



# Implementation Session: Early Childhood Care and Education

## **BACKGROUND REPORT**

- Summit participants urged to read this report before the event.
- Summit details: April 20-21, 2011  
Bishop's Lodge, Santa Fe

## **CONVENERS**

New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership  
Children, Youth, and Families Department  
New Mexico Business Roundtable

## **SPONSORS**

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

## **FACILITATOR**

New Mexico First



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# FORWARD

## Purpose of Event and this Report

New Mexico's young people are our greatest asset. Fifty years ago, we did not know that 85% of the brain develops before the fifth year of life. Thirty years ago we had no evidence that the care we provide for our youngest children would substantially influence their success, or failure, later in life. Twenty years ago we did not know the economic burden every New Mexico taxpayer would bear as a result of inadequate preparation of more than a third of New Mexico's pre-school age children. But now we know.

On April 7, 2011, Governor Susana Martinez signed into law SB 120, the Early Childhood Care and Education Act. This report provides essential background information for implementing the new law. Participants at the April 2011 session will develop an action plan for implementing the law, and aligning existing programs and funding to ensure a comprehensive early childhood system in New Mexico. Parents, teachers, early childhood advocates, business leaders, elected officials, and national experts will roll up their sleeves for a two-day session to develop an innovative, out-of-the-box plan.

That plan will focus on four key areas:

1. Financing sources and strategies
2. Quality standards
3. Data systems and outcomes
4. School readiness

In a state as diverse as New Mexico, all four of these areas are influenced by the overriding theme of cultural competency. Another cross-cutting theme addressing all four themes is alignment; participants at the implementation session will be urged to look for ways to reduce duplication and link existing programs.

All these efforts support the ultimate goal of the session, to move New Mexico toward a single, streamlined system for early care and learning that enables all our children to fulfill their potential.

## Conveners

### NEW MEXICO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

This organization is a public-private partnership, founded to advocate for the creation, adoption and implementation of robust, effective and proven early childhood programs, available to all children, five and under in New Mexico. The partnership's mission is to create statewide awareness, support and understanding of the overwhelming benefits of early childhood programs, and the positive effect on future generations of New Mexicans. For more information, visit [www.nmecdp.org](http://www.nmecdp.org).

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*"Bringing together business leaders, policymakers, state government experts and early childhood leadership, the session will be an ideal opportunity to stitch together the multitude of complimentary interests in strengthening and improving the lives of New Mexico's children. The personal agenda we hope each person brings is to be collaborative, innovative, and open to creating one early childhood framework that results in a meaningful legacy for New Mexico."*

-- Lillian Montoya-Rael, NMECDP

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### **NEW MEXICO BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE**

This statewide association of executives represents more than 300,000 employees in the state of New Mexico. The organization unites these executives, amplifying their diverse business perspectives and voices on solutions to some of the most difficult challenges facing the state and nation. Combining those insights with policy know-how, the New Mexico Business Roundtable innovates and advocates to expand economic opportunity for all New Mexicans. For more information, visit [www.nmbree.org](http://www.nmbree.org).

### **CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT**

The CYFD provides an array of prevention, intervention, rehabilitative and after-care services to New Mexico children and their families. It partners with communities to strengthen families in New Mexico to be productive and self-sufficient.

### **Facilitator**

**New Mexico First** engages people in important issues facing their state or community. Established in 1986, the public policy organization offers unique town halls and forums that bring together people from all walks of life to develop recommendations for policymakers and the public. New Mexico First also produces nonpartisan reports on critical issues facing the state. These reports – on topics like water, education, healthcare, the economy, and energy – are available at [nmfirst.org](http://nmfirst.org).

Our state's two U.S. Senators – Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall – serve as New Mexico First's honorary co-chairs. The organization was co-founded in 1986 by Senators Jeff Bingaman and Pete Domenici (retired).

### **Report Authors**

This New Mexico First report was prepared by Pamela K. Blackwell and Heather Balas. Contributing reviewers included:

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Special thanks to the review committee for sharing their time and expertise.

# NEW MEXICO'S REPORT CARD

## How Do Our Children Rank Nationally?

New Mexico's children continue to rank near the bottom in the nation in academic achievement and economic opportunities. Out of 50 states, New Mexico ranks:<sup>1</sup>

- 45<sup>th</sup> in percent of people in poverty<sup>2</sup>
- 47<sup>th</sup> in percent of children in poverty
- 48<sup>th</sup> in single-parent households
- 46<sup>th</sup> in children without health insurance
- 49<sup>th</sup> in teen births

Furthermore, New Mexico is ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in child well-being.<sup>3</sup> This ranking is based on multiple indicators including low birth weight babies, infant mortality, teen birth rate, teen dropouts (47<sup>th</sup>), child death rate (42<sup>nd</sup>), teen death rate (48<sup>th</sup>), child poverty rate (47<sup>th</sup>), and other factors. In addition, compared to other states, our children:<sup>4</sup>

- Score near the bottom in national tests of reading, math and science
- Are more likely to drop out of school
- Are more likely to suffer from domestic violence or drug and alcohol abuse
- Are less able to get healthcare when they need it

## What Does New Mexico Spend on Early Childhood Development?

The state spends \$33 million (less than 1% of its total annual spending) on early childhood care and education programs.<sup>5</sup> Funded programs include home visits, childcare assistance and referrals, New Mexico PreK, state contributions to Head Start and training for early childhood educators.

Research shows that funding for early childhood is not only an investment in our children's future, but an investment that improves our communities and – many people say – saves taxpayers' money in the long run. Economists estimate that \$1 invested in quality early care and education saves taxpayers more than \$8 in future costs.<sup>6</sup> Money spent in later grade levels or job training does not save as much money. Quality early childhood programs help ensure that children grow up to be healthy and productive adults. Some researchers point to long-term benefits this way: an

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<sup>1</sup> Common Ground. *The First Five Years: A Dialogue on Early Childhood in New Mexico*. New Mexico Voices for Children. Rep. 2010. p.12.

<sup>2</sup> A family of four is "in poverty" if they earn less than \$20,560 per year.

