

ECLC

Early Childhood Leadership Commission

Annual Report 2019



PRESENTED TO:

Governor Jared Polis, The Colorado General Assembly, Senate Education Committee, Senate Health and Human Services Committee, House Education Committee, House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee, and House Health, Insurance and Environment Committee

Letter from the Governor



COLORADO
Governor Jared Polis

Dear Early Childhood Stakeholders,

Investing in early childhood education is transformative for Coloradans. Increasing opportunities for quality early childhood education is critical for the healthy development of young children and science confirms it's the right investment to make. We know there is a difference between children who have had that advantage of a strong start and those who have not.

In 2019, I made full-day kindergarten a priority and the state funded full-day kindergarten for every child in the state, freeing up more than 5,000 preschool slots.

Now we have an opportunity to expand preschool with its important foundational elements of quality, a strong workforce and adequate facilities. Investments in quality universal preschool will give children the best start – socially, emotionally and academically – and will prepare all Colorado's children for success.

Full-day kindergarten and universal preschool are also investments in our economy and are economic issues for families. Extra money in families' pockets means they can better save for college, pay for their children's summer activities and enrichment classes, and increase their incomes without the expense of preschool and kindergarten.

Expanding preschool in Colorado will require more consideration of implementation issues, engagement and creative planning. In 2020, we will work with all quality providers to scale up and improve preschool. This is an exciting opportunity that will make an enormous difference in our state. I am looking forward to working with early childhood stakeholders, school districts, local governments, and the Legislature to see that pathway to high-quality early childhood opportunities is achieved.

As we expand access to quality preschool, these efforts must include better state-level outcome data; coordination across sectors, services, and agencies; and ensure that early education is delivered in a mixed delivery context (both school-based and community-based). We also must prioritize the route to professionalize the workforce as we prepare for universal preschool.

Providing all Colorado children with full-day kindergarten and early education is a priority for our administration. I look forward to working with all of you to increase these opportunities so they get a strong start that prepares them for success in school and in life. I extend my gratitude to the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and to early childhood stakeholders for carrying this message forward as we continue to make a positive difference in 2020.

Sincerely,

Jared Polis
Governor

Letter from the ECLC Co-Chairs

Dear Governor Polis, Lt. Governor Primavera, Cabinet Members and Colorado General Assembly,

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) (the Commission) is pleased to share with you our eighth Annual Report. With cross-sector and diverse members appointed by the Governor, the Commission serves as Colorado's federally-authorized state advisory council on early childhood and partners with you to ensure that all of Colorado's children are valued, healthy and thriving.

This annual report provides an overview of the Governor-appointed Commission's work and accomplishments in 2019, and our priorities and commitments to all of Colorado's young children and their families as we look to the future. We will continue to develop partnerships with public and private early childhood organizations in collaboration with families, providers, stakeholders and advocates across the state.

The ECLC is acknowledged as the trusted and proactive early childhood champion for high quality, outcome-focused learning and development, health and well-being, and family support and education. Our efforts support pregnant women, young children birth through age eight and their families by promoting services and monitoring progress toward early childhood outcomes.

In 2017, the Commission was reauthorized by the General Assembly in statute through 2023 to continue to align services and support outcomes for children and families. It has been recognized for its critical work in aligning and coordinating early childhood services.

We strive to identify opportunities for, and barriers to, the alignment of public and private early childhood policies, programs and resources. The Commission provides a platform for collaboration across five state departments – Colorado Department of Human Services, Health Care Policy and Financing, Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and Colorado Department of Higher Education – that all play a role in supporting Colorado's children and families.

In 2018, the ECLC identified three Areas of Opportunity that are paramount to continuing to advance early childhood outcomes:

- Improve Access to High Quality Early Care and Education for All Families
- Elevate the Early Childhood Workforce to Ensure Coordinated Career Pathways and Appropriate Compensation
- Support Improved Family Health and Economic Security through a Two-Generation Approach

We look forward to standing with you to continue to make progress across early childhood systems to ensure that all children are valued, healthy and thriving.

