assessments, individualized teaching, and family engagement.

Statutory Authority: None. However, NRS 422A.630 requires the state plan for Child Care and Development, pursuant to 42 USC Ch. 105, II-B §9858c, to include "measures to increase the availability of child care for children with a disability." This may include an enhanced rate of reimbursement by a provider that receives specific training or technical assistance, other economic incentives, or the provision of supplemental services, which provide a basis for support for QRIS.

**Funding:** QRIS is funded through the federal Child Care and Development Fund's Quality Improvement dollars and administered by the Nevada Department of Education.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The QRIS Advisory Committee serves as a body to guide, advise and make recommendations to QRIS personnel. Committee members include representatives of public and private agencies and programs in the early childhood space.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Participation in the program by child care providers is voluntary, though financial incentives are offered.

**Reporting:** QRIS voluntarily reports program information and data to Child Trends and its Quality Compendium website (see below).

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://doe.nv.gov/QRIS/Quality\_Rating\_and\_Improvement\_System/(Additional program data at: https://qualitycompendium.org/profile-report)



## T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood Nevada

Overview: The national Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program was created in 1990 to address the issues of under-education, poor compensation, and high turnover within the early childhood workforce. In Nevada, it is operated by the Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC). The program collaborates with child care programs to offer scholarships to the early childhood professionals they employ. This partnership with child care programs and scholarship recipients advances the education and skills of Nevada's early childhood workforce.

Statutory Authority: None.

**Funding:** Originally created under federal Race to the Top grants, the program is funded by the Office of Early Learning and Development's Child Care Development Fund.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight from NevAEYC and the Office of Early Learning and Development. It does not have formal oversight roles with other entities but exercises advisory influence in its work with child care providers and professionals.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** None are provided for in statute or regulation.

Reporting: As required by its funding agreement.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="https://nvteach.org/">https://nvteach.org/</a>



## **Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children**

Overview: The Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC) is the state affiliate organization of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Founded in 1926, NAEYC has nearly 100,000 members and a national network of over 300 local, state, and regional affiliates. NevAEYC promotes high-quality early learning for all children, from birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. It advances a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and supports all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. It has over 600 individual members with chapters in the Reno and Las Vegas areas.

Statutory Authority: None.

Funding: The organization is supported through membership dues and grants or contracts.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The organization receives oversight from its board of directors and may have accountability relationships with funding sources.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: No coordination is required in statute or regulation.

Reporting: Reports may be made as required by the national organization or by a grant or contract.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="https://nevaeyc.org/">https://nevaeyc.org/</a>



## Home Visiting Program – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: The Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program is federally funded through Nevada's Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, which provides resources and support to community agencies serving women of childbearing age and infants. The program is housed within the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH). MIECHV is a voluntary, home-based program supporting pregnant mothers and parents of children from birth until kindergarten entry by promoting infant and child health, fostering healthy child development, preventing child abuse and neglect, and improving school readiness and family self-sufficiency. Services are most often delivered by trained nurses, social workers, or child development specialists.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 7-V §§701 et seq.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3222</u>, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight and advisory support from DPBH leadership, the State Board of Health and the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: Federal law requires the state to generally coordinate maternal and child health services in response to an annual needs assessment and state plan. Morespecifically, the state must coordinate activities with related federal grant programs such as supplemental food programs for mothers, infants, and children, related education programs, and otherhealth, developmental disability, and family planning programs.

**Reporting:** Section 706 of the federal law requires an annual report from DPBH to the secretary of Health and Human Services. Additionally, <u>NRS 439.180</u> requires a biennial report from DPBH to the state Department of Health and Human Services director detailing the general state of public health in Nevada and making recommendations for legislation, appropriations and other matters deemed necessary or desirable.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** Though not specifically related to home visiting, NRS 442 empowers or requires the State Board of Health to adopt regulations concerning various public health matters related to maternal and child health.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/MIECHV/Nevada Home Visiting (MIECHV) - Home/



## Maternal and Infant Health Program – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: The Maternal and Infant Health Program is federally funded through Nevada's Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, which provides resources and support to community agencies serving women of childbearing age and infants. The program is housed within the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH), and its mission is to improve the health and well-being of pregnant women and infants and decrease infant and maternal morbidity and mortality. The program promotes healthy pregnancies, positive birth outcomes and healthy infant growth and development.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 7-V §§701 et seq; NRS 442.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3222</u>, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight and advisory support from DPBH leadership, the State Board of Health and the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: Federal law requires the state to generally coordinate maternal and child health services in response to an annual needs assessment and state plan. More specifically, the state must also deliver "care coordination services" for children with special health care needs and coordinate activities with related federal grant programs such as supplemental food programs for mothers, infants, and children, related education programs, and other health, developmental disability, and family planning programs.

**Reporting:** Section 706 of the federal law requires an annual report from DPBH to the secretary of Health and Human Services. Additionally, NRS 439.180 requires a biennial report from DPBH to the state Department of Health and Human Services director detailing the general state of public health in Nevada and making recommendations for legislation, appropriations and other matters deemed necessary or desirable. NRS 442 also requires DPBH to collect a variety of public health data reported by health providers in the state and to submit various reports to state policymakers.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 442 empowers or requires the State Board of Health to adopt regulations concerning various public health matters related to maternal and child health.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/MIP/MIP-Home



## Women, Infants and Children Program – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

**Overview:** The Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) is a special supplemental nutrition program that serves income-eligible pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to their fifth birthday who are at nutrition risk. Services include food, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, health screening and community referrals.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 13-A §§1786 et seq.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3214</u>, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight and advisory support from DPBH leadership, the State Board of Health, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Federal law requires the DPBH to submit an annual state plan that must include plans to coordinate program operations with other services or programs that may benefit applicants and participants.

**Reporting:** Federal law requires submitting monthly financial reports and participation data. Nevada also posts monthly data through an <u>online dashboard</u>. Not specifically related to WIC, <u>NRS 439.180</u> requires a biennial report from DPBH to the Department of Health and Human Services director detailing the general state of public health in Nevada and making recommendations for legislation, appropriations and other matters deemed necessary or desirable.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** There is no regulatory authority specific to WIC, but NRS 442 empowers or requires the State Board of Health to adopt regulations concerning various public health matters related to maternal and child health.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/WIC/Women, Infants Children (WIC) - Home/; https://nevadawic.org/



# Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program – Nevada System of Higher Education

Overview: The Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS) is a federally-funded program that provides child care on university and college campuses with the purpose of supporting the participation of low-income student parents in postsecondary education. Funds must be used to support or establish campus-based child care programs primarily serving the needs of low-income students enrolled in an institution. CCAMPIS Program funds may be used to provide child care directly or by contract. Grants may also be used for before- or after-school services. Grant competitions occur annually and awards last for four years. In Nevada, CCAMPIS programs are available at the universities in Las Vegas, Henderson, and Reno, as well as the College of Southern Nevada. Nevada's current funding awards range from approximately \$97,000 to \$598,000.

Statutory Authority: 20 USC Ch. 28-IVa §§ 1070e et seq.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 2980, 2987, 3005, 3011, NSHE.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight from university and college leadership and the federal Office of Postsecondary Education.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: None.

**Reporting:** Federal law requires all CCAMPIS grantees to submit an annual performance report documenting the persistence and degree attainment of their participants. Because students may take different lengths of time to complete their degrees, multiple years of performance report data are needed to determine the degree completion rates of CCAMPIS Program participants.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="https://www.unr.edu/first-generation-student-center/child-care-access">https://www.unlv.edu/studentaffairs/ccampis; https://www.csn.edu/childcare</a>



# OVERVIEW OF NEVADA'S KEY ECS ENTITIES

PART II -Entities intersecting with early childhood services but also serving other populations





#### The Children's Cabinet

Overview: Established in December 1985 as a private nonprofit, the mission of The Children's Cabinet is to keep children safe and families together. They provide programs and services at no charge to children, youth, and their families from six locations in Reno, Carson City, Las Vegas, and Elko. Their programs include parenting classes, child care subsidy assistance, child care resource and referral, an onsite food pantry, an onsite high school, family counseling, wraparound case management, workforce development and crisis intervention.

#### Statutory Authority: None

**Funding:** Funding is received through private-sector and governmental grants, contracts, and contributions.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The organization receives oversight from its board of trustees. Other advisory and oversight relationships are primarily linked to funding received and given by the organization.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Grants or contracts may require specific coordination or collaboration, but a core focus of the organization is coordinating child, youth and family services across all stakeholders and providers in Nevada.

**Reporting:** The organization issues an annual report, publishes audited financial statements, and offers a variety of topical publications.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None, though the organization develops policies for its services.

Website: <a href="https://www.nevadachildcare.org/">https://www.nevadachildcare.org/</a> (also see: <a href="https://www.nevadachildcare.org/">https://www.nevadachildcare.org/</a> and <a href="https://www.nevadachildcarefund.org/">https://www.nevadachildcarefund.org/</a>)



#### Las Vegas Urban League

Overview: The Las Vegas Urban League (LVUL) was established in 2003 by local philanthropist Jacqulyn Shropshire as a community action agency to empower communities and ensure equal opportunity for low-income people throughout Clark County. It is an affiliate of the National Urban League, founded in 1910. In the early childhood space, LVUL is a nutrition education provider under the Women Infants and Children program. It also provides breastfeeding education. For families needing childcare assistance, LVUL offers partial monetary assistance to families who otherwise cannot afford to pay for care. The program also offers the Family, Friend and Neighbor Registration Program, for parents who qualify based on income. It allows a family to register a family member, friend or neighbor to supervise their child or children.

Statutory Authority: None.