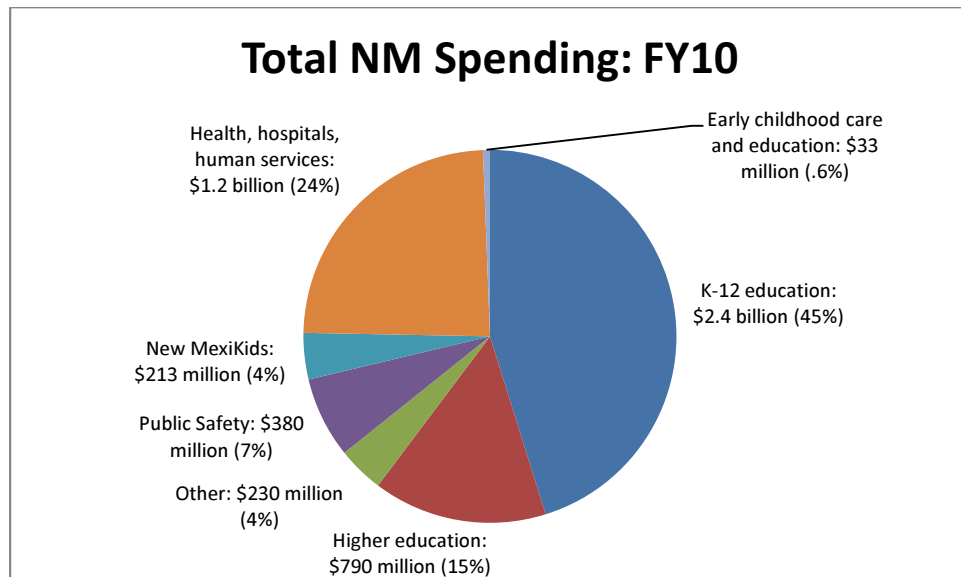
<sup>3</sup> *Affordable Care Act Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, New Mexico's Statewide Needs Assessment* INSERT SOURCE; *Kids Count, Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2008. [www.kidscount.org/datacenter/databook](http://www.kidscount.org/datacenter/databook), Overall Ranking Profiles by State.*

<sup>4</sup> Id. p.4. (*Affordable Care Act Maternal...*)

<sup>5</sup> Common Ground. *The first five years: Choice-dialogues on Early Childhood in New Mexico*. New Mexico Voices for Children. Rep. Nov. 2010. p.7.

<sup>6</sup> *Affordable Care Act Maternal...*, p. 11

educated workforce attracts good jobs to the community; those good jobs generate more tax revenues for the community while reducing unemployment and crime.<sup>7</sup>



Source: NM Dept. of Finance and Administration, NM Voices for Children

## What Prevents Children from Reaching Their Potential?

New Mexico’s geographic, demographic and economic characteristics pose a steep challenge to parents and all those who strive to ensure the economic opportunity, health and well-being of New Mexico’s children.

- Much of the state’s population resides in rural or frontier counties, where it is difficult to access quality early childhood and healthcare services.
- New Mexico ranks as one of the fourth poorest states in the nation with a median household income of \$41,452. In New Mexico, about half of children live in households below 200% of poverty.
- Poor families commonly lack knowledge to provide early childhood services to their own children, and may also lack resources to hire and/or manage quality caregivers for their children.

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*Even if children try really hard, research demonstrates that those who enter kindergarten without the skills and dispositions necessary to succeed in school are rarely able to catch up to their peers. Therefore, it is the responsibility of a just society to ensure that every child enters kindergarten with an equal opportunity for success.*

– Dan Haggard, CYFD

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New Mexico’s rich heritage of ethnic and racial diversity makes the state unique. Over half of New Mexico children (57%) are Hispanic.<sup>8</sup> (A quarter are Anglo, 10% are American

<sup>7</sup> Id. (Affordable Care Act Maternal...)

<sup>8</sup> Affordable Care Act Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, New Mexico’s Statewide Needs Assessment INSERT SOURCE;

Indian, and over 8% are of another race.) Unfortunately, Hispanic children have the highest drop-out rate and represent the largest percentage of the state's prison population.<sup>9</sup> Of Hispanic students who entered ninth grade in 2004, only 37% graduated four years later.<sup>10</sup>

Many of New Mexico's Native American children also face challenges of poverty and school failure. For example, according to the 2000 Census, close to half of Navajo children live in poverty compared to 12% of Anglo children. Only 38% of Native American third graders are proficient in reading and only 27% in math.<sup>11</sup> Proficiency levels are even lower for eleventh graders and dropout rates continue to climb.

## WHAT THE PUBLIC SAYS

In the last two years, New Mexicans have enjoyed many opportunities to share their opinions on early childhood issues. Events included *Everyday Democracy* community forums, Viewpoint Learning dialogues, a host of convenings by the New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership, a set of town halls organized by New Mexico First, and a six-part television series aired on KNME-TV. From these events, we have learned that New Mexicans are caring, committed people who want the very best for our children.

### Viewpoint Learning Dialogues

In Summer 2010, the public dialogue organization Viewpoint Learning held a series of discussions in Albuquerque, Laguna Pueblo, Las Cruces, Española, and Farmington. All the day-long events focused on early childhood issues. Participants expressed a range of perspectives, including the following recurring themes:

- New Mexico must do more to help all parents and families, not just the disadvantaged, and the entire state will benefit in the long run.
- Parents need broad-based, culturally sensitive educations on parenting skills, child development, nutrition, and school readiness.
- Participants strongly supported high quality preschool, with many recommending that a year of optional PreK be available to all 4-year-olds.

Additional findings are available in the full report: [www.viewpointlearning.com/publications/reports/OVOC.pdf](http://www.viewpointlearning.com/publications/reports/OVOC.pdf)

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<sup>9</sup> Id. p.2. (*Affordable Care Act Maternal...*)

<sup>10</sup> New Mexico Public Education Department.

<sup>11</sup> NM Public Education Department. *Indian Education Status Report for 2006-2007*.

## Early Childhood Development Partnership Convenings

Since November 2009, the New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership (NMECDP) has hosted a number of public meetings in which business leaders comprised a substantial portion of event participants. NMECDP also conducted one-on-one meetings with policymakers, state government early childhood experts, leaders in early childhood, and national consultants. In addition, NMECDP participated in a number of gatherings hosted by other early childhood organizations (i.e. NM Voices for Children, Partnership for American's Economic Success, Committee for Economic Development, Pew Charitable Trusts, and W.K. Kellogg Foundation). Each gathering built on the previous by improving participants' knowledge and creating opportunities for effective public policy.

Informed by its events and meetings, NMECDP set goals for engaging business leaders and policymakers.

### **BUSINESS LEADER ENGAGEMENT GOALS**

1. Ensure business and community leaders have an increased awareness of the impact of early childhood programs and investment.
2. Create opportunities for business and community leaders to actively participate in furthering the message about the importance of early childhood.
3. Ensure that this awareness and participation is evident in New Mexico and manifests itself in legislative advocacy for effective early childhood policy and investment.

### **POLICYMAKER ENGAGEMENT GOALS**

1. Influence and inform policymakers, in spite of economic and budgetary challenges, to prioritize investments in early childhood by holding firm on current appropriations.
2. Create a "no-risk" environment in which policymakers are active and willing collaborators for early childhood investment in their home communities and around the state.