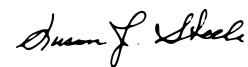
Sincerely,



Elsa Holguín
ECLC Co-Chair



Tom Massey
ECLC Co-Chair



Susan Steele
ECLC Co-Chair



About the Early Childhood Leadership Commission

The ECLC was originally established by the Colorado Legislature in 2010 and was recently re-authorized until 2023 through House Bill 17-1106. The Commission is comprised of 20 individuals representing a full spectrum of early childhood champions, advocates and leaders. It includes parents, early childhood professionals, Head Start, school districts, local municipalities, foundations, nonprofits, businesses and five state departments: Education, Health Care Policy and Financing, Higher Education, Human Services, and Public Health and Environment. As Colorado's state advisory council for early childhood, the role of the Commission is to be a statewide leader, subject matter expert and advocate for best and promising practices throughout the state.

THE ECLC IS STATUTORILY CHARGED TO:

- Assist and monitor efforts to enhance alignment across programs and agencies that support young children and their families including collaboration among five state departments;
- Advise and make recommendations to the Governor's Office, the General Assembly and state departments; and
- Develop strategies and monitor efforts to increase the access, quality and equity of services and supports on behalf of pregnant women and children birth through age eight.



2019 ECLC Accomplishments

- Worked with more than **100 partners** including businesses, nonprofits, advocacy organizations, early childhood councils, government agencies and philanthropic partners to align and strengthen Colorado's early childhood systems on behalf of **pregnant women, children birth to eight and their families**

- Developed the **Monitoring and Measuring Progress in Colorado's Early Childhood Areas of Opportunity: 2019** report that provides a baseline measure of key indicators for the three Areas of Opportunity identified by the Commission in 2018

- Encouraged early childhood professionals to share and align their work on the **Early Childhood Colorado Framework** website, an interactive platform providing Colorado with a tool to better understand how the state is making progress toward the outcomes in the *Framework*

- Worked alongside the Office of Early Childhood, CDHS to develop the **Infant and Family Child Care Action Plan** that provides a comprehensive set of steps for the State of Colorado to address the declining availability of licensed infant care and family child care homes

- Continued to implement the **Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Plan**, Colorado's early childhood professional development plan, through coordination with the Early Childhood Professional Development Advisory Working Group and the numerous workforce initiatives around the state

- Advised the Office of Early Childhood, CDHS on the **Colorado Shines Brighter, Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five**, supporting the state's shared vision to ensure all children are ready for school when entering kindergarten

- Worked with the **Early Childhood & School Readiness Legislative Commission** on best and promising practices related to early childhood policy as outlined in House Bill 13-1007

- Served as the **State Advisory Council** that advised on federal grant applications related to pregnant women and children birth through age eight and submitted letters of support required for Colorado to apply for those grants

- Supported House Bill 19-1262 for **Full-Day Kindergarten**, providing funding for full-day kindergarten that made kindergarten affordable and accessible for all Colorado families

Our Strategies

In collaboration with our partners, we use the following **STRATEGIES FOR ACTION** to help guide all of our work across early childhood systems in Colorado.



**CONNECT AND
EMPOWER
FAMILIES**



**MAKE
DATA INFORMED
DECISIONS**



**ENCOURAGE
PUBLIC-PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIPS**



**BUILD CAPACITY
AND SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS PRACTICES**



**PURSUE QUALITY
AND CONSUMER
AFFORDABILITY**



**PROMOTE AND
SHARE KNOWLEDGE**



**DEVELOP
AND RETAIN THE
WORKFORCE**



**VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR
ECLC RESOURCES &
PAST NOTABLE WORK**

earlychildhoodcolorado.org

- ECLC Areas of Opportunity
- Early Childhood Colorado Framework Website
- 2018 ECLC Annual Report
- Past ECLC Annual Reports, 2012-2017
- ECLC Early Childhood Communication Efforts in Colorado, 2016
- ECLC Strategic Plan
- 2019 Executive Order
- Member List
- Organizational Chart
- ECLC Bylaws
- Enabling Legislation

Highlights from the ECLC Subcommittees

► COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

The Communications Subcommittee continued the work of the Early Childhood Communication Collaborative (ECCC) that reviewed the amount and variety of parent and caregiver communication and engagement efforts in Colorado and provided recommendations for the field to better support and connect with parents and caregivers. From this research, eleven recommendations were developed across three areas – noise reduction, quality and engagement. These recommendations support providers to more effectively communicate with parents and caregivers.