**Funding:** Funding is received through private-sector and governmental grants, contracts, and contributions.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The organization receives oversight from its board of directors. Other advisory and oversight relationships are primarily linked to funding received and given by the organization.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Grants or contracts may require specific coordination or collaboration, but the organization generally collaborates with other organizations to connect client families with a variety of support services.

Reporting: The organization files an annual IRS 990 report, available online.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None, though the organization develops policies for its services.

Website: <a href="https://lvccul.org/">https://lvccul.org/</a> (also see: <a href="https://childcarelv.org/">https://childcarelv.org/</a>)



## Children's Advocacy Alliance of Nevada

Overview: The Children's Advocacy Alliance is a community-based nonprofit organization that mobilizes people, resources, and reason to ensure every child has a chance to thrive. The organization advocates for the well-being of Nevada's children by bringing people together to build consensus around priorities and to leverage collective strength toward fundamental changes in policy and practice. The alliance collects, analyzes, and shares research and information with people who make decisions affecting Nevada's children and families. They believe in building public will through education, outreach, and advocacy to solve expansive and chronic problems facing children and families.

Statutory Authority: None.

Funding: Funding is received through grants, contracts, and contributions.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The organization receives oversight from its board of directors. Other advisory and oversight relationships may be linked to funding received by the organization.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Grants or contracts may require specific coordination or collaboration, but a core focus of the organization is a coordinated advocacy effort to improve child, youth, and family services throughout Nevada.

**Reporting:** In addition to legally required reports for nonprofits, during Nevada's legislative sessions, the organization provides detailed bill-tracking information on legislation affecting children, youth, and families.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="https://www.caanv.org/">https://www.caanv.org/</a>



## **Children's Advocacy Centers of Nevada**

Overview: Children's Advocacy Centers of Nevada are government- or community-based organizations that help heal children who have been victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. Its strategies include community advocacy and supporting the work of agencies addressing these issues in Nevada. Services include counseling, family advocacy, forensic interviewing, and medical examinations. The state organization is a chapter of the National Children's Alliance; it supports emerging and existing Children's Advocacy Centers and multidisciplinary teams throughout the state. Congress has identified Children's Advocacy Centers as the preferred model for pursuing justice and healing for child victims of human trafficking.

Statutory Authority: NRS 432B.401 et seq.

**Funding:** Centers may receive funding through grants, contracts, and contributions. NRS 432B.4019 also provides for an account in the State General Fund to support the centers, but the Executive Budget contains no specific earmarked funding.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: State law requires each center to convene a multidisciplinary team to develop standards for accepting cases. Other advisory and oversight relationships may be linked to funding received by the centers.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Multidisciplinary teams are a key component of advocacy centers and inherently involve the collaboration of personnel from various entities serving children.

Reporting: No specific general reporting is required.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://childrensadvocacycentersnv.org



## **Family Resource Centers**

Overview: Nevada's Family Resource Centers were established in state law in 1995 and operate as independent local entities with oversight and support provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The state has 18 service areas designated by zip code; the center in each area provides information, referral, and case management services to local residents. The centers collaborate with local and state agencies and organizations to help individuals and families access needed services and support.

Statutory Authority: NRS 430A.

**Funding:** Centers receive basic support from the DHHS Grants Management Unit through Nevada Executive Budget account number 3195, DHHS. Additionally, centers may receive funding through gifts, grants, contracts, and donations. NRS 430A.100 also provides for an account in the State General Fund to support the centers with funds raised by the DHHS director.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: State law provides for certain elements of oversight of the centers by the DHHS director and the department's Grants Management Advisory Committee; this includes the submission of an action plan for each center, as required by regulation under NAC 430A.100. State law also requires each center to form a Family Resource Center council comprised of local community members. The councils must meet at least twice yearly and are subject to open meeting law.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** NRS 430A.210 explicitly requires social service agencies in Nevada to cooperate with the centers.

Reporting: NRS 430A.200 requires two reports. By August 1 of each year, each center must submit a report to the DHHS director summarizing its achievements and accounting for the expenditure of any money received from DHHS during the previous fiscal year. By September 30 of each year, the director must provide a written report to the legislature's Interim Finance Committee concerning the expenditure during the preceding fiscal year of all money received by the director for the centers.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 430A.120 requires the DHHS director to adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of NRS 430A.

Website: https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/Grants/Programs/FRC/Family Resource Center/



## **Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy**

Overview: The Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP), located within the School of Public Health at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization dedicated to improving the lives of children through research, advocacy, and other specialized services. It is also Nevada's lead agency for Prevent Child Abuse America, the Nevada Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and the Nevada After School Network.

Statutory Authority: None.

**Funding:** Funding is provided through the UNLY School of Public Health.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: No such relationships are required by law, but many exist in the course of the institute's work.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** In addition to having an interdisciplinary research staff, NICRP also collaborates with university faculty from a variety of disciplines as well as community partners to ensure its research reflects the most current methods and has beneficial use.

Reporting: NICRP creates a variety of <u>reports and publications</u> related to children's issues.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://nic.unlv.edu/



#### Nevada PEP

Overview: Nevada PEP is a statewide organization serving families of children and youth with disabilities and behavioral health needs, from birth to age 26, and their service providers. Their services focus on empowering families to be life-long advocates for their children through education and skill building. Nevada PEP recognizes that parents are experts on their children but must learn about disabilities, intervention needs and how to develop a support system. It offers a variety of training workshops on special education, mental health care and disability-related topics. The organization's staff has personal experience with disabilities and pursues opportunities for community collaboration and policy advocacy.

Statutory Authority: 42 U.S.C. Ch. 6A-IIIA §290bb-32 (Statewide Family Network grant); 20 U.S.C. Ch. 33-IVC §1471 (Parent Training and Information Center grant).

Funding: The organization receives funding from a variety of government, foundation, and private sources.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The organization receives oversight from its board of directors and funding sources.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Under the National Center for Mental Health Services Nevada PEP operates as a Statewide Family Network, which are family-driven nonprofits in each state required to assist families in accessing appropriate care for their children. They also mentor families in coordinating the improvement of community services and reform of the state's system of care.

Parent Training and Information (PTI) Centers are non-profit organizations funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As a PTI Center, Nevada PEP coordinates its work with a national network of over 100 Parent Centers throughout the United States.

**Reporting:** In addition to publishing an <u>annual report</u> of organizational outcomes, Nevada PEP complies with any reporting requirements of its funders.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://nvpep.org



## **Family to Family Connection**

Overview: Founded in 1998, the Family to Family Connection program provides services focusing on strengthening attachment, maximizing brain development, and promoting breastfeeding. This statewide effort created a comprehensive network that encourages optimal child growth and development through community-based public and private partnerships. It serves families with children from birth to age five and empowers parents and caretakers with tools to provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children through parent education and community networking. Parent engagement classes help build strong bonds with infants and toddlers and provide training in key areas including early physical, social, and emotional development.

Statutory Authority: None.

Funding: The organization receives funding from a variety of government, foundation, and private sources.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The organization receives oversight from its board of directors and funding sources.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: No collaboration is required by law.

Reporting: No reporting is required by law.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="https://family2familylv.org/">https://family2familylv.org/</a>



#### Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada

Overview: The Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN) was founded by John Dressler of the Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada in 1963 and gained non-profit status in 1966. The ITCN is a consortium and serves as the governing body of the 28 Nevada member tribes. The ITCN Executive Board includes the chairperson of each member tribe. The ITCN is a recipient of many federal and state grants that provide social service programs, resources, and support to tribal communities throughout the state. In the early childhood space, it serves as the tribal gateway to:

- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which provides supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for qualified pregnant, breastfeeding/non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age 5.
- Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), which provides child care payment assistance and promotes safe, healthy, nurturing, and high-quality early learning environments for children. ITCN CCDF currently provides support, resources, and assistance to 14 of Nevada's tribes and urban areas, including Reno, Sparks, Carson City, and Las Vegas.
- Head Start, which provides free nutritious meals; vision, hearing, physical, dental, and nutritional
  assessments; mental health and other services for children and families with disabilities; and
  kindergarten readiness skills.

Statutory Authority: None.

Funding: The organization receives funding from a variety of government, foundation, and private sources.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The organization receives oversight from its executive board and funding sources.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: No collaboration is required by law.

Reporting: No reporting is required by law.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://itcn.org/



## Child Care and Development Program – Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

Overview: The Child Care and Development Program (CCDP), within the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS), administers the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The funding assists families who are income-eligible, receiving temporary public assistance, fostering children, or dealing with homelessness, as well as children involved with Child Protective Services or transitioning from public assistance. The program helps families find and pay for child care and funds activities to improve the quality of and access to child care. CCDP partners with the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, the Nevada Department of Education's Office of Early Learning and Development, The Children's Cabinet, the Las Vegas Urban League, and other community partners statewide to determine eligibility for child care subsidy assistance and to provide child care resources and referrals. General Fund appropriations pay for the state maintenance of effort required to receive federal funding. The CCDF was initially authorized under the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant Act enacted under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 105-IIB §9858; NRS 422A.055 and 422A.630.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3267, DHHS - DWSS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Apart from the federal and state agencies overseeing the program, no special oversight or advisory roles are prescribed by law.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: None is required by law.

Reporting: Federal law requires creating a state plan for the CCDP. Per NRS 422A.630, the state plan must also include measures to increase the availability of child care for children with a disability and, when funding is available, some child care reimbursement to parents enrolled in a postsecondary educational or vocational program. Under these requirements, by April of each even-numbered year, the program must submit a report to the director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Health and Human Services and the Joint Interim Standing Committee on the Judiciary.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://dwss.nv.gov/Care/Childcare/



## Children's Trust Account - Division of Child and Family Services

Overview: The Children's Trust Account is authorized pursuant to NRS Chapter 432. Revenues for this account are derived from a fee on Nevada birth and death certificates. Funds in the account are to be used to support programs and services designed to prevent abuse and neglect of children. The account is operated under the name Children's Trust Fund and its grants have tended to fund programs that provide parenting education, self-protection education for children, respite care, home visitation, and public awareness of child abuse and neglect.