**SUMMARY OF NMECDP CONVENINGS**Additional information available at [nmeecd.org](http://nmeecd.org).

<b>Date</b>	<b>Convening</b>	<b>Participant Demographic</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
November 2009	NM Summit on Early Childhood Investment	200 participants: 80% business leaders	Launch event to build business leader support and understanding of early childhood investments.
January 2010	Sessions with Rob Grunewald, MN Federal Reserve Board on “The Economics of Early Childhood Investment: Let’s Not Loose Ground”	Three sessions: Approx. 100 participants, 80% business leaders	A follow up event to build on efforts to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of early childhood investment and its impact on the economic vitality of communities and states.
May 2010	NMECDP & NM Business Roundtable Work Session: The Development of Principles for Early Childhood Investment	60 participants: 99% business leaders	Facilitated business leaders in the initial development of early childhood education public policy/legislation. Became the foundation for SB 120; see p. 19.
June 2010	Early Childhood Finance, Exploring Options and Gaining Understanding	Three Sessions: 60 Participants, 50% business leaders	Purpose was to discuss financing models with national experts. Enabled participants to seek expert advice on early childhood financing mechanisms.
October 2010	David Lawrence: Helping Every Child Read & Succeed	150 community and business leaders	Event built awareness and support for early childhood investment. Addressed creating a movement that embraces all children, preparing them for school and a successful future.
November 2010	Research & Polling: Discussion of ECE polling results	40 participants: 50% business leaders	Released a commissioned report of the business leader and legislative polling results on the topic of early childhood investments in New Mexico.
January 2011	Legislative Reception: The Economic Impact of Early Care and Education in New Mexico	50 participants: business leaders, legislators, early childhood practitioners	Purpose was to share a commissioned report on the economic impact of the early childhood industry on New Mexico.

## Public Square Vision

Mothers and fathers who took part in KNME-TV's March 2011 televised discussion on parenting small children developed the following three vision statements.

### **BECOMING PARENTS**

Within a community of support and a culture of collaboration, parents will be positive role models who are a voice of reason, patience, caring, compassion, and confidence about what is truly important and best for their children. They have the support and ability to make children feel they have value just as they are with all their unique qualities. They are aware of their children's needs and how to support them as they learn to do new things and take their talents out into a world that is waiting for them. Parents recognize that parenting is a learning process and are willing to access help when they need it.

### **PARENTS AND SCHOOLS**

Parents and teachers will have a shared sense of purpose and mutual trust regarding what is good for every child's development. There will be an open invitation to communicate, collaborate, and work in partnership to help children learn in and out of the classroom.

### **PARENTS AND GOVERNMENT**

Our government focuses on what matters to the health and well-being of children, recognizing that all children learn differently and develop at their own pace. Programs that promote good nutrition, physical activity, safe behavior, language development, culture, and creative pursuits are supported.

## New Mexico First Town Halls

In the spring of 2010, over 300 people from 44 communities took part in a series of town halls addressing the needs of youth and families. They came from small, medium, and large towns representing community, education, business, social service, tribal, and government interests. While the primary focus was on youth development, participants in each town hall pointed out again and again that effective parenting in the early childhood years is essential. Many participants believed that all or most of the challenges that derail teenagers could be prevented if they had stronger parental and educational foundations in their early years. Community members noted that many parents lack the skills to help their children grow up to be emotionally, physically, and spiritually healthy. Among other things, participants called for increased parental involvement from pre-school to high school. They also called on more adults to become mentors for children and encouraged business owners to support employees volunteering in pre-schools and k-12 schools.

The full report of 84 recommendations is available at: [nmfirst.org/events/previous-events](http://nmfirst.org/events/previous-events). *(Select Town Hall 38.)*

# EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Much of the work during the 2011 implementation session, for which this report was prepared, will focus on supporting and informing the state's Early Learning Advisory Council.

## Origin of the NM Early Learning Advisory Council

In 2008, federal law required states to establish early childhood education and care advisory councils. New Mexico established its council in 2009 with a broad membership of stakeholders. The council is staffed by the state's Children Youth and Families Department. The CYFD received a three-year federal grant to launch and support the council, resulting in a blueprint for New Mexico's early childhood system.

## Council Goals: Equal Opportunity, Program Alignment, Quality Learning

The council's work focuses on all children having equal opportunities for success in school, based on access to an aligned and quality early learning system. To accomplish this goal, the council identified New Mexico's seven major early education and care systems and transformed them into a "system of systems." These seven federal, tribal and state systems include:

- early intervention
- home visiting
- Early/Head Start
- childcare
- family support
- early childhood special education
- New Mexico PreK

This approach recognizes the need for system-wide change and improvement as well as the need for alignment of programs and effective use of resources. The council's efforts will also focus on aligning the early childhood system with the public school system (kindergarten through third grade).

### DIAMOND SYSTEM OF SYSTEMS DIAGRAM



## Council Objectives

The council recognizes that there are many challenges New Mexico must resolve that impede our children's opportunities. These challenges include:<sup>12</sup>

- **Fragmentation of Services and Silos** – The work to build early childhood programs is often done in isolation. Efforts have been made to align systems, but further collaboration and coordination is required.
- **Lack of Access to Services and Awareness** - Many New Mexico families are unaware of existing services in their communities.
- **Funding and Poverty** - Some people believe that New Mexico suffers from a lack of adequate funding for early childhood education programs. Others argue that we just need to use existing dollars better. As a poor state in an economic downturn, scarce dollars must be invested to produce the greatest return.
- **Data Systems** - New Mexico lacks a coordinated and integrated system of data collection and analysis across early learning systems. Information, like the systems responsible for collecting it, is maintained “in silos.” While each system may have collected data for the population it serves, there are few linkages between data systems. Operators of those systems have neither a requirement nor mechanism to share the data.

Keeping in mind these challenges, the council has set the following objectives and initiated several projects.

### OBJECTIVE 1: INTEGRATED DATA SYSTEM

Establish an integrated data system with two primary components that will allow the state to correlate services being provided with results-based accountability measures: a unique identifier system and a data warehouse. Actions underway include:

- The Early Childhood Data Warehouse has been established within the NM Department of Health. Risk indicators (e.g. rates of abuse, pregnancy, low birth rate, poverty, unemployment, drop-out) have been entered. Using that information, communities have been ranked by their degree of risk.
- Data regarding current early childhood services are now being entered. Client data from each system is being entered as it is available.
- Aggregated data will be available to the public.
- The UNM Center for Education Research is under contract to document gaps in the early learning system, especially within areas identified as high risk. This analysis will be completed June 2011.

### OBJECTIVE 2: ALIGNED SERVICES

Establish an aligned early learning system with programs that are more efficiently and intentionally funded so that all families have consistent access to a seamless continuum of appropriate services, with assurance that children who are most at risk for school failure have equitable access to the highest quality programs. Actions underway:

- A New Mexico State University (NMSU) faculty member is under contract to write the New Mexico Early Learning Plan. The plan will serve as a policy and vision statement regarding the early learning system in New Mexico.

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<sup>12</sup> NM Children Youth and Families Department. *New Mexico's Early Learning System[s]: The transformation of seven major early education and care systems into a "system of systems"*. Federal grant application. Dec. 15, 2009.

- A national expert on early learning standards is under contract to offer training regarding the *New Mexico Early Childhood Early Learning Guidelines: Birth through Kindergarten*.

**OBJECTIVE 3: MORE CHILDREN IN QUALITY PROGRAMS**

Increase the participation of children (especially those who are at risk for school failure) in the highest quality programs.

**OBJECTIVE 4: FAMILY SUPPORT AS PART OF EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM**

Establish family support as a recognized early learning system and ensure that a continuum of family support services is equitably available to all families in New Mexico. There is one action already underway:

- The former executive director of Parents Reaching Out is under contract to develop a definition of “Family Support System.” She has extensive experience conducting research on systems in others states and will team with NMSU to hold focus groups throughout the state in Spring 2011.