In order to align and advance these findings and recommendations, the Communications Subcommittee members reviewed and shared resources and best practices from across the nation on how to best engage with parents and caregivers. They organized these best practices around the three areas of recommendations from the ECCC report (noise reduction, quality and engagement) and created a resource document entitled *Communication Guidelines for Engaging with Parents and Caregivers*. Subcommittee members shared this tool with providers, organizations and programs to promote best practices in communicating effectively with this important audience. The Subcommittee also began work creating an online resource with national and local tools, resources and examples organized around the *Communication Guidelines* tool.

Future Priorities

In 2020, the Communications Subcommittee will:

- Finalize and share the newly developed online communication resource;
- Continue distribution of the best practices resource document *Communication Guidelines for Engaging with Parents and Caregivers*;
- Continue working on an online platform for sharing tools, resources and strategies to improve the coordination of communication efforts within Colorado; and
- Encourage all who connect with new parents to incorporate parent and caregiver engagement strategies and messages into their programs and outreach.





Highlights from the ECLC Subcommittees

► DATA SUBCOMMITTEE

The ECLC is statutorily required to monitor and develop strategies for the sharing and using of common data for planning and accountability among early childhood programs. The Commission and its Data Subcommittee strongly support the consistent and responsible use of relevant, reliable and secure data to better understand populations across the state, identify opportunities to create efficiencies within programs and across departments, and encourage sufficient public and private investments in the early childhood system.

To guide this work, the Commission adopted the following data vision statement to incorporate effective and responsible use of data as an essential component in all early childhood conversations and decisions:

Reliable, relevant and secure data guides and informs early childhood decision-makers at all levels who are working to ensure all children are valued, healthy and thriving in Colorado.

Throughout 2019, the Data Subcommittee identified ways to measure and track the progress of the Commission's three Areas of Opportunity. Based on this work the Subcommittee developed the *Monitoring and Measuring Progress in Colorado's Early Childhood Areas of Opportunity: 2019* report that will assist the Commission to monitor progress in the prioritized Areas of Opportunity, as well as identify strategies that support and align Colorado's early childhood system.

The Data Subcommittee began an analysis of the current landscape of school readiness data, including how school readiness data is collected and what data is available. The Subcommittee will bring suggestions on school readiness data to the ECLC and ultimately bring recommendations forward on understanding what children need to be ready for kindergarten.

Future Priorities

In 2020, the Data Subcommittee will:

- Advance the three ECLC Areas of Opportunity and monitor the progress of each area;
- Review and disseminate trusted, publicly available early childhood data resources and reports on the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* website;
- Advocate for the importance of school readiness data; and
- Encourage stakeholders to interpret and appropriately use data when making decisions across all levels of early childhood practice.

Monitoring and Measuring Progress in Early Childhood Areas of Opportunity

- **Improve access to high quality early care and education for all families**
- **Elevate the early childhood workforce to ensure coordinated career pathways and appropriate compensation**
- **Support improved family health and economic security through a Two-Generation approach**

After identifying the three Areas of Opportunity in 2018, the Early Childhood Leadership Commission committed to creating a process across the areas to explicitly track progress over the next four years. This task was entrusted to the ECLC Data Subcommittee that simultaneously identified data gaps specifically related to each area.

In 2019, the Data Subcommittee and its partners participated in the process to develop the Monitoring and Measuring Progress in Colorado's Early Childhood Areas of Opportunity report. It is a technical resource on the indicators selected to measure progress on the ECLC Areas of Opportunity and includes the methods, selected indicators, data gaps and baseline data for each of the Areas of Opportunity.

ACCESS THE FULL REPORT AT
earlychildhoodcolorado.org/eclc-areas-of-opportunity



Highlights from the ECLC Subcommittees

► PROGRAM QUALITY AND ALIGNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

The Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee identifies opportunities for, and barriers to, the alignment of standards, rules, policies and procedures to ensure that children and families have access to the services and supports they need. The Subcommittee served as the advisory body for the Colorado Shines Brighter Preschool Development Grant (PDG), and provided opportunities for feedback and to share best practices on the grant implementation throughout 2019.

The Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee oversees several Working Groups:

- The **Young Child Wellness Council** focused on implementing LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health). This five-year grant was completed in 2019. *The Colorado Project LAUNCH 2014-2019 Report* shares the work of LAUNCH to increase the quality and availability of evidence-based programs for children and families, improve collaboration among child-serving organizations, and integrate physical and behavioral health services and supports for children ages birth to age eight and their families.
- The **Framework Working Group** promoted the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* website, an interactive platform (www.EarlyChildhoodFramework.org) that allows organizations to share programs and best practices and align the work under the domains and outcomes of the *Framework*. The *Framework* Working Group promoted the *Framework* website encouraging all early childhood organizations to share how they are working to advance the *Framework* outcomes.
- The **Early Childhood Professional Development (ECPD) Advisory Working Group** engaged stakeholders across the early childhood spectrum to implement *Colorado's Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Plan*. This plan, which was endorsed by the Commission in June, 2017, focuses on retention, recruitment and compensation for early childhood professionals and outlines specific strategies and objectives to elevate this workforce so young children have consistent, effective and caring educators.

Future Priorities

In 2020, the Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee will:

- Provide guidance and support the implementation of the *Colorado Shines Brighter Statewide Birth through Five Strategic Plan*;
- Continue to align and coordinate early childhood workforce efforts and work with stakeholders to implement the *EC Workforce 2020 Plan*;
- Promote and enhance the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* website resource to share program information and highlight progress that Colorado is making on the *Framework* outcomes for children and families; and
- Support and encourage programs to utilize a Two-Generation approach when providing services to children and families.



Colorado Shines Brighter, Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five



In 2019, Colorado was awarded a \$5.8 million federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) planning grant. The grant supports Colorado Shines Brighter, an initiative designed to enhance the state's quality early care and education system for children birth through five and their families. Supporting the research and strategic planning of the grant was an ECLC priority in 2019.

The ECLC served as the advisory body for the PDG B-5. In partnership with the Program Quality and Alignment (PQA) Subcommittee, the Office of Early Childhood shared grant updates and engaged members and the general public to inform the statewide B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan, and reviewed grant deliverables to support implementation. The grant brought exciting new opportunities for the state to analyze the current landscape of the early care and learning mixed delivery system. It also allowed the state to implement systemic changes that maximize the availability of high-quality early care and education options for low-income and underserved families across providers and partners; improve the quality of care; streamline administrative infrastructure; and improve state-level early childhood funding efficiencies.

In fall 2019, ECLC members reviewed and provided input on the *Colorado Shines Brighter* Statewide B-5 Strategic Plan and the state's PDG B-5 renewal application for funding for an additional three years. Colorado was awarded the renewal grant and will utilize the funding to implement the Strategic Plan to continue to work toward ensuring all children are ready for school when entering kindergarten.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT
coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com

The ECLC Partners with State Agencies to Support Young Children and Their Families



Colorado Department of Education (CDE)

CDE values its partnership with the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and its member agencies and organizations. CDE has a strong commitment to coherence of programs that support children and families across the preschool through third grade (P – 3) continuum.

In 2017, CDE brought together all of its early childhood programs into a single P – 3 Office to provide more coordinated support to children and families. In 2018, CDE affirmed its commitment to aligned support for early childhood educators by moving the Early Childhood Professional Development Team to the Educator Talent Division. The Early Childhood Professional Development Team will remain connected to the P – 3 Office, working together to build strong foundations that lead to school success.

Highlights for the year include:

- Celebration of 30 years of the Colorado Preschool Program which has served 378,658 children and has shown to support long-lasting positive outcomes

- Administration of over \$111 million in CPP dollars to fund preschool programs for at-risk children in 175 of Colorado’s 178 school districts to serve 26,650 children. Recent longitudinal analysis shows that CPP graduates are more likely to graduate from high school on time and less likely to have a significant reading deficiency in kindergarten compared to children who did not participate in CPP
- Creation of a P – 3 department work plan in partnership with Colorado’s early childhood community
- Issuing 5,038 Early Childhood Professional Credentials, 276 Coaching Credentials and 136 Trainer Credentials
- Communication with thousands of users through the Professional Development Information System Help Desk to enable early childhood educators to access supports and resources
- Supporting the New Early Childhood Professional Development Advisory as it begins work on the EC Workforce 2020 Plan

LEARN MORE ABOUT CDE AT cde.state.co.us

Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing (HCPF)

HCPF administers Health First Colorado (Colorado’s Medicaid Program), Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) and other programs for Coloradans who qualify. The mission is to improve health care access and outcomes for the people HCPF serves while demonstrating sound stewardship of financial resources.