Statutory Authority: NRS 432.131-133.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3201</u>, DHHS – DCFS. Though not reflected in the current Executive Budget, in years past, DHHS has also received federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention grant funds, under Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The director of DHHS bears statutory responsibility for the account, but the Grants Management Advisory Committee created by NRS 232.383 is responsible for overseeing the distribution of grants from the account.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: None.

**Reporting:** Under NRS 432.133, the director must report to the Legislature regarding the agencies, organizations, or institutions awarded money from the Children's Trust Account, the money credited to the account, the interest and income earned, any unexpended money received, and the general expenses of administering the account.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/CTF/ChildrensTrustFund/



## Child Care Licensing Office – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: The Child Care Licensing Office, within the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS), ensures system health and safety along with the equitable and proper treatment of children receiving out-of-home care for compensation. The office licenses, permits, monitors, and provides technical assistance to facilities caring for five or more children not licensed by local entities. A database containing all current state-licensed child care facilities is available at findchildcare.nv.gov. Facilities located in Washoe County are licensed by the Washoe County Department of Social Services (see below).

Statutory Authority: NRS 432A.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3149</u>, DHHS – DWSS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The office provides oversight to the facilities it licenses. It receives oversight from DWSS leadership, and advisory support from the Child Care Advisory Council.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Under NRS 432A.079, the State Board of Health must establish policies providing coordination among all interested public, private and commercial entities to strengthen child care, day care and preschool services. Therefore, the office must comply with these policies.

**Reporting:** Under NRS 432A.178, the office receives reports from licensed entities; under NRS 432A.180 and NRS 432A.184, it conducts inspections and reports ratings of licensed facilities. It is required to make the related reports available to interested parties.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** The State Board of Health is required to adopt regulations under <u>NRS 432A.077</u>, <u>NRS 432A.184</u> and <u>NRS 432A.188</u> related to child care facilities.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Reg/ChildCare/Child\_Care\_Licensing - Home/



## **Washoe County Child Care and Early Childhood Services**

**Overview:** Washoe County Child Care and Early Childhood Services serves in a similar capacity to the state Child Care Licensing Office (see above). It licenses, permits, monitors, and provides technical assistance to facilities caring for five or more children in Washoe County.

Statutory Authority: NRS 432A.

Funding: Washoe County.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The agency provides oversight to the facilities it licenses. It receives oversight from the Washoe County Human Services Agency and the Washoe County Commission. It receives advisory support from the <u>Washoe County Child Care Advisory Board</u>.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: Under NRS 432A.079, the State Board of Health has established policies providing for coordination among all interested public, private and commercial entities to strengthen child care, day care and preschool services. Therefore, the agency must comply with these policies.

**Reporting:** Under NRS 432A.178, the office receives reports from licensed entities and must make the related reports available to interested parties.

Authority to Issue Regulations: The county is required to adopt regulations under NRS 432A.131.

Website: https://www.washoecounty.gov/hsa/childrens\_services/child\_care\_and\_early\_childhood\_services/index.php



# Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program – Division of Child and Family Services

Overview: The federal MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program aims to prevent child maltreatment, enable children to remain safely with their families, and ensure permanency for children in foster care. The program supports state child welfare agencies and eligible tribes in establishing and operating integrated, community-based services for families. Administered by the federal Children's Bureau, a state receives funding based on its share of children receiving benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. In Nevada, services are provided through community-based agencies receiving grants from the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) as coordinated by the Grants Management Unit

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 7-IVB §§629 et seq.

**Funding:** Though not completely clear, it appears as though the PSSF is operated through Nevada Executive Budget account number 3195, DHHS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight from the leadership of DCFS, the Grants Management Unit, and the federal Children's Bureau.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: NRS 432B requires DCFS to coordinate its activities with and assist in the efforts of law enforcement, the courts, child welfare agencies and any public or private organization providing social services for the prevention, identification and treatment of abuse or neglect of children and for the permanent placement of children. The division must also coordinate with and assist child welfare agencies, foster care agencies and (under certain conditions) nonprofit or community-based organizations in screening, recruiting, licensing, and training foster care providers. Additionally, child welfare agencies may organize teams for child protection to assist in evaluating and investigating reports of abuse or neglect and coordinate responsibilities.

Reporting: To receive federal funding under Title IV-B, a state must submit a 5-year Child and Family Services Plan and Annual Progress and Services Reports. The CFSP is a strategic plan that sets forth a state's vision and goals to strengthen its child welfare system. It outlines initiatives and activities that the state will carry out over the next five years to administer and integrate programs and services to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. Nevada is scheduled to submit a new five-year plan in 2024.

NRS 432B.218 requires an annual report to the governor and legislature from DCFS concerning the achievement of specific performance targets by agencies providing child welfare services. Under NRS 432.033, in consultation with each child welfare agency, DCFS may prescribe reports and records to be maintained by the agencies and all persons subject to supervision by the division, or investigation pursuant to NRS 432.010 to 432.085. Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY) is a federally-mandated, comprehensive information system for child welfare agencies nationwide and is managed by DCFS. Through UNITY, Nevada submits adoption and foster care information to the federal Administration for Children and Families.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** State law provides DCFS with regulatory authority related to several programs, though not specifically for the PSSF program.

Website: https://dcfs.nv.gov/



# Temporary Assistance to Needy Families – Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

Overview: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) is a federal program administered by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS). Program goals include assisting low-income families with children, reducing dependency by promoting job preparation, reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. TANF is a needs-based program for families with children under age 18 (or under age 19 if the child is in high school) who need financial support because of: the death of a parent; a parent being absent from the home; a physical or mental incapacity; or underemployment/unemployment of a parent. Services include financial assistance, child care, transportation and other supports. There is a 60-month lifetime benefit limit.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 7-IV §§601 et seg; NRS 422A.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3230</u>, DWSS. The program is federally funded through a block grant, but federal law includes a provision for state-funded maintenance of effort.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight from the leadership of DWSS, as well as the federal Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance. No special oversight or advisory roles are prescribed by law.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: Federal law emphasizes the importance of collaboration and cooperation of the program with public assistance, social services, and juvenile justice programs. State law requires TANF to coordinate with diaper banks and similar nonprofit organizations that provide diapers and diapering supplies to ensure recipients of public assistance and other low-income families are aware of their existence, location and services provided.

Tangentially related to TANF, <u>NRS 422A.478</u> establishes a Statewide Council on Financial Independence under the purview of the State Treasurer that must coordinate with state public assistance and social services programs. Additionally, <u>NRS 422A.680</u> establishes a Housing Crisis Response System that must coordinate with social service agencies, local governments and nonprofit organizations to identify, assess, refer and connect persons in crisis to housing assistance and services.

**Reporting:** The federal law includes annual reporting requirements. State law requires DWSS to submit a general biennial report to the Department of Health and Human Services director related to the division's operations. It also outlines reporting requirements for TANF diaper assistance services and fiduciary organizations involved in welfare services.

Authority to Issue Regulations: The DWSS administrator is authorized to adopt regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of NRS 422A and is required to adopt regulations related to work requirements for participating heads of household and establishing a schedule of progressive penalties when a head of household fails to comply with the terms of their plan for personal responsibility.

Website: https://dwss.nv.gov/TANF/Financial Help/



# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

Overview: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp Program, is federally funded and provides eligible low-income individuals and families with funds to purchase food. SNAP aims to alleviate food insecurity and improve nutrition among vulnerable populations. Eligibility is based on income, household size and expenses. Eligible individuals and families receive an Electronic Benefit Transfer card to purchase eligible food items at authorized retailers. In general, non-disabled adults aged 18 to 49 without dependents have work requirements for SNAP eligibility; these include participating in a work program, job training, or working for a specified number of hours per week.

Statutory Authority: 7 USC Ch. 51 §§2011 et sea; NRS 422A.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 3228 and 3233, DWSS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight from the leadership of DWSS, as well as the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. No special oversight or advisory roles are prescribed by law.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Federal law emphasizes the importance of collaboration and cooperation of SNAP with public assistance programs, social service agencies, workforce and employment programs, and food policy and planning stakeholders. It also calls for federal-state cooperation in identifying and reducing fraud in the program.

State law only contains a few minor provisions related to SNAP and nothing about program coordination.

**Reporting:** The federal law includes annual reporting requirements. State law requires DWSS to submit a general biennial report to the Department of Health and Human Services director related to the division's operations.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** The DWSS administrator is authorized to adopt regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of NRS 422A but has no regulatory authority or obligation specific to SNAP.

Website: https://dwss.nv.gov/SNAP/Food/



## Child and Adult Care Food Program – Department of Agriculture

Overview: The federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) supports or provides funding for healthy meals and snacks for children and adults receiving day care. It plays a vital role in improving the quality of care by making it more affordable for many low-income families. The program reimburses participating centers for their meal costs. The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA), Food and Nutrition Division administers the program. In addition to other demographics, children aged 12 and younger can receive up to two meals and one snack each day.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 13 § 1766.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 2691 and 4554, AGRI.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The NDA provides programmatic oversight of the facilities it funds, including periodic site visits. It receives oversight from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Federal law requires participating child care centers and sponsoring organizations to coordinate in identifying limited-English-proficient children and using appropriate obesity prevention strategies.

Reporting: NDA must provide periodic reports to the USDA.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** None specifically related to this program, though the NDA has general regulatory authority.

