



**Executive Leadership Subcommittee
Public Meeting**

Tuesday, January 06, 2026
11:00 am-12:30 pm

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MINUTES

1. Welcome, Call to Order, and Roll Call 7 min.

- Patrice Gardner called the meeting to order at 11:05 am
- Brandi Hearst conducted roll call

MEMBER ROLL CALL

Present

1. Abbey Bernhardt, Systems Alignment Co-Chair
2. Brianna Cambra, Communication and Engagement Co-Chair
3. Cherry Clark, Nevada Early Intervention Services
4. Patrice Gardner, ECAC Vice Chair
5. Dr. Elizabeth Glover, CEO of Echoes of Excellence
6. Amanda Haboush-Deloye, Data and Evaluation Co-Chair
7. Jerek Hough, District Manager, Source Academy
8. Dr. Jamelle Nance, Communication and Engagement Co-Chair
9. Darby Porter, Nevada Library System
10. Kathy Yoder-Bass, Provider Representative

Absent

1. Tiffany Alston, ECAC Chair
2. Cherry Clark, Nevada Early Intervention Services
3. Marty Elquist, Data and Evaluation Co-Chair
4. Tiffany Olivas, Systems Alignment Co-Chair
5. Denise Tanata, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Advisor, The Children's Cabinet

Public in Attendance

1. Cecilia Alonso, Regional Coordinator, Office of Community Living, Aging and Disability Services Division, State of Nevada
2. Brandi Hearst, ECAC Administrative Coordinator, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
3. Sabrina Jones, ECAC System Specialist, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
4. Kate Pflughoeft, Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 Assistant Manager, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
5. Michelle Peterlin, Education and Information Officer, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
6. Sabrina Schnur, Community Member
7. Anna Severns, Washoe ECAC Co-Chair, Education Programs Professional, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
8. Rachel Stepina, Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 Manager, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
9. Candace Vaughn, Administrative Assistant, Division of Child and Family Services, State of Nevada
10. Anna Villatoro, Family Leadership Coordinator, The Children's Cabinet
11. Brooke Yarborough, Social Services Chief 2, Department of Supportive Services, State of Nevada

2. Public Comment #1 5 min.

Public Comment is not given during this agenda item

- No Comment

3. Approval of Flexible Agenda (Discussion for Possible Action) 3 min.

The Subcommittee approved a flexible agenda.

Tiffany Alston, Nevada ECAC Chair, and Patrice Gardner, Nevada ECAC Vice Chair

- Brianna Cambra motioned to approve a flexible agenda
- Kathy Yoder-Bass seconded the motion.
- Members voted, motion passes, flexible agenda approved.

4. Approval of October 29, October 30, and December 02, Minutes (Discussion for Possible Action) 3 min.

The Subcommittee reviewed 3 sets of Minutes, approving 2 sets.

Patrice Gardner, Nevada ECAC Vice Chair

10.29.25

- Amanda Haboush-Deloye motioned to approve the October 29, 2025, Minutes
- Brianna Cambra seconded the motion.
- Members voted, motion passes, 10.29.25 minutes approved.

10.30.2025

- Brianna Cambra is missing under "present."
- Amanda Haboush-Deloye requests additional context to Group Discussion notes
- Rachel Stepina agreed and added that the information is accurate, and context will help with understanding the importance of the group discussion, and suggested adding pictures of the work done
- Members continued discussing and explaining the importance of capturing the retreat thoughts for future reference
- Patrice Gardner allows time until the February meeting to make these updates and approve minutes
- Brandi Hearst to ask Tiffany Alston for pictures

12.02.2025

- Abbey Bernhardt motioned to approve the December 02, 2025, Minutes
- Amanda Haboush-Deloye seconded the motion.
- Members voted, motion passes, December 02, 2025, minutes approved.

5. Executive Leadership 2026 Meeting Schedule (Discussion for Possible Action) 5 min

The Subcommittee decided their 2026 meeting schedule.

Patrice Gardner, Nevada ECAC Vice Chair

- Patrice Gardner explained to Members that we need to decide on a schedule for 2026, offering time for Members to bring up various schedules that may be better. With no comment, it was decided to keep the same schedule for 2026. Meet monthly, first Tuesday from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm starting now.

6. Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 (PDG B-5) Updates (Discussion, Informational) 10 min

The Subcommittee was updated on the PDG B-5 Application status.