Health First Colorado is the largest program, covering approximately 1.3 million Coloradans. Children comprise approximately 41 percent of the Health First Colorado members. Most Health First Colorado members are enrolled in the Accountable Care Collaborative which seeks to improve member health and experience while improving

health care affordability. CHP+, that includes children and pregnant women, covered just over 81,000 Colorado kids and pregnant women in the state fiscal year 2018-19. Approximately 45 percent of all babies born in Colorado in calendar year 2018 were born to Health First Colorado or CHP+ moms. Through Medicaid expansion, Colorado has reduced the number of uninsured children to less than 2.5%. HCPF as a Department also works closely with other departments to improve the health and well-being of all children in Colorado with a focus on the social determinants of health starting from prenatal.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HCPF AT Colorado.gov/HCPF

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)

CDPHE provides valuable services to improve the health of all Colorado children, youth, women and their families. CDPHE programs support children with special health care needs, improve youth obesity and oral health and connect families with developmental screenings. Some highlights:

- **WIC** provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and other services. WIC recently built a new website and referral system, established data-sharing approaches with other organizations and piloted text messaging to potentially eligible individuals to encourage participation.
- **THE EARLY CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION UNIT (ECOP)** provides resources to prevent obesity among children. ECOP convened partners to identify barriers childcare providers experience in buying locally grown produce for children's meals.
- **ESSENTIALS FOR CHILDHOOD** funds five communities to prevent child abuse and neglect by decreasing barriers

to food security and child care and improving community norms around parental help-seeking and collective prosperity. It also educates advocacy partners to promote family-friendly work policies, including paid leave.

- **SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS** served 33,111 patients with primary, behavioral and oral health care in 2018-19, its most recent data year.
- The **MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH)** program funded a statewide maternal mental health public awareness campaign, in addition to strategies to increase provider screening rates for pregnancy-related depression. Since 2011, the percent of new mothers enrolled in Medicaid who were screened rose from 21.7% to 34% (Medicaid claims data).

LEARN MORE ABOUT CDPHE AT [Colorado.gov/CDPHE](https://colorado.gov/CDPHE)

Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE)

CDHE strives to support a strong early childhood educator workforce. In doing so, CDHE has made the following gains:

- Articulation agreements between 2- and 4-year public colleges and universities allowing students to transfer credits creating an efficient and affordable pathway
- More than 200 credentials in early childhood education, early childhood special education, and early childhood special education specialist programs awarded by 4-year Institutions of Higher Education

- Financial incentives available to pre-service and in-service ECE P-3 elementary school teachers who commit to teach in rural Colorado
- Inclusion of early childhood as an area students can pursue while participating in Teacher Cadet – a high school pipeline program
- Implementation of an educator loan forgiveness program for which eligible ECE teachers can apply

LEARN MORE ABOUT CDHE AT higher.ed.colorado.gov



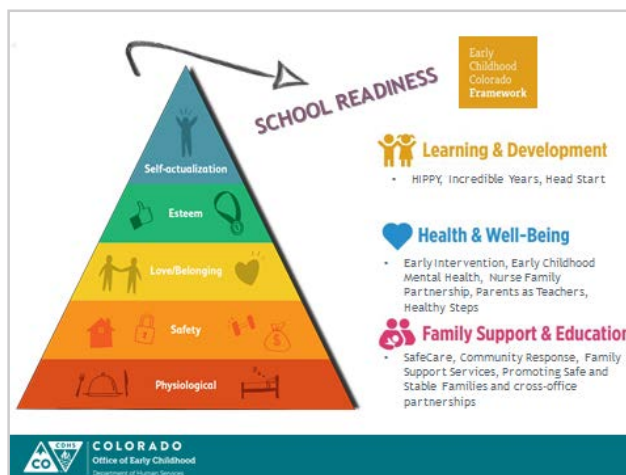
Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)