**OBJECTIVE 5: ALIGNMENT WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Align early learning systems with the public education (k-3) system as the foundation for New Mexico’s P-20 education system through the promotion of ready schools.

## Existing Improvement & Alignment Efforts<sup>13</sup>

Since CYFD's establishment in 1992, it has worked with other departments and agencies outside state government to establish a quality, comprehensive and coordinated early care and education system. Efforts focus on public policy and increasing capacity and quality.

### PUBLIC POLICY EFFORTS

In 1989, a governor-appointed Child Development Board was established to provide oversight and direction on professional development program standards. Accomplishments include:

- **Professional Development System** – By coordinating efforts with the PED, the Department of Health, and higher education institutions, New Mexico now has the only fully articulated and coordinated system of licensure and certification for early care and education professionals in the United States. The system encompasses all those working with children, birth through third grade.
- **Early Learning Guidelines, Birth through Kindergarten** – These early learning guidelines are now being implemented in all early care and education systems. In preschool programs (PreK, Head Start, and Early Childhood Special Education), the guidelines serve as preschool outcomes, providing indicators of readiness for kindergarten. They also extend into the kindergarten year, providing alignment with public school content standards.
- **Early Learning Advisory Council** – As noted in the previous section, the Early Learning Advisory Council was established, and it developed objectives for its work.

### EFFORTS TO INCREASE CAPACITY

CYFD has taken a leadership role in the establishment and expansion of critical early childhood programs.

Accomplishments include:

- **PreK** – The PreK Act of 2005 designated the CYFD and the PED as co-administrators of this initiative, with half of the funding going to each department to ensure a mixed delivery system that would include public school districts, childcare programs, municipalities and community agencies. The program has served more than 17,000 children.
- **Home Visiting** – In 2007, legislation established a work group to develop a comprehensive, long-range plan to phase in a statewide system of universal voluntary home visitation to families during pregnancy and possibly continue for up to three years. This system now provides home visiting services to nearly 1500 families in 21 counties. The CYFD is the lead agency for federal home visiting funds through federal healthcare reform.
- **Increase of Childcare Eligibility to 200% of Poverty** – In 2009, the CYFD worked collaboratively with advocates, the executive and the legislature to expand the availability of childcare subsidy to families up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

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<sup>13</sup> Haggard, Dan. *Early Care and Education Systems Improvement and Alignment Efforts*. Working paper. Santa Fe, NM: New Mexico Children Youth and Families Department, March 2011. Print.

## EFFORTS TO INCREASE QUALITY

- **Differentiated Childcare Subsidy** - New Mexico was the first state in the nation to establish a system to differentiate the childcare subsidy rate based on the quality of the program. This system was established in an effort to deregulate childcare programs and incentivize programs to improve their quality and serve children receiving state subsidies.
- **Childcare Quality Rating System** – New Mexico led the nation by establishing the Gold-Silver-Bronze Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) system in 1997. By 1999, the state had recognized 52 Silver (programs meeting higher than minimal standards of quality) and 54 Gold (nationally accredited) childcare programs in the state. This system evolved into the AIM HIGH and Look for the STARS quality improvement and rating system.

## The Council's First Year

While the council has not yet officially convened, its members met regularly in smaller committees and task forces to accomplish the work to this point. There are currently 30 council members. SB 120 calls for 15 council members but allows the council to establish subcommittees that include non-council members.

Starting in 2011, the council in its first year will do the following.<sup>14</sup>

- **Establish bylaws** to assure effectiveness and establish clear relationships with the executive branch and Children's Cabinet.
- **The Early Learning Plan** that was initiated in 2004 will be reviewed and updated, providing a common vision and shared principles for the development of the early learning system. An essential component of the plan will be research-based standards for early childhood programs.
- **Results-Based Accountability**, a strategic planning methodology, will guide the council's efforts. The methodology is geared toward measurable outcomes, or the "ends." The Early Learning Advisory Council will track progress and make policy recommendations based on these findings.
- **A Community Engagement Process** is described in the next section.

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<sup>14</sup> NM Children Youth and Families Department. *New Mexico's Early Learning System[s]: The transformation of seven major early education and care systems into a "system of systems"*. Federal grant application. Dec. 15, 2009.

## Broad Community Participation and Culturally Competent Solutions

It is important to the council that a diverse array of experts and stakeholders provide input. The council will use work groups, focus groups and hearings to inform actions steps and policy recommendations. In addition, the council will continue to represent New Mexico's network of program and early childhood stakeholders.

New Mexico's diversity, unique history, culture and linguistic heritage call for culturally appropriate solutions for each community. A "cookie-cutter" approach will not work. To achieve culturally competent solutions, the implementation work will be guided by the work of Jerry Kinkade. (See Appendix B for details on Dr. Kinkade's work.)

### Key Elements of Success

The Early Learning Advisory Council will establish committees to address four key elements:

1. Financing sources and strategies
2. Quality standards
3. Data systems and outcomes
4. School readiness

These four elements are profiled later in this report.

### ENSURING CULTURAL EQUITY AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE: KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Who are the cultural communities affected by the policy/practice/decision, and are they at the table?
2. How will the policy/practice/decision affect each cultural community?
3. How will the policy/practice/decision be perceived by each cultural community?
4. Does the policy/practice/decision ignore or worsen existing disparities, or produce other unintended consequences?
5. Based on the above responses, what revisions are needed in the policy/practice/decision under discussion?

## Senate Bill 120

# EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION ACT

The Early Childhood Care and Education Act, SB 120, does the following key things:

1. Establishes a comprehensive system that aligns state and private programs (such as home visitation, childcare, Head Start, PreK, etc.)
2. Allows the state to establish and maintain infrastructure to support quality in the system's programs
3. Creates the Early Learning Advisory Council, comprised of 15 members including government officials and staffers, educators, issue experts, business leaders, and community members
4. Charges the council with complying with federal early childhood laws and advising the state on issues including funding, program alignment, ensuring families have consistent access to appropriate care, and education services

During the 2011 legislative session, SB 120 received broad bipartisan support and passed by an overwhelming majority in both the House and Senate. The bill was sponsored by Senator John M. Sapien and Representative Rhonda S. King, and signed into law by Governor Susana Martinez on April 7, 2011.

## Fiscal Implications of SB 120<sup>15</sup>

The legislation creates an Early Childhood Care and Education Fund that is administered by CYFD and may consist of gifts, grants, donations and bequests made to the fund. The money in the fund is subject to appropriation by the legislature. The council and CYFD may apply for and accept gifts, grants, donations or bequests for the fund from any source, public or private. The council and CYFD may enter into contracts or other transactions with any federal or state agency, private organization or other source for the purpose of carrying out the Early Childhood Care and Education Act. There is no cost to the state to carry out this legislation.

