

Nevada ECAC Community Member & Sector Survey Results

Suggested Ideas Cited in Open-Ended Comments by Priority Focus Areas

The following analysis is based upon a qualitative content review of comments provided among 1,777 community members and 212 ECE Sector respondents to five queries within each survey soliciting open-ended feedback. These are categorized among Four Priority Focus Areas. Among thousands of comments, selected quotes of concrete ideas are presented that reflect frequently cited strategies and ideas for ECAC to consider as part of its strategic planning process.

Some recommendations call for action steps that are beyond ECAC's scope and legislative jurisdiction. ECAC can, however, address these ideas in its advising, facilitating and recommending roles.

1. Workforce Development

A. Increase Educator Compensation:

- "Higher Pay for Early Educators. Support and promote wage incentive programs or salary supplements for childcare workers and teachers."
- "Support the early childhood workforce by providing fair pay (living wage), professional development and mentorship."
- "Advocate for Wage supplements, loan forgiveness and salary parity with K-12 teachers" for early childhood educators."

B. Ongoing Training Scholarships and Career Pathways:

- "Establish a statewide, unified professional development and career ladder system for the ECE workforce. A unified system would standardize quality, tie compensation to credentials, reduce turnover, and professionalize the field."
- "Provide scholarships, tuition assistance or bonuses for teachers and caregivers to continue education and stay in the field."

C. Offset Workforce Expenses:

- "Child care providers need assistance to pay for TB tests, background checks, and initial and ongoing training requirements."
- "Cover or subsidize mandatory costs (health tests, licensing, training fees) for early childhood staff so that these requirements don't deter hiring or retention."
- "Give home visitors small stipends for gas — rural drives add up fast, and it would keep staff longer."

D. Mentorship and Burnout Support:

- "Partner with local programs to provide mentorship, training and mental health support for educators to reduce burnout."
- "Address burnout through better mental health support and manageable caseloads for educators."

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2. Connected Service System

A. Shared Information Platform:

- “The council could create a shared online tool for providers to communicate and update families on available help and activities.”
- Create ways to foster “Coordination with pediatricians to help support and offer services e.g. have doctors actively refer or connect families to developmental services and resources.”

B. One-Stop Access & Navigation Support for Services:

- “Coordinating the services and providers into 1 spot rather than siloed services. Ease of access and better communication among all.” (one-stop system with a single point of entry to make it easier to navigate and apply for services).
- “Build a statewide ‘autism navigation program’ with trained guides to help families find and apply for services step-by-step.”
- “Create a seamless ‘one-stop-shop’ service models that connect childcare with health, nutrition, and family support services.”

C. Community Resource Hubs:

- “Family Support Service: Establish community hubs that connect families with parenting resources, health screenings, and financial assistance.”
- “Create a rural early childhood service hub network to reduce geographic barriers... hubs would centralize preschool health screenings and parent workshops to make services accessible for underserved communities.”
- “Develop a statewide plan for integrating high-quality ECE into community hubs that encourage resource-sharing (such as via local schools, non-profits and libraries).”

D. Integrated Data Systems:

- “ECAC should develop a statewide data system that tracks children from birth through kindergarten, linking early education experiences to school readiness metrics. This evidence-based approach would guide policy decisions and funding priorities.”

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3. Funding and Affordability

A. Public Funding for Early Care & Education:

- “Affordable childcare services. Daycare facilities should act like public schools and be funded by the state.”
- “Find a way to allocate 1 to 2% of annual funds to ECE that come from sports teams and casino revenue and ensure it becomes a permanent fund and educational endowment funding source.
- “Develop and implement a universal, state-funded pre-kindergarten program for all 4-year-olds.”
- “Champion statewide legislation to create a business tax credit for companies that support employee child care.”
- “Champion and pass legislation for a sustainable public funding stream for early childhood education (e.g., dedicate a portion of gaming revenue or a business tax).”
- “Increase in funding for centers to open in small communities.”

B. Expand Subsidy Eligibility:

- “There needs to be affordable childcare options for families who don’t qualify for assistance... The middle class makes too much to get assistance but not enough to afford it.”
- “I hope the ECAC can launch a dynamic adjustment policy for early childhood service subsidies for low-income families... dynamic adjustment can make the subsidy truly keep up with actual expenditure needs.”

C. Grants to Providers to Lower Costs:

- “The most important need that I think would be more grants to childcare providers to provide low-cost but high quality early childhood education to students.”
- “Increase in funding for centers to open in small communities.”
- “Create a state-level ‘Child Care Deserts’ initiative to expand supply in underserved areas by providing targeted grants, technical assistance, and incentives to open new centers.”

D. Mitigate the “Cliff Effect”:

- “Advocate for a step off system for families to get off of services instead of the current system whereby if they are over by \$1 they are cut off.”

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4. Advocacy and Influence

A. Statewide Awareness Campaign:

- “Launch a sustained, statewide public awareness campaign using compelling data and personal stories to reframe early childhood education as a critical public good and a smart economic investment.”

B. Legislative Advocacy for Universal Pre-K:

- “It is imperative that NV provide free Pre-K for all NV children. Continued advocacy in the legislature and education on this topic to community members is needed.”

C. Utilize Social Media Outreach:

- “Use social media more actively providing short, clear posts or reels on Facebook and Instagram: reach parents where they already spend time.”

D. Community Events and Engagement:

- “Host community events to raise awareness and foster connections among families.”
- “Partner with local organizations, schools, and community groups to promote awareness and involve the community.”
- “Organize public events (rallies, walks, conferences) to educate and engage the public about early childhood.”

E. Increase High-Quality Program Slots:

- “Advocate for legislative change at the State and Federal level to create more Head Start, Early Head Start, and State Pre-k slots.”

F. Advocate for a Governor’s Office of Early Childhood:

- Continue advocating for a “Governor’s Office of Early Childhood that creates a platform for providers to connect with policy makers to promote and advance informed decision-making.”
- “Create a formal interagency coordinating body.”