Rachel Stepina, Preschool and Development Grant Birth -5 Manager, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education

- Rachel explained that, unfortunately, PDG did not get approval for the grant she had pushed for, \$15,000,000, granted for the next year to cover PDG projects and continue to support Nevada Families.

- Members were made aware that the No Cost Extension has been approved, allowing the PDG team to continue through June 2026.
- ECAC will continue to receive support from Sabrina Jones and Brandi Hearst at least until June of 2026.
- Rachel Stepina explained the work that went into the application process, thanking everyone for their ideas and efforts.

7. Review of Strategic Plan with Ad Hoc Update (*Informational, Discussion*) **5 min**

The Subcommittee was presented with the Ad Hoc's current status.

Patrice Gardner, Nevada ECAC Vice Chair

Sabrina Jones, ECAC Systems Specialist

Abbey Bernhardt, Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee Co-Chair

- Abbey Bernhardt gave a summary of the AD Hoc Committee's progress:
 - Revised goals using language from the Strategic Planning Retreat
 - Change order, putting the system's goal first, making only 4 goals instead of 5
 - Priorities and objectives are still under development,
 - Recommended that implementation of strategies and activities be determined by subcommittees
 - Subcommittees may be restructured
- Patrice Gardner added some context, explaining the use of Public Works drafted goals and objectives
 - Made sure that it aligned with ECAC and the work that we all put into the Strategic Planning/retreat
 - made sure that the spirit of what we initially developed in our strategic planning session was truly captured in our goals.
- Sabrina Jones then shared the goals written by Public Works
 - Shared the ECAC Retreat Participant verbiage used
 - Reflected on the changes the Ad Hoc made:
 - Goal 1 Was: Connected Services Updated to: Comprehensive and Integrated Early Childhood System *(North Star)
 - Goal 2 Workforce- verbiage added, such as respectfully compensated, promoted growth and sustainability, well prepared, and representative added as a placeholder to "inclusive" as we cannot use that word.
 - Goal 3 Was: Funding and Affordability Updated to: Fiscal (Policy) and Sustainability
 - Goal #4 Advocacy and Influence, kept the wording, minor changes
 - Goal 5 WAS: Organizational Structure." NOW: moved into the Comprehensive system, which is now Goal 1,
 - Better as an objective, as we need an organized structure within the Comprehensive System
 - Could be achieved faster as an objective than one of the 5 goals with a 5-year timeline.
- Patrice Gardner added that sustainability made more sense as affordability would be different for everyone
- Rachel Stepina noted that Goal 3 reads "Fiscal Policy", not "Fiscal."
- Matthew Winterhawk has a phone-in comment asking where the minutes are, as he can only find the agenda, and was thankful for the opportunity to have a few minutes to clarify documents on the website.
- Members were invited to reflect on the changes and participate in the January 20, 2026, Ad Hoc Meeting.
- Brianna Cambra suggested that the ECAC look into having a secretary position to take minutes at General ECAC and Executive Leadership meetings, as well as posting online, and other tasks
- Anna Villatoro suggests more Family Leadership or Family Engagement, as mentioned in the Objectives of the Strategic Plan Goals

8. Subcommittee Updates (*Discussion for Possible Action*) **10 min**

Each Subcommittee had a chance to share updates.

- **Executive Leadership:** Patrice Gardner
 - Patrice Gardner invited everyone to come and participate in the next Ad Hoc meeting on 1.20.26.
 - Announced Dense Tanata's absence, noting she is still looking for a Co-Chair
 - Announced the Annual Report is posted for review

- Sabrina Jones added that the On-strategy subscription has expired, final report available online at nvecac.com
- Rachel Stepina pointed out that the OnStrategy subscription was hosted by The Children's Cabinet in past years
- Sabrina Jones added that she thinks Child Care Development Program (CCDP) funds paid for this last subscription
- **Systems Alignment:** Abbey Bernhardt
 - Abbey Bernhardt let members know their next meeting is January 28 at 1 pm
- **Data and Evaluation:** Amanda Haboush-Deloye
 - Amanda Haboush-Deloye shared that they are working on handouts and went through their work plan and looked at action items to possibly move to 2026, and will focus on alignment with the new plan
 - Next meeting on 2.15.26
- **Policy and Finance:** Denise Tanata, Vacancy-
 - Denise Tanata emailed her update, which is that she is still looking for a Co-Chair, shared by Patrice Gardner
- **Communication and Engagement:** Dr. Jamelle Nance & Brianna Cambra
 - Dr. Nance announced that the next meeting is on 1.27 from 11:30-12:30 pm
 - Communication Ad Hoc is dissolved, and there are
 - Ad Hoc created tracking tools to help streamline how ECAC is seen publicly
 - made sure that our work is sustainable without the support -if we don't have it.
 - Focus for the coming year is to help uplift other Subcommittees
 - Brianna Cambra added wanting to uplift family voices throughout the Early Childhood System.