Website: https://nutrition.nv.gov/Programs/Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)/



## Office of Food Security – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: The Office of Food Security (OFS) is administered by the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) with support from the Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion program (CDPHP). The OFS also manages the DPBH Wellness and Prevention Program, which is a member of the Nevada Obesity Collaborative, a statewide working group of community members across multiple sectors whose goal is to reduce obesity and related comorbidities. The OFS produces an annual Geographic Information System map to guide outreach and promotion of the Children and Adult Food Program and to increase its participation in early childhood care and education settings.

Statutory Authority: None (the Council on Food Security (CFS) statute is found in NRS 232.496 et seq).

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3220, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The OFS receives oversight from the DPBH Nutrition Unit. It provides programmatic oversight to the Wellness and Prevention Program and administrative support to the CFS. It receives advisory input from the CFS, which also advises the Governor and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director on state food policy.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: The OFS continues to support the CFS in enhancing collaborative efforts throughout the food security network and implementing policies supporting food security statewide. It also collaborates with other programs within the DPBH Nutrition Unit: the Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion program, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed).

**Reporting:** The OFS creates periodic strategic plans (2023 Plan) to guide state action. On or before January 31 each year the CFS must submit an annual report to the DHHS director and the director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau concerning the accomplishments and recommendations of the Council concerning food security, and any recommendations concerning community gardens and urban farms.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** No authority is provided specifically related to the OFS, though the State Board of Health has general regulatory authority.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/OFS/Home - Office of Food Security/



## Office of Inclusive Education – Department of Education

Overview: The Office of Inclusive Education (OIE), located within the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), is committed to ensuring that all students in Nevada are college- and career-ready upon exit from the public school system. By providing general supervision over implementing federal and state regulations, OIE builds upon collaborative efforts with state and local partners and stakeholders to raise expectations and improve the early childhood, educational and employment outcomes for all students with disabilities, their families, and their communities.

**Statutory Authority:** The various programs within the office come with a variety of federal and state statutory authorities. Some of its larger programs include: Title I Part A basic aid; 21st Century Learning Centers; Title IV Part A student support and academic enrichment; and English language acquisition.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 2712, K-12 Education.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Varies by program within the office.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: Varies by program within the office.

Reporting: Varies by program within the office. However, the Nevada General Supervision System (NVGSS) is NDE's system for monitoring, documenting, and enforcing accountability for implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and state regulations within the Nevada Administrative Code. The NVGSS ensures continuous improvement, resulting in improved educational and functional outcomes for all students with disabilities ages 3 through 21, and that each Local Education Agency responsible for educating students with disabilities meets special education program requirements. (See various NVGSS links at the website linked below.)

Authority to Issue Regulations: Varies by program within the office.

Website: <a href="https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive\_Education/">https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive\_Education/;</a>; <a href="https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive\_Education/Early">https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive\_Education/Early</a> Childhood/#content



#### Child Support Enforcement Program – Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

Overview: The Child Support Enforcement program ensures families can achieve safe, stable, and healthy lives by making child support a more reliable source of income. Services are available to either parent when the other parent lives outside the home. Services are offered automatically to families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. The program ensures children have the financial and medical support of both parents, fosters responsible behavior towards children and emphasizes that children need both parents involved in their lives. The program is administered by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) and jointly operated with participating district attorneys' offices.

Statutory Authority: NRS 31A and NRS 425.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 3238 and 3239, DWSS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight from the leadership of DWSS. No special oversight or advisory roles are prescribed by law.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The work of the division is coordinated in those jurisdictions where the district attorneys have chosen to participate. It also coordinates its enforcement work with financial institutions, employers, and law enforcement agencies.

**Reporting:** No public reporting is required.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** The DWSS administrator is authorized to adopt regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of NRS 425. Per NRS 31A.130, the division is required to adopt regulations establishing procedures for enforcing authorities to document payments for support and the expeditious distribution of amounts withheld.

Website: https://dwss.nv.gov/Support/1 0 0-Support/



#### Foster Care – Division of Child and Family Services; Clark and Washoe Counties

Overview: Foster care provides a family life experience in a licensed home for a child removed from their parents or other family members due to abuse and neglect. Foster parents are a critical part of the child welfare team. They support children in preparing for reunification with their birth parents or for adoption. The Clark County Department of Family Services and the Washoe County Department of Social Services coordinate foster services in their counties, and the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) operates in the balance of the state.

Statutory Authority: NRS 424; NRS 432; NRS 388E (education of children in foster care).

**Funding:** State services are funded in Nevada Executive Budget account numbers <u>3145</u>, <u>3250</u> and <u>3267</u>, DCFS; Clark County services in account number <u>3142</u>, DCFS; and Washoe County services in account number <u>3141</u>, DCFS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Foster care programs receive oversight from their agency leadership. Under the law, they provide oversight to families involved in the system.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: NRS 424.097 requires a licensed foster care agency to coordinate case and treatment plans with child welfare agencies or a juvenile court. NRS 424.273 requires the coordinator of services for commercially sexually exploited children to collaborate with state and local agencies and other interested parties for the benefit of victims.

Under <u>NRS 432</u>, a central purpose of DCFS is the coordination and provision of services to children and families. The chapter also requires the attorney general to establish a program to coordinate activities and information for missing or exploited children.

NRS 388E requires the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), local education agencies and child welfare agencies to designate a single point of contact for the coordination of supports for children in foster care.

Reporting: NRS 424.041 requires each child welfare agency providing services to children placed in a specialized foster home to report all expenditures for the previous fiscal year. The report must be submitted by August 1 to DCFS and the Fiscal Analysis Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau. NRS 424.180 requires foster care agencies to create an annual report concerning each program or service, including a description of each and their goals and information relating to any special populations of children served.

Under <u>NRS 432.033</u>, in consultation with each child welfare agency, DCFS may prescribe reports and records to be maintained by the agencies and all persons subject to supervision by the division, or investigation pursuant to NRS 432.010 to 432.085.

NRS 432.133 requires the director of DHHS to report to each regular session of the legislature regarding: the agencies, organizations or institutions that have been awarded money from the Children's Trust Account; the money credited to the account; any unexpended money in the account; and the general expenses of administering the account.

NRS 388E.145 requires the State Board of Education to annually report on the academic progress of children in foster care who attend a public school, including the information prescribed by 20 USC Ch. 70-A1 §6311(h)(1)(c)(i)-(iii), based upon reports received from each local education agency.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 424 requires the division to issue specific regulations related to foster care homes and agencies. Some related regulations are called for in NRS 432.

Website: <a href="https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/Foster\_Care/FosterCare/">https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/Foster\_Care/FosterCare/</a>; <a href="https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/residents/family\_services/services/foster\_home\_licensing.php">https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/residents/family\_services/services/foster\_home\_licensing.php</a>; <a href="https://www.washoecounty.gov/hsa/childrens-services/foster\_care/index.phpw">https://www.washoecounty.gov/hsa/childrens-services/foster\_care/index.phpw</a>



#### **Adoption supports – Division of Child and Family Services**

Overview: State law governs adoption procedures and protects the best interests of adopted children and adults, birth parents, and persons who wish to adopt. State adoption programs aim to find safe and permanent homes for children whose birth parents cannot care for them. Therefore, prospective adoptive parents are a valuable resource. State and county child welfare agencies and licensed private agencies offer various adoption services, which vary from agency to agency. Very few infants without special needs are available for adoption through public agencies. The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) licenses private adoption agencies in Nevada.

Statutory Authority: NRS 127.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 3141, 3142 and 3143, DCFS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Adoption services receive oversight from DCFS leadership. Under the law, they provide oversight to licensed agencies.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** Under <u>NRS 127.320 et seq</u>, the state must coordinate certain activities of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and the Interstate Compacts on Adoption and Medical Assistance.

**Reporting:** Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY) is a federally-mandated comprehensive information system for child welfare agencies nationwide and is managed by DCFS. Through UNITY, Nevada submits adoption and foster care information to the federal Administration for Children and Families.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 127 requires the division to adopt specific regulations related to adoption.

Website: https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/Adoption/



### Child Protective Services – Division of Child and Family Services; Clark and Washoe Counties

Overview: Child Protective Services (CPS) is the first step in ensuring the safety and permanency of children who are reported as being abused or neglected. CPS focuses on protecting a child from harm or risk of harm and making it safe to live with a parent or caretaker. CPS agencies respond to reports of abuse or neglect of children under age eighteen. Abuse or neglect complaints are defined in statute and include mental or physical injury, sexual abuse and exploitation, negligent treatment or maltreatment, and excessive corporal punishment. Referrals are also made to community-based services to assist families in preventing entry into the child welfare system. The Clark County Department of Family Services receives 50 percent of the referrals to CPS agencies; the Washoe County Department of Social Services receives 32 percent; and Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) agencies receive the balance.

Statutory Authority: NRS 432B.

**Funding:** State services are funded in Nevada Executive Budget account numbers <u>3145</u> and <u>3267</u>, DCFS; Clark County services in account number <u>3142</u>, DCFS; and Washoe County services in account number <u>3141</u>, DCFS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: CPS programs receive oversight from their agency leadership. Under the law, they may provide oversight to families involved in the system.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: NRS 432B requires DCFS to coordinate its activities with and assist in the efforts of law enforcement, the courts, child welfare agencies and any public or private organization providing social services for the prevention, identification and treatment of abuse or neglect of children and for the permanent placement of children. The division must also coordinate with and assist child welfare agencies, foster care agencies and (under certain conditions) nonprofit or community-based organizations in screening, recruiting, licensing, and training foster care providers. Additionally, child welfare agencies may organize teams for child protection to assist in evaluating and investigating reports of abuse or neglect and coordinate responsibilities.