*See Appendix A for a full reprint of SB 120.*

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<sup>15</sup> New Mexico State Legislature. Legislative Finance Committee. *Fiscal Impact Report (FIR): SB 120 Early Childhood Care & Education Act*. By R. Peery-Galon. Santa Fe, NM, Feb. 28, 2011.

# FINANCING SOURCES AND STRATEGIES

The Early Learning Advisory Council comes into existence during a time when state budgets are tight, in which many parents find themselves unemployed or underemployed, and when tax revenues, grant funding and charitable giving are down from previous years. The council must take practical and creative steps to finance an early childhood system.

There are a number of sources the council can use to finance a cohesive system. State and federal funding, plus human resources, that are currently appropriated to CYFD and PED can be used for this purpose. The council can use current grant funds and is required to apply for additional grants. In addition, the council and CYFD have access to the Early Care and Education Fund described on p. 19.

One of the first steps toward building an effective system is acknowledging that most early care and education services are delivered by the private sector in for-profit, nonprofit and faith-based businesses.<sup>16</sup> Public agencies provide only about 6% of total early childhood services. This means that early childhood care is essentially a market-driven service that meets both a public and private need.<sup>17</sup> As a private good, it enables parents to work. As a public good, it prepares children for school, enhances the productivity of our education system, and strengthens our future workforce. This means that developing an integrated early childhood system will require public-private partnerships.<sup>18</sup>

A key to successfully financing early childhood programs is to link funding to a common set of standards, causing all parts of the early care and education system to begin to move in the same direction.<sup>19</sup>

There is a wide array of financing strategies, some of which involve more efficient use of existing funds, while others involve generation of additional funds. A comprehensive list of funding strategies employed in other states is available in the appendix of this report.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

This report will be used during the 2011 Early Childhood Care and Education Implementation Session. The committee that works on finance will first focus on using current dollars wisely and consider ways to generate additional dollars.

- How are we using the money we have now?
- Why are we investing in those things now?
- What dollars are discretionary?
- Are we ready to make some tough decisions?
- Are there states that have asked tough questions about how to reallocate dollars and what criteria or process have they used?

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<sup>16</sup> Stoney, Louise. *What Is an Early Care and Education System?* Rep. 2008. Print. New Mexico Families Impact System Report. p.11.

<sup>17</sup> Id. (Stoney, Louise....)

<sup>18</sup> Id. (Stoney, Louise....)

<sup>19</sup> Id. p. 9. (Stoney, Louise....)

# QUALITY STANDARDS

## Establishing Common Quality Standards

Research indicates that establishing quality standards throughout an early childhood system will result in good outcomes for children. Standards for programs and early childhood teachers can be expressed in ways that are easily understood and linked to technical assistance, funding, monitoring and public information.<sup>20</sup>

QRIS programs like New Mexico’s “Look for the STARS” quality rating improvement system can be tiered so that all parts of the early learning system are included. A tiered system views standards as a continuum (rather than a single measure), with various levels of quality that build on one another.<sup>21</sup> A set of tiered results-oriented standards might look like this.<sup>22</sup>

### POSSIBLE SET OF TIERED STANDARDS

Level	Possible Elements
Level 1	Might include the minimal program and practitioner standards currently required by childcare licensing and willingness to participate in a quality rating process.
Level 2	Might include licensing standards plus lead teachers with degrees or credentials in early childhood, better staff/child ratios, and a specific score on a quality rating scale.
Level 3	Might include licensing standards plus lead teachers with BA degrees in early childhood or early childhood teacher certification, compliance with Head Start Performance Standards or attainment of early childhood program accreditation, and/or a specific score on another quality rating scale.

A range of sample quality standards are provided in Appendix E.

### QUALITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The committee that works on standards during the 2011 implementation session will consider a range of issues:

- Are our standards aligned across all aspects of early childhood care and education?
- Do all early childhood funding streams have standards?
- How do we craft standards so that programs focus on continuous quality improvement and get past a 2-STAR rating?
- What standards exist for home visiting programs, and do they align with other programs?
- Do all standards fit together in a rational way?
- How should higher education early childhood teacher preparation programs, training and technical assistance be assessed for quality?

<sup>20</sup> Stoney, Louise. *What Is an Early Care and Education System?* Rep. 2008. Print. New Mexico Families Impact System Report. p.8.

<sup>21</sup> Id. (Stoney)

<sup>22</sup> *Early Care and Education System Reform: Key Elements*. Rep. 2003. Print. p.2. (The Alliance for Early Childhood Finance)

## NM T.E.A.C.H

One example is NM T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Help). This scholarship program creates a partnership between the early childhood teacher, employer, and public and/or private foundations. All of them help pay for the teacher's college tuition (i.e. 10% by the teacher, 10% by the employer, 80% by a foundation). Funds also allow the teacher time from work to attend classes and compensates the employer for the teacher's time away.

### CASE STUDY: KELLIE BISCHOFF

Kellie Bischoff is a teacher in the 3-year-olds room at Serendipity Day School in Albuquerque. She is also a T.E.A.C.H. scholar working on a Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Multicultural Education at the University of New Mexico.



**Kellie Bischoff works with students in her class at Serendipity Day School.**

The early childhood classes have been valuable, said Kellie, who has been working at Serendipity for 12 years. "The classes reinforce what I have been doing. They have been really helpful."

In particular, Kellie said, the assessment class gave her many ideas in how to gauge whether children have special needs.

"Teaching 3-year-olds is my favorite thing in the world right now," Kellie said, though in the future she may want to be a program director. "Some day, I will be too old to be able to chase the kids anymore," she laughed.

She said for someone like herself, who has been out of high school for 20 years, it is hard to find financial aid to go to college, and that's one reason she appreciates T.E.A.C.H.

### CASE STUDY: ANA PARRA

Ana Parra teaches two-year-olds at La Luz Early Childhood Center in Albuquerque. She is part of a program at Central New Mexico Community College providing early childhood multicultural education classes in Spanish.

Like many people in New Mexico, Ana's first language is Spanish. Until recently, early childhood teachers who wanted to take college classes about child development were most often channeled into English as a Second Language classes for semester after semester until their English improved enough for early childhood education and other classes in English.

Her success with the early childhood classes delivered in Spanish made Ana eager to not just get a New Mexico Child Development Certificate, but to go on for an Associate or Bachelors degree.

"I like to work with kids," Ana said. "It is my passion."



**Ana Parra reads to two-year-olds in her class at La Luz Early Childhood Center.**

# DATA SYSTEMS

To measure quality, outcomes and progress, New Mexico must develop a data system that collects information from all programs and sub-systems, can be analyzed, and can be made available to the public. The state can use this information to determine the most effective use of funds and any gaps in the system.

New Mexico currently lacks a coordinated and integrated system of data collection and analysis across early learning systems.<sup>23</sup> Information, like the systems responsible for collecting it, is maintained in silos. While each system may (or may not) have collected its own set of comprehensive data for the population it serves, those data systems are not linked. They lack the requirement or mechanism to share information.

