



## Policy & Finance Subcommittee

Public Meeting

TUESDAY, January 20, 2026

3:30-4:30 pm

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

**Virtual Meeting Location:** Zoom.com. To join us, click [HERE](#)

**Meeting Id:** 867 0737 7682

**Passcode:** 851310

### MINUTES

#### 1. Welcome, Call to Order, and Roll Call

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Denise Tanata started the meeting at 3:31 pm
- Brandi Hearst conducted roll call

#### MEMBERS’ PRESENT

1. Anna Binder, Parent Representative
2. Brianna Cambra, Provider Support Director, The Children’s Cabinet
3. Lela Gonzales, Workforce Support Coordinator, The Children’s Cabinet
4. Jerek Hough, Regional Director, Source Academy
5. Kate Pflughoeft, PDG B-5 Assistant Grant Manager, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
6. Rachel Stepina
7. Denise Tanata, Policy and Finance Co-Chair
8. Stephanie Vega, Teacher, Washoe County School District
9. Patty West, Employer Support Statewide Coordinator, The Children’s Cabinet

#### MEMBERS’ ABSENT

1. Abbey Bernhardt, Systems Alignment Co-Chair

#### PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

1. Brandi Hearst, ECAC Administrative Coordinator, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
2. Krystal VanDelden, Community Member
3. Patrice Gardner, ECAC Vice Chair

#### 2. Public Comment #1

Public Comment was not given during this agenda item.

- No comment

#### 3. Approval of a Flexible Agenda (*Discussion for Possible Action*)

The Subcommittee approved a flexible agenda.

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Lela Gonzales motioned to approve a flexible agenda
- Anna Binder seconded the motion
- Members voted unanimously, motion carries

#### 4. Approval of December 11, 2025, Minutes (*Discussion for Possible Action*)

The Subcommittee approved the December 11, 2025, meeting minutes.

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Kate Pflughoeft noted on agenda item 5 that the section after Assembly Bill 4 is missing the bill number.
- Denise Tanata read the minutes and reviewed the missing bill, noting it should read "Assembly Bill 5."
- Patrice Gardner motions to approve the December 11, 2025, minutes with the above corrections
- Lela Gonzales seconded the motion
- Members voted unanimously, motion carries
- Kate Pflughoeft abstains due to absence

#### **5. ECAC Interim Policy Recommendations and Work Plan Updates** *(Discussion for Possible Action)*

The Subcommittee discussed key activities and strategies for implementation and dissemination of the Interim Policy Priorities included in the 2025 ECAC Annual Report.

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Denise Tanata reviewed the draft interim policy priorities and recommendations. Members discussed the first item to really focus on the key messaging they want to send out with the annual report from December 2025 to the Partners, asking members:
  - Do we want to make a toolkit to give partners on what / how to share information?
  - Do we want the partners to do something with the information?
  - Do we want a response from our partners?
  - How do we get the partners' buy-in to be early childhood champions?
- Brand Hearst shared that the Annual Report is online on the website, and we have sent it out to some key people; however, we would need to ask Sabrina Jones if it was specifically sent out to ECAC Partners or the listserv.
- Members discussed how the community gets information to join the listserv.
- Brandi Hearst asked how our partners become a partner, and whether we can remove those who are not participating.
- Lela Gonzales also had a similar question and asked how we recruit for the listserv.
- Brandi Hearst responded that we do have it on our email signatures as well as the subcommittee webpages.
- Patrice Gardner added that we also recruit at different events that we table as a vendor, such as the NevAEYC conference.
- Denise Tanata discussed the amount of work ahead of us in terms of the recommendation of presentations and deciding who will present, who will create the presentations, and who will build relationships with the right people, legislative, and the like.
- Anna Binder recalls the partners helping with interim recommendations, making flyers, and promoting ECAC.
- Denise Tanata expresses interest in having partners help again, as this is a lot of work to take on.
- Brandi Hearst suggests creating an interest form of some sort to present at the General ECAC meeting for partners or members to say that they are interested and what skills they can offer to support ECAC.
- Denise Tanata and Brandi Hearst discussed details, and members offered suggestions.
  - Brandi Hearst to create "Call to Action Interest Form" and send to Denise Tanata for review and edits.
- After discussion among members, Patrice Gardner mentions that we want to see where Tiffany Alston stands with this as she is not here, but we do need her input.

#### **6. Subcommittee Co-Chair Update** *(Discussion, Informational)*

The members of this Subcommittee heard an update.

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Denise Tanata let members know that we are still looking for a co-chair.

#### **7. ECAC Strategic Planning Updates** *(Discussion for Possible Action)*

The Subcommittee not updated.

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Tabled due to time

#### **8. EC Funding Matrix Updates** *(Discussion for Possible Action)*

## **8. EC Funding Matrix Updates** (Discussion for Possible Action)

The Subcommittee did not review the EC Funding Matrix .

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Tabled due to time

## **9. Subcommittee Work Plan Review** (Discussion for Possible Action)

The Subcommittee tabled the review.

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Tabled due to time

## **10. Agenda Items for February 17, 2026, Meeting** (Discussion, Informational)

The Subcommittee kept the same items for the February 17, 2026, agenda.

*Denise Tanata, Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- Keep the same agenda items
- Finalize work plan for item #5

## **11. Member Updates and Share-Outs** (Discussion, Informational), 5 min

Members of this Subcommittee did not make announcements.

- Tabled due to time

## **12. Public Comment #2** (Discussion for Possible Action)

Public comment was not given during the meeting.

- No comment

## **13. Upcoming ECAC Meetings** (Informational)

- General ECAC: 1.21.26, 9:00 am
- Communication and Engagement: 1.27.26 @ 11:30am
- Systems Alignment: 1.28.26, @ 1:00 pm
- Executive Leadership: 2.03.26, @ 11:00 am
- Policy and Finance: 2.17.26 @3:30 pm
- Data and Evaluation: 2.19.26, @1:00 pm

## **14. Adjournment**

- Denise Tanata adjourned the meeting at **4:33 pm**

- **One Sentence Summary-** The Subcommittee spent time discussing the annual report, what they wanted to do with the ECAC Partners, how to incorporate the Annual Report with the Policy recommendations, and agreed on sending an email to ECAC Partners highlighting success within the annual report and requesting support using an Interest Form linked in the email.

### **• Action Steps**

- Patrice Gardner to follow up with Tiffany Alston for the process of Partnerships and removing/adding/applying?
- Brandi Hearst to make a Google Form for interest from partners at the General ECAC meeting.
- Denise Tanata to prepare and present a brief high-level overview at Gen ECAC meeting 1.21.26.