Reporting: NRS 432B.218 requires an annual report to the governor and legislature from DCFS concerning the achievement of specific performance targets by agencies providing child welfare services. NRS 432B.327 requires DCFS to submit certain CPS budget reports to the governor and certain counties, as well as any reports required by the Legislative Commission. NRS 432B.5919 requires DCFS to report to the legislature by September 1 of each year the number of participants in child welfare services and the costs of providing extended support services.

Authority to Issue Regulations: NRS 432B requires the division to issue specific regulations related to CPS.

Website: <a href="https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/CPS/cps/">https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/CPS/cps/;</a>
<a href="https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/residents/family\_services/child\_protection.php">https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/residents/family\_services/child\_protection.php</a>;
<a href="https://www.washoecounty.gov/hsa/childrens\_services/child\_protective\_services/index.php">https://www.washoecounty.gov/hsa/childrens\_services/child\_protective\_services/index.php</a>



### Central Registry for the Collection of Information Concerning the Abuse or Neglect of a Child – Division of Child and Family Services

Overview: The Central Registry for the Collection of Information Concerning the Abuse or Neglect of a Child, managed by the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), contains information about substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect in Nevada. This information may be requested by certain parties in accordance with NRS 432.100.

Statutory Authority: NRS 432.097 to 130.

Funding: The registry is not mentioned in the Nevada Executive Budget.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The registry functions as a repository of information gathered from certain mandatory reporters. It receives oversight through the leadership of DCFS and does not exercise oversight with other entities.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: None.

Reporting: No reports are required under state law.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 432.120 requires the division to adopt certain regulations related to the registry.

Website: https://dcfs.nv.gov/Forms/CentralRegistry/



### Victim Services Unit – Division of Child and Family Services, Clark and Washoe Counties

Overview: The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Victim Services Unit was created to assist victims throughout the state. The Victim Services Unit includes the Nevada Victims of Crime Compensation program, the Grants Management Unit for Victim Services funding, and the Confidential Address Program. The unit identifies gaps in services to support victims when they need it most and works closely with community partners across the state to provide resources and coverage. Nevada also receives federal funding for the Victims Assistance Academy of Nevada and the Victims Liaison Grant to facilitate and provide for victims' needs in rural and tribal communities.

**Statutory Authority:** NRS 217; various federal laws that provide funding in the state, such as the <u>Violence Against Women Act</u> and the <u>Victims of Crime Act</u>.

Funding: Victim services are funded in Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 3145 and 4894, DCFS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: DCFS receives general advisory support for victims' services from the Commission on Behavioral Health and specific advice from the commission concerning the award of grants from the Account for Aid for Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence. NRS 217.420 provides that applicants for grants from the account must be a nonprofit corporation governed by a board of trustees with at least one member who has been a victim of domestic or sexual violence.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: NRS 217 requires DCFS to collaborate with persons and entities that advocate for the needs of victims in designating a statewide center to assist victims. The law also requires the State Plan for Services for Victims of Crime to ensure that agencies providing services and compensation to victims of crime coordinate their efforts and use the same data.

**Reporting:** NRS 217.250 requires the Department of Health and Human Services to report biennially to the legislature about its victim compensation activities, including the amount of compensation awarded, the number of applicants, the number who were denied compensation, and the average length of time to award compensation. NRS 217.460 requires organizations receiving grants for assistance to victims of domestic or sexual violence to provide quarterly and annual financial reports to DCFS.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 217.130 requires the State Plan for Services for Victims of Crime adopted under NRS 217.094 to include rules and regulations: establishing the eligibility requirements for receiving compensation under state and federal law; prescribing procedures for the filing of applications and other proceedings under NRS 217.010 to 217.270; and providing for administrative hearings to address appeals of decisions made in the program. NRS 217.350 allows boards of county commissioners to adopt, rescind and amend regulations prescribing the procedures in performing its functions under NRS 217.280 to 217.350.

Website: <a href="https://dcfs.nv.gov/VSC/VS/">https://dcfs.nv.gov/VSC/VS/</a>



#### Child Death Review Teams - Division of Child and Family Services

Overview: Child Death Review Teams (CDRT) are multidisciplinary teams in various locations in Nevada that conduct comprehensive reviews of child death cases. Their objective is to better understand how and why children under 18 die. There are eight teams in Nevada, determined by region or county. Clark and Washoe counties each have a team, and the rural area has six teams. They include representatives from various agencies, such as the coroner's office, law enforcement, school personnel, medical professionals, child protective services, district attorneys' offices and other agencies that can provide valuable input. The multidisciplinary approach brings subject matter experts together to analyze trends and make prevention recommendations to the state oversight team—the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children. The executive committee is coordinated by the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and is responsible for approving members of the county and regional teams.

Statutory Authority: NRS 432B.403 to 4095.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3251, DCFS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The CRDTs receive oversight from the executive committee through report reviews and member approval. The executive committee receives oversight from the leadership of DCFS through the appointment of members and, more generally, from the Department of Health and Human Services.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The nature of the multidisciplinary teams and the child death review process requires the cooperation and collaboration of many stakeholders from law enforcement, medical, school, child welfare and other entities.

**Reporting:** NRS 432B.408 requires the executive committee to review reports and recommendations from regional and county multidisciplinary teams. The reports must be transmitted to the executive committee, which must review them and respond in writing to the CDRT within 90 days.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 432B.409 gives the executive committee authority to adopt regulations related to CDRTs and the review process.

Website: <a href="https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/CPS/ChildFatalities/">https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/CPS/CDR/</a>



#### Medicaid - Division of Health Care Financing and Policy

Overview: Nevada Medicaid, within the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy (DHCFP), provides health coverage to eligible individuals and families who have low income. Nevada Medicaid offers comprehensive healthcare services, including doctor visits, hospital care, prescription medications, preventive care, behavioral health services, maternity care and more. It also covers long-term care services, such as nursing home and home health services. Eligibility is based on income and varies depending on household size and whether the applicant is a child, pregnant woman, parent, or adult without dependent children.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 7-XIX §§1396 et seq; NRS 422 and NRS 439B.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3243</u>, DHCFP, and several others that can be found by searching for "Medicaid" at <u>this webpage</u>.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Medicaid receives oversight and advisory input from DHCFP leadership and the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The division also receives advisory support from the Medical Care Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee on Medicaid Innovation, and the Reinvestment Advisory Committee, all of which are established in NRS 422. Additionally, NRS 439B establishes an advisory committee to make recommendations concerning the collection, analysis and reporting of data in Medicaid's all-payer claims database.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The size and complexity of Medicaid require a great deal of coordination, including with private health insurance that may cover beneficiaries, with other public and private agencies that have related activities or the same beneficiaries, and with other entities in the provision of community-based services as well as payments and rebates for prescription drugs.

**Reporting:** Federal and state laws require a complex array of reporting for Medicaid. Significant reports include the State Plan for Medicaid, which details the program's services and benefits, and a biennial report from the division to the Department of Health and Human Services director required by NRS 422.2358.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 422.2368 grants the DHCFP administrator general authority to adopt necessary regulations for the administration of that chapter of the statute. NRS 439B provides regulatory authority for various specific purposes.

Website: <a href="https://www.medicaid.nv.gov">https://www.medicaid.nv.gov</a>



#### Nevada Check Up - Division of Health Care Financing and Policy

Overview: Nevada Check Up was established when the state initiated a Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 1998. Under Title XXI of the Social Security Act, a CHIP provides options for states to cover health care costs for low-income, uninsured children not eligible for Medicaid, whose family income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The program is stand-alone and not an entitlement program or part of Medicaid. However, the program delivers the basic Medicaid State Plan health benefits to enrollees, with some minor exceptions, and families are assessed quarterly premiums based on family size and income.

The Medicaid provider network and Medicaid-contracted HMOs provide covered services to eligible children. Enrollees are mandated to receive treatment under an HMO in the state's urban areas. DHCFP manages the program's health policy benefits, and the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services manages enrollment eligibility.

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 7-XXI §§1397aa et sea; NRS 422 and NRS 432A.300.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3178, DHCFP.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Nevada Check Up receives oversight from DHCFP leadership and the federal Department of Health and Human Services. The division also receives advisory support from the Medical Care Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee on Medicaid Innovation, and the Reinvestment Advisory Committee, all of which are established in NRS 422.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: The size and complexity of Nevada Check Up and Medicaid require a great deal of coordination, including with other public and private agencies that have related activities or the same beneficiaries and with other entities in the provision of community-based services as well as payments and rebates for prescription drugs.

**Reporting:** Federal law requires an annual program report by January 1 each year to the federal Department of Health and Human Services secretary. NRS 422.2358 requires a biennial report to the state Department of Health and Human Services director on the condition, operation and functioning of the division.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 422.2368 grants the DHCFP administrator general authority to adopt necessary regulations for the administration of that chapter of the statute.

Website: <a href="https://dwss.nv.gov/Medical/NCUMAIN/">https://dwss.nv.gov/Medical/NCUMAIN/</a>



#### Vaccines for Children Program – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: The Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) is a federally-funded program providing no-cost vaccines to children who lack health insurance or otherwise cannot afford the cost of a vaccine. The VFC was created in 1993 and is a required entitlement in each state's Medicaid plan. In Nevada, the program is managed by the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH). The division also manages the state's School and Child Care Facility immunization program (resource website linked below).

Statutory Authority: 42 USC Ch. 7-XIX §§1396s; NRS 439 and NRS 441A.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3213, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The VFC receives oversight and advisory support from DPBH leadership, the State Board of Health, and the federal Centers for Disease Control.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The state Immunization Information System requires coordination between DPBH and providers of immunizations. State law requires coordination generally between DPBH and local boards of health.