CDHS continued to support children and families through a variety of programs and services. Two important highlights from the year include:

- In April 2019, Governor Jared Polis directed the Colorado Department of Human Services to spearhead Colorado's Behavioral Health Task Force. The mission of the task force is to evaluate and set the roadmap to improve the current behavioral health system in the state. This includes developing Colorado's "Behavioral Health Blueprint". Within the task force, there is a subcommittee focusing on Children's Behavioral Health. This subcommittee is tasked to develop a plan to address how we deliver and manage children's behavioral health and improve outcomes.
- Under Governor Polis' leadership, the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), Division of Community and Family Support (DCFS) aligned its publicly funded early childhood programs through the lens of school readiness. With this office paradigm shift towards school readiness, DCFS has a fresh approach within the three units of Fostering Well-Being, Early Intervention and Family Strengthening. The DCFS worked to align the 14 programs which reside in the three units to the outcomes of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Family Support & Education, Health & Well-Being, and Learning & Development). The Division developed logic models on how activities of each program lead to intermediate and long-term outcomes for children with the overall goal of being ready for school. The logic models will allow communities and families to make informed decisions that meet their needs regarding the various programs that support school readiness.
- The Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning (DECL) includes units dedicated to licensing, subsidy and quality and is structured to align with the three pillars associated with the federal Child Care Development Block Grant Act: safety, equal access

and quality. In an effort to further benefit providers and families, the DECL has refocused licensing efforts from a solely regulatory process into something more meaningful for the growth and improvement of providers. The DECL developed more user-friendly tools, such as an administrative guide, and have trained licensing specialists to both provide more technical assistance to and build productive relationships with licensed providers. The Child Care Quality Unit has redoubled its efforts to develop free, high-quality online training for the early childhood workforce and quality is supported and incentivized through higher (tiered) reimbursement rates to high-quality providers through the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), ensuring Colorado's most vulnerable families have access to high-quality early childhood education. These efforts are all geared toward supporting Governor Polis' goal of ensuring all children are ready for school and beyond.

LEARN MORE ABOUT CDHS AT Colorado.gov/CDHS



The Framework

The *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* fosters collaboration to ensure all children in Colorado reach their developmental potential.

In 2015, the ECLC led the process to update the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* (the *Framework*) originally created in 2008. A *Framework* Steering Committee, which included cross-sector experience and expertise, was formed to guide all content and graphic revisions. Hundreds of Colorado stakeholders participated via surveys, focus groups and meetings to inform the revision process.

This updated *Framework* promotes a shared vision for state agencies, local communities, and partner coalitions – across early learning and development, health and well-being, and family support and education.

The ECLC led the design of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* website, an interactive platform used by early childhood professionals to share and align their work, providing Colorado with a tool to better understand how the state is making progress toward the outcomes in the *Framework*.

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Visit the *Framework* website to learn about organizations in your community that serve children and families.

EARLYCHILDHOODFRAMEWORK.ORG

There are marketing materials including flyers, Facebook graphics and newsletter content to help early childhood organizations join the Framework website and share with others in their communities. All are available on the website.

EarlyChildhoodFramework.org

Early Childhood Colorado Framework:

A SHARED VISION

Colorado Leads the Way in Early Childhood- Let's Keep It Going!

Colorado's Early Childhood Framework website is a resource for county commissioners, policy makers, funders, state leaders and YOU to advance your local early childhood system.

Colorado Senate Bill 19-063 Infant and Family Child Care Action Plan

During the 2019 legislative session, the Colorado General Assembly passed an act requiring the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), in consultation with the ECLC, to draft a strategic action plan addressing the declining availability of family child care homes and infant child care.

The CDHS Office of Early Childhood (OEC), the ECLC and partners at Raise Colorado worked to ensure that the plan submitted to the Legislature would be the result of a diverse, robust and authentic stakeholder engagement process. To accomplish this, the Senate Bill 63 Discussion Toolkit was created to support communities in planning local events and sharing their perspectives with the OEC and ECLC. The primary purpose of the discussions was to identify barriers and potential solutions to the state's loss in licensed infant and family child care.