Although community programs might be aware that children receive services through multiple systems, there is no way to know at the state level. Most significantly, there is no mechanism to systematically gain information regarding the populations not being served. Additionally, there is limited access to information that needs to follow children as they move from system to system or from program to program within and without the early learning system. For example, there is no mechanism to know how many of the children being served in the early intervention system are also in the protective services system.

Federal grant funding will be used to create a comprehensive data system to support the early childhood system. Additional funding will be required from multiple sources.

## DATA SYSTEMS COMMITTEE

The committee that works on data systems during the 2011 implementation session will consider a range of issues:

- What specific policy questions do we want data to help us answer?
- How do we establish an aligned system of data on early childhood programs and services?
- How do we ensure that the data isn't duplicated, is based on shared definitions, and measures the outcomes we need?
- How can we use existing data effectively and to identify gaps?

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<sup>23</sup> NM Children Youth and Families Department. *New Mexico's Early Learning System[s]: The transformation of seven major early education and care systems into a "system of systems"*. Federal grant application. Dec. 15, 2009. p.36.

# SCHOOL READINESS

From the moment children walk into their first kindergarten classroom, they should be ready to focus and succeed in school. The collective work of an early childhood development system is geared towards this aim.

New Mexico's Early Learning Guidelines provide criteria for school readiness and are based on determining "what children should know, be able to do, and the dispositions toward learning that are necessary for success in kindergarten."<sup>24</sup> With input from hundreds of stakeholders and early childhood professionals throughout the state, committees worked tirelessly to research and document their recommendations for the guidelines.<sup>25</sup> This work was based upon New Mexico's adaptation of the readiness framework of the National Governors Association.

New Mexico's work in the area of school readiness further ties into the NGA's Task Force on School Readiness which defines "Ready Schools" as:<sup>26</sup>

- Schools that support children's transition to kindergarten
- Schools that encourage continuity and alignment between early care and education programs and elementary schools
- Schools that ensure high quality learning environments.

## School Failure

Many people believe that poverty alone is a predictor of school failure. It is not. However, when poverty is coupled with other risk factors – like abuse, neglect, or poor nutrition – school failure can result. Data shows that quality early childhood programs make a long-lasting difference in the lives of children, their families and the community – and they increase the likelihood of school success.

Research tells us the following things:

- High quality early childhood programs make a positive impact, while low quality programs can be harmful.
- High quality early childhood programs make the most impact when the children being served are those identified as being most at risk for school failure.

### SCHOOL READINESS COMMITTEE

The committee that works on data systems during the 2011 implementation session will consider a range of issues:

- What measures of school readiness are we currently using? Are they the right ones?
- How can we ensure that children successfully transition from community-based childcare and preschool into kindergarten?
- How can we make sure that the curricula and assessments are aligned?
- What do we currently do and what should we do differently?
- What is the appropriate role of schools and community-based early childhood providers?

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<sup>24</sup> Id. p. 40. (CYFD Grant application...)

<sup>25</sup> Id. p.15. (CYFD Grant application...)

<sup>26</sup> Id. p. 4. (CYFD Grant application...)

## **Case Study: Gadsden Independent School District**

The Gadsden Independent School District has been known for its commitment to early childhood education for many years. It uses federal and other funds to implement preschool programs throughout the district and partners with local communities to establish home visiting, parent education, and other early learning initiatives. Sunland Park is a community located within the Gadsden school district. It is a border crossing and one of the most impoverished communities in the state. In this community, early childhood investments appear to show astounding results. Though the community risk factors have remained significant, the children's academic achievement is excellent. In 2010, 93% of third graders tested proficient in math and reading. This rate is higher than the reading and math proficiency rates for elementary schools in the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) La Cueva Cluster, an area where there are far fewer community risk factors.

Sunland Park's high scores might create the false impression that there is no need for investments in early childhood programs. By contrast, community members say that the scores prove the value of long-term investments in early childhood education.

## Appendix A:

# EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ACT

STATE OF NEW MEXICO, 2011

INTRODUCED BY: John M. Sapien and Rhonda S. King

AN ACT RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION; ENACTING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ACT; CREATING THE STATE EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL AND SETTING FORTH ITS DUTIES; CREATING A FUND.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.--THIS ACT MAY BE CITED AS THE "EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ACT".**

**SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS.--AS USED IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ACT:**

- A. "council" means the state early learning advisory council;
- B. "department" means the children, youth and families department;
- C. "early childhood" means from prenatal to the age of five years;
- D. "fund" means the early childhood care and education fund;
- E. "pre-kindergarten" means a voluntary developmental readiness program for children who have attained their fourth birthday prior to September 1; and
- F. "secretary" means the secretary of children, youth and families.

**SECTION 3. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

A. The legislature finds that an early childhood care and education system is vital in ensuring that every New Mexico child is eager to learn and ready to succeed by the time that child enters kindergarten, that high-quality early learning experiences have been proven to prepare children for success in school and later in life and that cost-benefit research demonstrates a high return on investment for money spent on early childhood care and education for at-risk children.

B. The legislature further finds that, to be successful, an early childhood care and education system should be:

- (1) developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate and include the implementation of program models, standards and curriculum based on research and best practices;
- (2) data-driven, including the identification and prioritization of communities most at risk while striving to make the system universally available to all those who wish to participate;
- (3) accountable through developmentally appropriate methods of measuring, reporting and tracking a child's growth and development and the improvement of the system's programs;
- (4) accessible, especially to those children most at risk for school failure;

(5) of the highest possible quality through the utilization of qualified practitioners who have completed specialized training in early childhood growth, development and learning that is specific to the practitioner's role in the system and the maintenance of quality rating methods for the programs in the system;

(6) fully aligned within each community to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources by combining funding sources and supporting seamless transitions for children within the system and for children transitioning into kindergarten;

(7) family-centered by recognizing that parents are the first and most important teachers of their children and providing the support and referrals necessary for parents to assume this critical role in their child's development; and

(8) a partnership between the state and private individuals or institutions with an interest or expertise in early childhood care and education.

C. The purpose of the Early Childhood Care and Education Act is to establish a comprehensive early childhood care and education system through an aligned continuum of state and private programs, including home visitation, early intervention, child care, early head start, head start, early childhood special education, family support and pre-kindergarten, and to maintain or establish the infrastructure necessary to support quality in the system's programs.

#### **SECTION 4. STATE EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL CREATED--MEMBERSHIP**

A. The "state early learning advisory council" is created. The council is attached to the department.

B. The council consists of fifteen members. The secretary of public education or the secretary's designee, the secretary of children, youth and families or the secretary's designee and the director of the head start state collaboration office of the department shall serve ex officio. The remaining members shall be qualified electors and, if appointment is not otherwise provided in this subsection, shall be appointed by the governor for four-year terms expiring on January 1 of the appropriate year. Council members appointed by the governor shall serve staggered terms as determined by the governor at the time of their initial appointment, and no more than five of the governor's appointees shall be from the same political party. Along with the ex-officio members, the council shall consist of the following members:

(1) one representative of an institution of higher education;

(2) one representative of a local educational agency;

(3) one representative from a head start or early head start organization;

(4) one provider of early care and education services;

(5) one representative of a state agency responsible for programs under Section 619 or Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

(6) one representative of the state agency responsible for children's health or mental health care issues;

(7) three members of the New Mexico business roundtable for educational excellence, appointed by and whose terms shall be set by the roundtable's board of directors; and

(8) three public members with knowledge and experience in early childhood care and education.