Reporting: No specific reporting is required in the federal law. NRS 439.180 requires a biennial report from DPBH to the Department of Health and Human Services director detailing the general state of public health in Nevada and making recommendations for legislation, appropriations and other matters deemed necessary or desirable. NRS 439.265 requires a state Immunization Information System; providers of immunizations must report all vaccines administered to the system. Similarly, NRS 441A.120 requires a system for reporting cases of communicable diseases.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 439 and NRS 441A provide general authority for the State Board of Health to issue regulations related to immunizations and other public health matters. Local boards of health may also adopt regulations.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/VFC/VFC\_-\_Home/; https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/SIP/dta/School\_Requirements/School\_Requirements/



#### Children's Mental Health Services – Division of Child and Family Services

Overview: The children's mental health services provided through the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) include community-based outpatient and residential care in the Reno and Las Vegas areas. The division serves children with significant emotional or behavioral problems. Services use a strengths-based approach that respects family decision-making for their child and honors the family's cultural values and practices. Services are individualized for each child and their family. These services may be alternatively referred to as the Northern or Southern Nevada Child and Adolescent Services (NNCAS and SNCAS).

Statutory Authority: NRS 433B.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 3281 and 3646, DCFS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Under <u>NRS 433B.120</u>, the division administrator oversees children's mental health facilities.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** State law requires a variety of coordination in children's mental health services. The division administrator must coordinate with the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, particularly related to the Interstate Compact on Mental Health under NRS 433.4543.

**Reporting:** NRS 433B.3398 requires each agency providing child welfare services to report to DHHS regarding children relinquished to, or voluntarily placed with, the agency during the preceding year for services related to a mental illness or emotional disturbance. In turn, the department must submit an expanded report to the director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 433B requires the division to issue specific regulations related to children's mental health services.

Website: <a href="https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CMH/">https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CMH/</a>



### Rural Clinics and Community Health Services – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: Children's mental health services outside the Reno and Las Vegas areas are provided through 16 Rural Clinics of the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH). The clinics help adults and children with mental illness through outpatient psychiatric and behavioral health treatment and community-based support services. The goal is to support personal recovery, self-empowerment, community integration and an enhanced quality of life.

Statutory Authority: NRS 433, NRS 433A, NRS 433C.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3648, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Rural Clinics have complex oversight and advisory relationships with their regional behavioral health policy boards, DPBH, the Commission on Behavioral Health and the State Board of Health.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** NRS 433.314 requires the commission to coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding any recommendations from the regional behavioral health policy boards in its annual report (see below) to the governor and legislature. Under NRS 433.316, the commission may create a plan to coordinate treatment services.

NRS 433.4295 requires the regional behavioral health policy boards to coordinate with one another and exchange information to make unified recommendations to DHHS, DPBH and the commission regarding behavioral health services. The boards must also coordinate with other entities in their behavioral health region and the state.

NRS 433C.350 requires DPBH to create and serve on the Nevada Conference of County Community Mental Health Programs. The conference must coordinate county and state mental health services.

**Reporting:** NRS 433.314 requires the commission to report each year to the governor and, in odd numbered years, to the legislature. The report must include: information concerning care quality and treatment; recommendations from the regional behavioral health policy boards; certain behavioral health data; health priorities for each behavioral health region; and recommendations concerning regulations submitted to the commission.

In addition to reports related to specific clinical practices and incidence, <u>NRS 433A.713</u> requires public or private mental health facilities and hospitals to report quarterly to DPBH the number of persons placed on a mental health crisis hold pursuant to <u>NRS 433A.160</u>, and any other information prescribed by regulation of the State Board of Health.

Under NRS 433C.190, county directors of community mental health facilities must submit an annual report to their local governing body regarding all program activities, including a financial accounting of expenditures and a forecast of anticipated needs for the coming year.

Authority to Issue Regulations: NRS 433.324 and various subsections of NRS 433A require the State Board of Health to adopt regulations for the operation of DPBH programs. NRS 433C.140 requires the division to administer NRS chapter 433 under the commission's supervision. The commission must adopt guidelines and regulations for county programs after consultation with and approval of the county director of each program. These regulations must support and maximize local responsibility and control of county programs.

Website: <a href="https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/ClinicalBehavioralServ/locations/Rural\_Community\_Health\_Services/">https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/ClinicalBehavioralServ/locations/Rural\_Community\_Health\_Services/</a>



#### Nevada Children's Behavioral Health Consortium

Overview: The Nevada Legislature created various mental health consortia to study the mental health needs of Nevadans and to develop recommendations for service delivery reform. The Nevada Children's Behavioral Health Consortium is one of these and it receives administrative support from the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS).

Statutory Authority: NRS 433B.333-335.

Funding: There is no apparent budget for the consortium under DCFS.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The subcommittee receives oversight support from the Commission on Behavioral Health. The commission has broad authority to monitor the delivery of mental health services and to recommend legislation, though it does not have express authority over specific entities.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: The statute requires the consortium to coordinate with Commission on Behavioral Health's Subcommittee on the Mental Health of Children. The commission is empowered to create a plan to coordinate services for the treatment of persons with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders.

On or before January 31 of even-numbered years, each mental health consortium must submit to the director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the commission: a list of the priorities of services necessary to implement the long-term strategic plan (see "Reporting" below) and an itemized list of the costs to provide those services; a description of any revisions to the plan adopted by the consortium; and any request for an allocation for administrative expenses of the consortium. In preparing the biennial budget request for the department, the director must consider the list of priorities and any request for a budget allocation by each mental health consortium.

On or before September 30 of even-numbered years, the director must submit to each mental health consortium a report describing: each item on the list of priorities of the consortium that was included or not included in the biennial budget request for DHHS and an explanation for any exclusions; and any request for an allocation for administrative expenses of the consortium that was included in the biennial budget.

Reporting: NRS 433B.333 establishes mental health consortia throughout the state that are required to prepare and submit to the DHHS director a long-term strategic plan for providing mental health services to children with emotional disturbance in the jurisdiction of the consortium. Each plan is valid for 10 years and must be updated after expiration. The Commission on Behavioral Health's Subcommittee on the Mental Health of Children in turn must review the findings and recommendations from each consortium and create a statewide plan for children's mental health services.

On or before January 31 of odd-numbered years, each consortium must submit to the director of DHHS and the Commission: a report regarding the status of the long-term strategic plan; a description of any revisions to the plan adopted by the consortium; and a report of all expenditures made from the account maintained pursuant to <u>NRS 433B.339</u>.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** None, although <u>NRS 433.324</u> requires the State Board of Health to issue regulations related to mental health services.

Website: https://dcfs.nv.gov/Meetings/NCBHC/



#### Commission on Behavioral Health's Subcommittee on the Mental Health of Children

Overview: The Commission on Behavioral Health's Subcommittee on the Mental Health of Children was established to address children's mental health issues in Nevada. The Commission on Behavioral Health is responsible for providing policy guidance on behavioral health issues in the state. The role of the subcommittee is to: examine the needs of children and youth with mental health and substance use disorders; identify gaps in the state's mental health system and make recommendations for improvements; develop policies and initiatives to improve access to and quality of services; advocate for the needs of children and youth at the state and national levels; educate stakeholders, including families, providers and policymakers, about issues affecting children and youth; and monitor and evaluate the implementation of policies and programs related to the mental health of children and youth. The commission and subcommittee are under the purview of the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH).

Statutory Authority: NRS 433.317.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account numbers 3223, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The subcommittee receives oversight from the commission. The commission has broad authority to monitor the delivery of mental health services and to recommend legislation, though it does not have express oversight over specific entities.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: NRS 433 requires the subcommittee to coordinate with mental health consortia throughout the state (see below under "Reporting"). The commission is empowered to create a plan to coordinate services for the treatment of persons with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, substance use disorders or co-occurring disorders.

Reporting: NRS 433B.333 establishes mental health consortia throughout the state that are required to prepare and submit to the director of the Department of Health and Human Services a long-term strategic plan for providing mental health services to children with emotional disturbance in the jurisdiction of the consortium. Each plan is valid for 10 years and must be updated after expiration. The subcommittee, in turn, must review the findings and recommendations from each consortium and create a statewide plan for children's mental health services.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 433.324 requires the State Board of Health to issue regulations related to mental health services.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Boards/CBH/Commission\_on\_Behavioral\_Health\_- home/



#### **Nevada Technical Assistance Center on Social-Emotional Intervention**

**Overview:** The Nevada Technical Assistance Center on Social-Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) is a statewide initiative designed to promote social-emotional development in young children using the Pyramid Model, a foundational framework for early learning. It is a tiered prevention and intervention model designed to address children's challenging behaviors.

Statutory Authority: None.

Funding: Funding and other support is provided through a variety of <u>public and private entities</u>.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Policy, budgetary and other oversight is provided by TACSEI's state leadership team.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** As part of its operational model, TACSEI necessarily coordinates with a variety of entities involved in early childhood care and education.

Reporting: Other than those required by funding sources, no reports are required for external audiences.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: <a href="http://nvtacsei.com">http://nvtacsei.com</a>



### Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs – Division of Public and Behavioral Health

Overview: Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) is a federally funded program through Nevada's Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, which requires at least 30 percent of the funds to be allocated for CYSHCN. The federal definition of CYSHCN is "those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, development, behavioral or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond those required by children generally." Nevada's CYSHCN program, housed within the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) provides resources and support to community agencies serving children from birth to age 21. It funds various community programs that bridge service gaps by linking families to appropriate resources.

Statutory Authoritt: 42 USC Ch. 7-V §§701 et sea; NRS 442.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3222, DPBH.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program receives oversight and advisory support from DPBH leadership, the State Board of Health and the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: Federal law requires the state to generally coordinate maternal and child health services in response to an annual needs assessment and state plan. More specifically, the state must also deliver "care coordination services" for children with special health care needs and coordinate activities with related federal grant programs such as supplemental food programs for mothers, infants and children, related education programs, and other health, developmental disability, and family planning programs.