The OEC and ECLC made presentations to the Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee and to statewide groups to provide the opportunity for feedback and developed a follow-up survey. This process reached more than 400 stakeholders at 18 community conversations held in 17 different locations around the state. In addition to community meetings, data was collected through seven surveys reaching more than 1,200 stakeholders.

With this feedback and data collection, the OEC and ECLC created the *Infant Family Child Care Action Plan* that includes recommendations that were developed in response to key issues identified by stakeholders. The *Infant and Family Child Care Action Plan* provides a comprehensive set of steps for the State of Colorado to address the declining availability of licensed infant care and family child care homes.



OPERATIONAL SUPPORTS

Provide financial, business and professional support to prospective and existing family child care home providers and centers serving infants.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Increase access to training and professional supports that enable infant care professionals and family child care providers to provide high-quality care.



CHILD CARE LICENSING

Add resources to the child care licensing process to increase support and training to providers and decrease time to obtain a background check.



REGULATION

Clarify, coordinate and resolve differences among state and local regulatory agencies to remove administrative and financial burdens and assure safe environments for children in family child care homes.



POLICY REVIEW

Examine how early education (and other) policies impact availability of licensed infant care and family child care homes.

The ECLC looks forward to promoting the plan in 2020 and to coordinating efforts of various stakeholders to achieve the goals of the plan. For more information on the *Infant Family Child Care Action Plan* please visit

EARLYCHILDHOODCOLORADO.ORG

Looking Forward

Colorado early childhood stakeholders have a long history of working together to ensure children and families grow and thrive. Our state has made tremendous progress across the three domains of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*: Health & Well-Being, Family Support & Education and Learning & Development. Families, professionals, advocates and policymakers have worked together to build coordinated systems that support local areas to be responsive to the needs of their communities. The collaboration between state and local entities across private and public domains is a testament to Colorado's long and unwavering commitment to supporting children and families.

However, there is much more work to be done to ensure that all children and families have the support they need to reach our shared vision: **all children are valued, healthy and thriving**. After engaging with stakeholders to understand the history and collaborative progress of early childhood in Colorado, as well as the wide array of policy strategies and opportunities that exist to ensure the state continues to move forward, in 2020, the Commission will:

- Champion universal preschool with the Governor, the Colorado General Assembly, state agencies and stakeholders
- Support effective implementation of full-day kindergarten with an emphasis on workforce development
- Use the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* as a guide to collaborative efforts and increase the number of early childhood programs for alignment on the *Framework* website
- Advance solutions to the declining availability of licensed infant care and family child care homes by championing the *Infant and Family Child Care Action Plan*
- Promote the best practices resource document, *Communication Guidelines for Engaging with Parents and Caregivers*, to encourage parent and caregiver engagement and share tools, resources and strategies through an online platform
- Collaborate on the implementation of the strategic plan developed with the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five to ensure all children are ready for school when entering kindergarten
- Highlight data for the Commission's three Areas of Opportunity using the *Monitoring and Measuring Progress in Colorado's Early Childhood Areas of Opportunity* report, a resource developed in 2019



The Commission is committed to working with Governor Polis, the Colorado General Assembly, state agencies and stakeholders to address the early childhood challenges Colorado faces to ensure that all children are valued, healthy and thriving.

We are grateful to all of the diverse organizations that work with the ECLC in Colorado for your dedication, your innovation and your contributions to this important work. Let's keep it going in 2020!

2019 Early Childhood Leadership Commission

2018-19 Co-Chairs

Elsa Holguín, President & CEO - Denver Preschool Program

Susan Steele, President & CEO - Buell Foundation

Tom Massey, Deputy Executive Director - Department of Health Care Policy & Financing

Anna Jo Haynes, President Emeritus - Mile High Early Learning Centers (former Co-Chair)

Donna Lynne, Lieutenant Governor - State of Colorado (former Co-Chair)

2018-19 Commissioners

Barbara Grogan, Retired Founder and CEO - Western Industrial Contractors

Charlotte Brantley, President/CEO - Clayton Early Learning

Cindy Schulz, Executive Director - Cydney and Tom Marsico Family Foundation

Douglas H. Clements, Ph.D., Executive Director - Marsico Institute for Early Learning and Literacy, University of Denver