C. Annually, the members shall designate a chair and vice chair from the members of the council.

D. A majority of the members constitutes a quorum for the conduct of business. The council shall meet at the call of the chair, and the chair shall coordinate the activities of the council.

E. The council may form subcommittees or task forces needed to make recommendations to the council. Task force members may include individuals who are not members of the council but have an interest or expertise in early childhood education, health care or related matters.

F. Members of the council shall not be removed except for incompetence, neglect of duty or malfeasance in office. A vacancy in the membership of the council occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment, but for the unexpired term only.

G. Council members shall not be paid nor shall they receive per diem and mileage as provided in the Per Diem and Mileage Act.

#### **SECTION 5. COUNCIL AND DEPARTMENT DUTIES.**

A. The council is designated as the council required pursuant to the federal Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. The council shall fulfill all the duties required under the federal act for early childhood care and education. The council shall also lead the development or enhancement of a high-quality, comprehensive system of early childhood development and care that ensures statewide coordination and collaboration among the wide range of early childhood programs and services within the state, including child care, early head start, head start, federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act programs for preschool, infants and families and pre-kindergarten programs and services.

B. The council and department may apply for and accept gifts, grants, donations or bequests for the fund from any source, public or private, and enter into contracts or other transactions with any federal or state agency, any private organization or any other source in furtherance of the purpose of the Early Childhood Care and Education Act.

C. In addition to the duties assigned to the council under federal law, the council shall:

(1) make recommendations to the department and the legislature on the most efficient and effective way to leverage state and federal funding for early childhood care and education, including on grant applications made by the department to benefit the fund; and

(2) make recommendations to the department and the legislature on how to coordinate and align an early childhood care and education system to include child care, pre-kindergarten, home visitation, early head start, head start, early childhood special education, early intervention and family support and to provide New Mexico families with consistent access to appropriate care and education services. In developing recommendations, the council shall:

- (a) consider how to consolidate and coordinate resources and public funding streams for early childhood care and education and ensure the accountability and coordinated development of all early childhood care and education services;
- (b) consider a system of seamless transition from prenatal to early childhood programs to kindergarten;
- (c) take into account a parent's decisive role in the planning, operation and evaluation of programs that aid families in the care and education of children;
- (d) examine ways to provide consumer education and accessibility to early childhood care and education resources;
- (e) consider the advancement of quality early childhood care and education programs in order to support the healthy development of children and preparation for their success in school;
- (f) consider the development of a seamless service delivery system with local points of entry for early childhood care and education programs administered by local, state and federal agencies;
- (g) ensure effective collaboration with state and local child welfare programs and early childhood health and behavioral health programs;
- (h) consider how to develop and manage effective data collection systems to support the necessary functions of a coordinated system of early childhood care and education and track children through the education system from prenatal to early childhood to kindergarten to higher education, in order to enable accurate evaluation of the impact of early childhood care and education;
- (i) focus on the diversity, cultural heritage and strengths of the families and communities of the state;
- (j) consider the development of an aligned system of professional development for professionals providing early childhood care and education; and
- (k) consider the establishment of an administrative framework to promote the development of high-quality early childhood care and education services that are staffed by well-qualified professionals and are available in every community for all families that express a need for them.

**SECTION 6. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION FUND--CREATED--PURPOSE--ADMINISTRATION--GRANT APPLICATIONS**

A. The "early childhood care and education fund" is created as a non-reverting fund in the state treasury. The fund shall be administered by the department and shall consist of gifts, grants, donations and bequests made to the fund.

B. Money in the fund is subject to appropriation by the legislature to the department for awarding grants to the council and early childhood care and education providers for carrying out the provisions of the Early Childhood Care and Education Act.

C. The department shall adopt rules on qualifications for grants and specify the format, procedure and deadlines for grant applications. For grants to early childhood care and education providers, the council shall review all grant applications and submit those applications recommended for final approval to the secretary.

D. Disbursements from the fund shall be made upon vouchers issued and signed by the secretary or the secretary's designee upon warrants drawn by the secretary of finance and administration.

## Appendix B:

# CULTURAL COMPETENCE

### EXCERPTED FROM A REPORT TO NM EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

by Jerry Kinkade, Ph.D.

March 2011

Cultural competence is the ability to function effectively in the context of cultural differences. It has five elements.

1. Awareness, acceptance and valuing of cultural differences.
2. Awareness of one's own culture and values. (Everyone has a culture.)
3. Understanding the range of dynamics that result from the interaction between people of different cultures.
4. Developing cultural knowledge of a community or accessing cultural brokers who have that knowledge.
5. Ability to adapt individual interventions, programs, and policies to fit the cultural context of the individual, family, or community.

Cultural competence is a national movement in organizations that provide or fund educational and human services. It recognizes that success for program initiatives is tied to understanding how things are done in different cultures. Since no one can know about all cultures, general skills in understanding and interacting with differing cultures constitutes the basis of cultural competence. It begins by being "culturally intentional" or interested in a particular group (i.e. wanting to learn about customs, music, dress, food, arts, etc.).

However, cultural competence goes further, to a state of functioning effectively in cultural differences. It means learning to get along without offending people and changing to adapt to the ways of the culture. It is also an ongoing process of self and program improvement. It means learning to pay attention to and appreciate the "cultural bump" – "oh, what was that" – when two people from different cultures interact. Each person interprets the experience from their perspective. Discussing the exchange openly creates learning. From a program perspective it means creating an ongoing dialogue – a feedback mechanism for monitoring progress and continuing development of both policy and procedure.

In the western world the dominant society has adopted an "evidence-based practice" approach to evaluating program success. We want numbers, statistics, and "hard data." However, in many cultures a "faith-based practice" has prevailed for centuries. Things are done a certain way because the community accepts that it works. That practice has proven to be effective for that community. In most cultures such beliefs exist.

To be successful, our educational initiatives must frame our goals into language that can be interpreted and implemented within the cultures we seek to serve. We will do so with the help of "cultural brokers," people expert in the ways of the culture, accepted by the culture, and who can provide leadership in that community.

New Mexico is rich in cultural diversity. That diversity has attracted people to this area for centuries. Celebrating our diversity is at the heart of providing effective early childhood education. As we form partnerships with local communities, let's do so in a way that reflects our deep respect for their cultures.

## Appendix C:

# EARLY CHILDHOOD SURVEY

### Research & Polling, Inc.: July 2010

There are a myriad of issues facing children in New Mexico. Business and community leaders, tribal leaders, and legislators who took part in Research & Polling's statewide survey believed the biggest problems were:

- Child poverty level
- Children's academic performance
- Parental involvement in their children's education
- Quality of parenting skills

It should be noted that tribal leaders were more likely than business/community leaders and legislators to perceive these items as *very serious*. Legislators were less inclined to perceive these issues as being *very serious*.