**Reporting:** Section 706 of the federal law requires an annual report from DPBH to the secretary of Health and Human Services. Additionally, NRS 439.180 requires a biennial report from DPBH to the director of the Department of Health and Human Services detailing the general state of public health in Nevada and making recommendations for legislation, appropriations and other matters deemed necessary or desirable. NRS 442 also requires DPBH to collect a variety of public health data reported by health providers in the state and to submit various reports to state policymakers.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 442 empowers or requires the State Board of Health to adopt regulations concerning various public health matters related to maternal and child health.

Website: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/CYSHCN/CYSHCN-Home/



#### Program for Persons with Disabilities with Unique Needs – Department of Education

Overview: The Program for Persons with Disabilities with Unique Needs, within the Department of Education (NDE), enables the implementation of an individualized education program for a pupil with significant disabilities by enabling them to be transferred to a specialized facility or residence to receive more individualized support. Related to this program, the Account for State Special Education Services allows the state to reimburse school districts and charters schools for the extraordinary program expenses and related services which are not ordinarily available in the typical special education service delivery system at a public school and exceed the total funding for the pupil available to the school district or charter school.

Statutory Authority: NRS 388.5223-5243.

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 2619, NDE.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: The program and the account receive direct oversight from the Superintendent of Public Instruction and indirect oversight from the State Board of Education.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The process for meeting the educational needs of children in the program requires coordination between the local education agency, the facility serving the child, the Department of Education, and the state superintendent.

**Reporting:** State law requires the Division of Child and Family Services, when monitoring children under its authority whom it has placed in foster homes and residential facilities outside of the state, to also monitor the well-being of pupils with disabilities who have been placed by the program and to report to the state superintendent concerning the condition of those pupils.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 388.5243 requires the State Board of Education to adopt regulations for the application, approval, and disbursement of money from the Account for State Special Education Services.

Website: None.



#### **Autism Treatment Assistance Program – Aging and Disability Services Division**

Overview: The Autism Treatment Assistance Program (ATAP) offered by the Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) assists parents and caregivers with the expensive cost of providing Autism-specific treatments to their child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). ATAP is a statewide program that provides temporary assistance and funding to pay for evidence-based treatment for children who are under the age of 20 and diagnosed with ASD.

ATAP provides monthly funding to providers for ongoing treatment, supervision and limited weekly intervention hours based on a child's individualized treatment plan, age, and family income. ATAP only funds treatments proven by research to be evidence-based, including Applied Behavioral Analysis, Verbal Behavioral, and Pivotal Response Treatment to bring about meaningful behavior change. ATAP may also fund speech, occupational and physical therapy when other resources do not provide coverage.

Statutory Authority: NRS 427A.871 to 8803 (plus AB422, 2023).

Funding: Nevada Executive Budget account number 3209, ADSD.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Under <u>NRS 427A.8802</u> the Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders provides advisory support to the governor regarding the needs of persons with ASD and the availability, delivery and coordination of services. It must also exercise oversight by monitoring programs operated by state and local agencies that serve persons with ASD.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** State law requires ATAP to coordinate with other entities in serving persons with ASD; ATAP must also provide and use a standardized assessment for children through the age of 19.

**Reporting:** NRS 427A.8803 requires ADSD to submit, when requested by the commission, a report of the number of persons receiving early intervention and ATAP services from the division, the outcomes of the services and the related expenditures. NRS 427A.872 requires the division to prepare an annual summary of the reports submitted under NRS 388.451 and NRS 615.205 and make it publicly available. NRS 427A.8802 requires the commission to submit an annual report to the governor regarding its activities.

<u>NAC 427A.557</u> and <u>427A.558</u> require the Division of Public and Behavioral Health and the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation to report to the ADSD data about persons with ASD receiving services from or through those agencies.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 427A.872 requires ADSD, in cooperation with the Department of Education, school districts and the commission, to prescribe by regulation a statewide standard for measuring outcomes and assessing and evaluating persons with ASD through the age of 21 years who receive services through Nevada government agencies.

Website: <a href="https://adsd.nv.gov/Programs/Autism/ATAP/ATAP/">https://adsd.nv.gov/Programs/Autism/ATAP/ATAP/</a>



#### Family Preservation Program – Aging and Disability Services Division

Overview: The Family Preservation Program provides monthly financial assistance to low-income Nevada families providing care in their home for family members with a profound or severe intellectual disability. Also covered are children under six years of age who have developmental delays that require similar care. This assistance helps offset expenses necessary to meet the person's special needs and strengthen and support families, thereby keeping families intact and reducing the need for out-of-home placement. Families use assistance payments to obtain specialized supplies or equipment—wheelchairs, clothing, diapers, therapy services, special diets, transportation services—and for general income supplementation.

Statutory Authority: NRS 435.365.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>3166</u>, ADSD.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: None.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: None.

**Reporting:** No reporting is required under the statue.

**Authority to Issue Regulations:** NRS 435.365 requires ADSD to prescribe by regulation an application procedure, eligibility guidelines, and a process for determining the amount of assistance to be provided. These regulations are outlined in NAC 435.395-430.

Website: https://adsd.nv.gov/Programs/Intellectual/FamilyPres/FamilyPreservation/



#### Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation

Overview: The Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (GOWINN) was initially established by Executive Order #2016-08 to coordinate alignment within the workforce ecosystem and create a seamless system to help job seekers access employment, education, training and other supportive services. Senate Bill 516 of the 2017 legislature codified GOWINN into law. Related to early childhood services, the office maintains and oversees the Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research (NPWR) statewide longitudinal system that links data relating to early childhood education programs and K-12 public education with postsecondary education and workforce data in Nevada.

Statutory Authority: NRS 232.965 to 232.980.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>1004</u>, DETR.

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Per NRS, the director of the office must provide support to the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR), the Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB) created by NRS 232.935, and the industry sector councils established by the board on matters relating to workforce development. The director receives support and advice from the P-20W Research Data System Advisory Committee created by NRS 400.027 regarding maintaining and overseeing NPWR.

Required Coordination with Other Entities: NRS requires the director of the office to work in coordination with the Governor's Office of Economic Development to establish criteria and goals for workforce development and diversification. The office must also review the status and structure of local workforce investment areas in the state in coordination with the governor and the GWIB. Agencies required to submit educational and workforce data for inclusion in NPWR include: DETR; the Department of Education; the Nevada System of Higher Education; the Department of Motor Vehicles; and any other public agency the governor directs to submit such data.

Reporting: Per NRS 232, the director or the office must: present statistical details relating to workforce development in biennial reports to the governor and the legislature; report periodically to the GWIB concerning the administration of the policies and programs of the office; on or before March 31 of each year, submit to the governor a complete report of the activities, discussions, findings and recommendations; and on or before January 1 of each year, collect and analyze data, including the most current data and reports produced by NPWR, and report to the director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://gowinn.nv.gov/



#### P-20W Research Data System Advisory Committee

Overview: The committee—also known as the Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research (NPWR) data system advisory committee—was established by Senate Bill 239 of the 2017 Legislature. Related to early childhood services, the committee assists and advises the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (GOWINN) in maintaining and overseeing the statewide longitudinal data system. This system links data relating to early childhood education programs and K-12 public education with postsecondary education and workforce data in Nevada.

The Chancellor of the System of Higher Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the director of the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) or their designees serve as ex officio committee members.

Statutory Authority: NRS 400.

**Funding:** Nevada Executive Budget account number <u>1004</u>, DETR. (NOTE: the committee does not have its own budget but, per NRS, is required to receive administrative support from GOWINN to carry out its duties.)

Oversight/Advisory Relationships: Under state law, the committee provides support and advice to the director of GOWINN regarding the maintenance and oversight of the NPWR data system. The committee also advises and assists the System of Higher Education, the Department of Education, GOWINN, and DETR in the following activities related to NPWR and the work of the committee: applying for and obtaining grants; budgeting; proposing legislation; and matters relating to contracts for any necessary services.

**Required Coordination with Other Entities:** The committee was created to assist in coordinating and managing the NPWR data system administered by GOWINN under NRS 232.975(4)(e).

**Reporting:** Per NRS 400, on or before June 30 of each even-numbered year, the committee must prepare and post a written report of its activities and any recommendations on the Internet website maintained by GOWINN and submit a copy of the written report to the governor and the director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the next regular session of the legislature.

Authority to Issue Regulations: None.

Website: https://owinn.nv.gov/OWINN/NPWR/2023 Meetings/2023 Meetings/



#### Other Related Resources

Nevada has approved and published a list of **Pre-K education standards** that describe what most children should know and be able to do before they enter kindergarten.

https://dwss.nv.gov/Care/Early-Care-and-Education-Office-3-Pre-K/

The Contingency Account for Special Education Services allows the state to reimburse school districts and charters schools for extraordinary program expenses and related services which are: not ordinarily present in the typical special education service system at a public school; are associated with the implementation of an individualized education program of a pupil with significant disabilities; and the costs of which exceed the total funding available to the school district or charter school for the pupil.

https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/82nd2023/Budget/8264/Overview

https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Legal/LawLibrary/NRS/NRS-388.html#NRS388Sec5223

State law contains a variety of programs and requirements primarily directed to school districts for the benefit or protection of **students needing additional support**, including early intervening services, early literacy screening and evaluation for Autism. It also enables the Clark County School District to establish its own early intervening services program.