9. First Five Nevada Family Leadership Council (Informational, Discussion) 10 min.

The Subcommittee was updated by the Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council.

Anna Villatoro, Family Leadership Coordinator, The Children's Cabinet

- Anna Villatoro has family events scheduled in the coming months, including 2 parent summits (in March and July)
 - 5 family leaders share their stories with families in Florida, who in turn heard the Florida families' stories and experiences in their Early Childhood System

10. First Five Nevada Program Inclusion Requests (Discussion for Possible Action) 5 min.

The Subcommittee did not review any Program Inclusion Requests.

Denise Tanata, Policy and Finance Co-Chair

- Denise Tanata had planned an absence from this meeting and responded to this item via email, stating: "There are no requests to report for this month."

11. Agenda Items for February 2026 Meeting (Discussion and Possible Action) 5 min.

Subcommittee members had time to add items to the February Executive Leadership Agenda.

Patrice Gardner, Nevada ECAC Vice Chair

- Patrice Gardner adds a Strategic Planning update with solidified goals to then present to the General ECAC meeting,
 - Ad Hoc Update

12. Upcoming Meetings (Informational)

- Data and Evaluation: 1.15.26 @1:00 pm
- Policy and Finance: 1.20.26, 3:30 pm
- General ECAC Meeting 1.21.26 9:00 am
- Communication and Engagement: 1.27.26, 11:30 am
- Systems Alignment: 1.28.26, 1:00 pm
- Executive Leadership: 2.03.26

13. Member Updates (*Discussion, Informational*), 5 min

Members of this Subcommittee shared information:

- Dr. Jamelle Nance shared the following:
 - Children's Advocacy Alliance is starting its 4th cohort of Children's Advocacy Alliance
 - 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm\
 - Thanked PDG for their help and support, and thankful for their help with the language interpretation/translation pieces
 - Asks for childcare providers to show up and voice their opinion on what happens with the attendance-based child care subsidy changes.
 - Asks for the State of Nevada to be a part of the subsidy conversation
- Amanda Haboush-Deloye announces that the April 23, 2026, NevAEYC Conference in Sparks, NV
 - Travel assistance is available
 - The Children's Research Symposium is the day before the NevAEYC Conference in Sparks, NV
- Brianna Cambra shared that Child Care Aware is hosting child care subsidy listening sessions on January 8th for input on how it impacts families- **Link:** <https://earlysuccess.zoom.us/meeting/register/yYbufcfyQ7CQIcyWxdx6pw>
 - Childcare Cost Model Tool Input Sessions, hosted by Prenatal - 5 Fiscal Strategies (P5FS), offers an opportunity for providers to give input for the development of the online cost model, building off of the Cost Model Nevada built in 2024
 - **Link:** <https://www.prenatal5fiscal.org/nevada>

14. Public Comment #2

Public Comment was taken during this agenda item:

- Matthew Winterhawk, speaking on behalf of Nevada parents who can't be a part of this meeting, mentioned the following key points:
 - An Advisory provides:
 - clarity and expectations-parents need clarity on what is realistic
 - Sustainability- parents want to see response timelines and measures for the subcommittees to keep their focus
 - Transparency - grounded in the outcomes that families can actually feel here in Nevada.
 - Parents care about getting help before a crisis arises.
 - When creating activities or policy, ask yourself: "Did this help families in any way?"

15. Adjournment

- Patrice Gardner adjourned the meeting at 12:28 pm

▪ 3 Action Items

- Members to try to attend the next Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee Meeting on 1.20.26
 - Sabrina Jones to update the Goals document and PowerPoint to reflect the correct verbiage; instead of "Fiscal," it should read "Fiscal Policy."
- **One Sentence Summary:** Members heard updates from the PDG Team about the denied Application for funding, the PDG No Cost Extension (NCE), approval, and the subcommittees that had updates to share, as well as being briefed on the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc and the changes to the goals of the Strategic Plan.