Erin Ulric, Deputy Director of the Prevention Services Division - Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

George Welsh, Superintendent - Cañon City Schools

Gerri Gomez Howard, Principal - Gomez Howard Group

Heather Craiglow, Head Start Collaboration Director - Office of Early Childhood, Colorado Department of Human Services

Jai Scott, Parent Representative

Jeanne McQueeney, County Commissioner - Eagle County

Jeff Kuhr, Ph.D., Executive Director - Mesa County Health Department

Jerene Petersen, Deputy Executive Director for Community Partnerships - Colorado Department of Human Services

Letty Bass, Letty Bass Consulting

Lydia Prado, Executive Director - Lifespan Local Change Partnerships

Melissa Colzman, Ph.D., Associate Commissioner, Student Learning - Colorado Department of Education

New Commissioners in 2019

Angie Paccione, Ph.D., Executive Director - Colorado Department of Higher Education

Carrie Cortiglio, Division Director of the Prevention Services Division - Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

Ida Rhodes, Director of Programs - Catholic Charities Diocese of Pueblo

Kate Reinemund, Executive Director - Constellation Philanthropy

K. Jehan Benton-Clark, Portfolio Director - Colorado Health Foundation

Pamela Harris, Ph.D., President & CEO - Mile High Early Learning

Ryan Beiser, Regional President - PNC Bank

Sue Renner, Vice President of Philanthropy - Merage Foundations

Staff

Kristina Heyl, Director

Amanda Pelletier, Program Assistant II

**Thank you to all of the ECLC Subcommittee
and Working Group Co-Chairs!**

ECLC Annual Report Acronym Guide

ACC: Accountable Care Collaborative

CCCAP: Colorado Child Care Assistance Program

CDE: Colorado Department of Education

CDHE: Colorado Department of Higher Education

CDHS: Colorado Department of Human Services

CDPHE: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

CHP+: Child Health Plan *Plus*

ECLC: Early Childhood Leadership Commission

ECPD Advisory: Early Childhood Professional Development Advisory Working Group

HCPF: Health Care Policy and Financing

LAUNCH: Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health

MIECHV: Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting

OEC: Office of Early Childhood

PDIS: Professional Development Information System

PDG: Preschool Development Grant

PQA: Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittee

QRIS: Quality Rating and Improvement System

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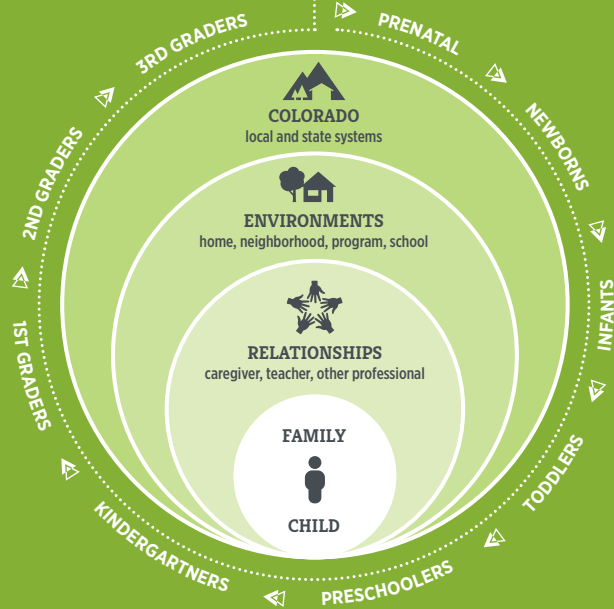
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Early Childhood Colorado Framework

all children are valued, healthy and thriving



Results



CHILD

Young children reach their developmental potential and are ready to succeed in school and in life



ENVIRONMENTS

Environments that impact children are safe, stable and supportive



RELATIONSHIPS

Adults are knowledgeable, responsive and interact effectively with and on behalf of children



COLORADO

Localities and the state attain economic and social benefits by prioritizing children and families

ECLC

Early Childhood Leadership Commission

For questions relating to the ECLC, please visit earlychildhoodcolorado.org