#### NRS 388.429 to 453

State law requires school districts and charter schools to prepare a plan to **improve the literacy of pupils** enrolled in elementary school. The Department of Education must also adopt regulations prescribing procedures for assessing the development across early learning domains of pupils enrolled in kindergarten within the first 45 days of a school year. Public elementary schools must also employ a licensed teacher as a literacy specialist.

#### NRS 388.157 to 159

Four of Nevada's colleges and universities offer **degree programs in Early Childhood** Education or Early Childhood Special Education that can lead to licensure and careers in the field.

UNR

UNLV

**NSC** 

**WNC** 

Chapter 391 of the Nevada Administrative Code contains many requirements for the **licensure of early education teachers**. These requirements may act as policy levers to affect outcomes in early childhood education.

**NAC 391** 



This Department of Education website includes several reports related to early childhood education:

PDG Needs Assessment

Nevada Early Childhood Care and Education Fiscal Feasibility Study

Nevada Ready! B-5 Alignment Workforce Standards Report

Nevada Ready! B-5 Alignment Learning Standards Report

Nevada Ready! B-5 Alignment Program Standards Report

Nevada Ready! B-5 Alignment Executive Summary

The Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires states to annually collect and report data on a variety of **education indicators**. The Department of Education website contains information on three of the indicators related to early childhood.

Indicator B6 relates to educational environments data for all children aged 3-5 with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive Education/Early Childhood/IDEA Indicator B6/

Indicator B7 relates to the extent to which preschool children with IEPs make progress on 3 outcomes:

https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive Education/Early Childhood/IDEA Indicator B7/

Indicator B12 relates to the percentage of children transitioning from Part C (Early Intervention Services) to Part B 619 (Preschool Special Education Services) with an IEP developed and implemented by their 3rd birthday.

https://doe.nv.gov/Inclusive Education/Early Childhood/IDEA Indicator B12/

This national interactive tool allows users to create and customize county-level maps on maternal and infant health and explore the geographic relationships between maternal and infant health indicators, health resources and demographics.

https://data.hrsa.gov/maps/mchb/

The Nevada Statewide Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Coalition offers membership, resources, and support in Northern and Southern Nevada. Both coalitions nurture and **enhance the knowledge and capacity of the healthcare community to better meet the needs of families**. The coalition receives support from the Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

https://nvmch.org/



Strong Start Nevada is a **community outreach campaign to** mobilize parents, educators, advocates and community and business leaders to **prioritize quality early childhood education**. The campaign is supported by many state and national partners, each with its unique policy agenda. As such, the campaign does not endorse or oppose any current or proposed legislation.

#### http://strongstartnevada.org/

UNLV Child Research and Policy Consortium fosters collaborative research across and within disciplines relevant to infants, children and families who are culturally, linguistically and ability diverse. The research involves community partners, faculty and graduate and undergraduate students to support their professional development. The work is used to inform issues relevant to infant, child, and family policies at the local, state, or federal level.

#### https://www.unlv.edu/psychology/consortium

Immunize Nevada is a statewide 501(c)3 nonprofit coalition of individuals, businesses and organizations that partner to connect people with **information and resources for vaccinations**.

https://www.immunizenevada.org/



### APPENDIX C.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR POLICYMAKING AND BUDGETING IN NEVADA'S STATE GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

It is helpful for ECS stakeholders and advocates to understand some of the practical aspects of creating policies and funding programs in state government. This appendix is offered as a brief primer on this topic.

#### **Policymaking**

Program policies generally take three forms in state government—written policies, regulations, and statutes. Below are some general guidelines and considerations for each.

Written Policies	Regulations	Statutes
Policies are contained in a written document or manual maintained by an agency.	Regulations are maintained in the <u>Nevada Administrative Code</u> (NAC). A history of regulatory proposals can be found in the <u>Nevada Register</u> .	Statutes are maintained in the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS). Be aware that it usually takes many months for the NRS to be updated after new laws are passed by the legislature.
Policies are usually created and changed by the manager of a program or the head of an agency.	Regulations are adopted by an agency through a specific, multistep process prescribed in Nevada law. An agency must have authority in the Nevada Revised Statutes to regulate a specific topic.	Statutes are enacted by the Legislature when it meets for 120 days during odd-numbered years or if a special session is called by the governor. Statutes are subject to review by the governor.
The agency may choose, or be required, to receive input from an advisory body or the public before changing a policy.	The regulatory process requires soliciting public input, coordination with the Legislative Counsel Bureau, and is subject to legislative review before final adoption.	Only authorized entities can propose statutes through a Bill Draft Request to the Legislature (see NRS 218D). Entities may include legislators, legislative committees, state agencies or officers, local governments, and others.
Theoretically, it is possible to affect a policy change with a phone call to the responsible party. This also makes a policy change easier to undo. Some agencies may have formal guidelines for creating and changing policies.	With some limitations related to legislative sessions, regulations can be adopted at any time. There are provisions for temporary and emergency regulations. Detailed processes are outlined in <a href="#chapter-233B of NRS">Chapter 233B of NRS</a> and Chapter 233B of NAC.	Statutes can only be created when the Legislature is in session. Proposed statutes are subject to public hearings. They must be approved by multiple committees, both houses of the Legislature, and the governor.
Policy changes are best for low- stakes and logistical items that are not controversial, or as a possible intermediate step before pursuing a law or regulation.	Regulations have the same effect as a statute. They are a good option when allowed on a given topic and the policy is supported by an agency. A regulation can be changed or reversed by an agency, or by a law passed by the Legislature.	Statutes can only be changed every two years, so they are best used for higher-level concepts and general guidelines. The Legislature may allow a statute to be further clarified through regulations.



#### **Budgeting**

The state budget process can be somewhat mysterious to those on the outside. However, having a basic understanding of the process can go a long way toward success when advocating for new or additional funding for a program or agency.



#### Agencies' requested budgets

Early in even-numbered years, the governor asks his or her agencies to prepare budgets for the coming biennium, which will begin in the middle of the following year. Because the Legislature only meets regularly in the first half of odd-numbered years, state budgets are adopted two years at a time. The governor may ask agencies to build their budgets within certain limitations; these limitations could be the same for all agencies or differ between them.

The greatest chance for success in getting a new or increased budget proposal funded is to have it included in an agency's requested budget. Accomplishing this requires buy-in from agency leadership (division and department) and room in the agency's budget—subject to any limitations required by the governor. Ideally, conversations with an agency about a proposal would begin well before they build their budget.





#### The governor's preliminary budget

Around the middle of even-numbered years, the governor receives the requested budgets from state agencies. Typically, the governor is already aware of agency proposals, but he or she is free to change the budget to fit personal policy priorities—sometimes subject to limitations from funding sources, such as federal grants or state law.

The second-best opportunity to get a new or increased budget proposal funded is to have it added by the governor to the budget. The budget is not finalized until step 3 below, but it is best if the governor knows of a need early in the process, even while an agency becomes engaged about the idea. Also, a governor will typically consult with an agency before adding money to their budget, so it is usually best to involve an agency before communicating with the governor. If the agency is opposed to the proposal, it is important to understand why and to proceed diplomatically. If a governor is unable or unwilling to add an item to the budget at step 2, they may consider holding it for possible addition at step 3.



#### The governor's recommended budget

By December 3 of even-numbered years, the Nevada Economic Forum is required to provide the official forecast of state revenues for the coming biennium. The Forum is a group of five appointed, independent, private-sector experts. The governor must use the Forum's revenue forecast for the recommended budget. Thus, the governor may be able to adjust the budget upward if the forecast is better than expected or may need to adjust it downward if the forecast is negative.

If the governor was approached with a budget proposal in step 2, it may be possible to add it at this step if the revenue forecast has made more money available. It is helpful to again be in

communication with the governor's staff around this time. Items that are included in the state budget before the legislative session have a much better chance for success.





#### The legislature's preliminary budget

During the first three months of the four-month legislative session, the money committees (Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means) hold joint and separate hearings on most agency budgets. They even finalize (close) some of the less complex or contentious budgets during this time. The Legislature tends to give deference to the Executive Branch with its budget proposals and does not usually change the budget very much. However, the Legislature is free to make any changes it chooses within the projected available revenues.

It is possible, though challenging, to have a new or increased budget proposal added to an agency budget at this point. It would be necessary to reduce expenses elsewhere to fund the request, and to overcome any objections the agency or governor might have to the change.





### The legislature's approved budget and bills with appropriation proposal

By May 1, about one month before the Legislature adjourns, the Economic Forum provides an updated revenue estimate that the Legislature is obligated to follow. Often, this estimate includes more revenue than in their December forecast. An increased forecast enables Legislative leaders, particularly in the majority party, to fund initiatives they care about. An item may have been informally proposed previously to legislators by advocates and held for consideration at this point in the process; such items would be added to a new or existing bill to be funded. Or, an item may already be included in a bill as a proposed funding request (appropriation).

Getting a project funded at this point in the process is challenging. There must be additional revenue available in the forecast, legislative leadership must support the proposal, it must be above the "cut line" on leadership's list of funding priorities, and the proposal must be able to overcome any opposition that could arise from opponents. It will also have to pass votes by both money committees, possibly two or more policy committees, both houses of the Legislature, and be signed by the governor.

#### Conclusion

The lesson to take away from this information is that policymaking and budgeting are a bottom-up process in state government. There is more power and flexibility in the Governor's Office and the Legislature, but these entities tend to respect the perspective of state agencies and will often give weight to their recommendations.



# ABOUT THE GUINN CENTER

The Guinn Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan, independent policy center that seeks to advance evidence-based policy solutions for Nevada through research, public engagement, and partnerships.

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#### **UR VISION**

Identify and advance sound policies and actionable solutions that support a thriving and prosperous Nevada.



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Advancing evidence-based policy solutions for Nevada through research, public engagement, and partnerships.