Overall, 20% or fewer of the leaders surveyed did not believe New Mexico is doing a good job in addressing the early childhood issues facing the state. Legislators tended to give more credit to the state than business or tribal leaders. However, the only issue in which over half (51%) of the legislators believe that the state is doing well is pre-k.

Most of the survey respondents believed it is harder to be a parent in New Mexico today than 10 years ago, primarily due to both parents having to work, the weak economy, and lack of time parents have to spend with their children. The majority of business/community leaders (56%), tribal leaders (68%), and legislators (60%) also believe it is harder to be a young child in New Mexico today than it was 10 years ago, for the same reasons.

The large majority of business/community leaders (86%), tribal leaders (86%), and legislators (91%) believe that "about half" or fewer of New Mexico children begin kindergarten and first grade with the skills they need to do their best in school. Most tribal leaders (83%) and business/community leaders (60%) believe New Mexico is doing too little to address the issue. In comparison, just 37% of the legislators feel the state is doing too little.

The majority of business/community leaders (67%) and tribal leaders (90%) support the state dedicating more funds for early childhood, compared to 51% of the legislators (28% are opposed).

The majority of business/community leaders (56%), tribal leaders (81%), and legislators (52%) believe the private business sector should play a large role in supporting early childhood development programs. The most commonly suggestions were flexible hours and day care.

When asked in an unaided, open-ended manner what would motivate businesses or elected officials to become more involved in early childhood programs, respondents suggested tax/financial incentives, educating business about the benefits of such programs, understanding impacts on the future workforce, and seeing the return on investment.

Approximately nine-in-ten of the business/community leaders, tribal leaders and legislators feel it is important to make sure parents have information to ensure their children enter kindergarten ready to do their best. The vast majority of respondents also believe making voluntary pre-k programs accessible to all four-year-olds is important.

In terms of paying for early childhood programs, the leaders surveyed are most apt to support offering tax cuts to businesses that develop day care and other early childhood programs.

## Appendix D:

# FUNDING STRATEGIES

## Business Support Linked to Quality Standards<sup>27</sup>

Early care and education leaders from across the U.S. are exploring a new approach to early childhood business management called shared services. Shared Service Alliances are networks of center- and home-based providers that share costs and receive a set of administrative and program services provided by a hub. The hub (a central office or contracted business) can provide billing services, IT assistance for child assessment data collection, childcare training seminars and other services to a group of providers. As a network the providers can obtain these necessary services more efficiently and cost effectively than if each provider had to provide these services individually.

### State Examples

Shared Service Alliances have been launched in many states and cities including Colorado, Louisiana, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington and Tennessee, and many other cities are exploring the feasibility of a shared services approach.

### Pros and Cons

Shared Services is a good way to provide targeted support to a network of quality ECDE providers. Several foundations are supporting efforts to establish alliances, create tools (Information Technology supports for billing, group purchase, etc) and learn more about industry norms and what costs might be most effectively standardized, scaled and shared. It is entirely possible to link some of the finance and/or tax credit strategies described above to a shared services approach. Indeed, several states are exploring this option.

## Financially Rewarding Quality<sup>28</sup>

Several states created targeted grant programs or quality awards linked to participation in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS). New Mexico established a QRIS called STARS for Childcare Quality Rating System and a related rating call AIM HIGH. The state offers funding for training and equipment for some programs that participate in AIM HIGH.

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<sup>27</sup> Stoney, Louise. *Financial Incentives for ECE Programs and Practitioners*. p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> Stoney, Louise. *Financial Incentives for ECE Programs and Practitioners*. Rep. Alliance for Early Childhood Finance, Aug. 17, 2010. p.1.

## Examples of Quality Incentives

Where	Type of Incentive
Pennsylvania	Established several quality grants for programs that participate in the state QRIS including merit, recruitment and retention awards for childcare providers. The award amounts are based on the star level, type and size of program and the number of subsidized children. Merit awards are time-limited to incentivize progress. Other awards are available only once for up to two years. Recruitment and retention awards are based on staff qualifications and are renewed annually.
Colorado	Established a school readiness childcare subsidization program that makes grants available to childcare centers that feed into low performing public school. To receive funding the centers are required to obtain a quality rating and show improvement within 18 months.
Miami, Florida	Established incentives for providers who participate in the state QRIS including grants for equipment, materials and bonuses for teachers who achieve educational credentials.
Iowa, Kentucky, Vermont and others	Offers smaller, one-time bonuses when programs attain a star level.

## Pros and Cons of Grant and Quality Incentives

Grants and quality awards can be an effective way to encourage programs and practitioners to participate in quality improvement efforts and narrow the gap between the actual cost of providing quality services and the ability of families to pay the full cost of the services. While this strategy can spur participation, ongoing financial support is necessary to sustain participation and encourage providers to move to the highest level of quality.

## Tax Credits<sup>29</sup>

Several states have used the tax system as a way to leverage and distribute financial incentives for higher-quality early care and education. Louisiana has the most comprehensive approach and a few other states have early childhood education ECDE investment credits.

Where	Type of Tax Credits
Louisiana	Offers four, refundable tax credits – for early childhood care consumers, programs, staff, and investors – all linked to participation in the state quality rating system. The value of the credit is based on the star level, type and size of program, and number of low-income children served. The credits may be combined and layered on top of tuition and other public and private support for early childhood, to help fill the gap between cost and price/rates.
Colorado	Offers a childcare contributions tax credit that provides an accelerated tax benefits to taxpayers (individuals or businesses) that make an approved contribution to a childcare program.
Oregon	Offers a childcare contributions tax credit that is sold to investors who may be either individuals or businesses (similar to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.) Proceeds from purchase of the credits are pooled into a statewide fund that is used to support a select group of quality, neighborhood-based early childhood programs.
Oklahoma, Florida (and others)	Offers tax credits to for-profit childcare businesses that attain quality certification.
New Mexico	Offers a refundable state Dependent Care Tax Credit, but it is not linked to STARS for Quality. The state also offers a corporate childcare tax credit for employers that help their employees pay for licensed childcare services. However, it appears this credit is rarely used.

### Pros and Cons of Tax Credits

Well crafted tax benefits linked to quality improvement can be effective. The challenge is that participants must be aware of the credit, understand the benefits, and be able to file the appropriate tax forms. The Louisiana credits are proving to be a powerful way to engage consumers, providers and investors.

While unusual, using the tax system to encourage expansion and use of quality early childcare has several additional benefits:

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<sup>29</sup> Stoney, Louise. *Financial Incentives for ECE Programs and Practitioners*. p. 2.

- The tax system has a built-in payment method, thus reducing administrative costs.
- If a tax credit is linked to web-based data systems, tax departments can easily verify eligibility via automation.
- Tax benefits reinforce the notion that most early care is provided by small businesses that not only offer an important public service but generate increased revenue for local government by paying taxes.
- Policymakers and the general public are often more willing to support a tax benefit than a direct appropriation.
- The tax system offers more stability than annually requesting funding from the state legislature.
- Many low-income families feel more comfortable receiving a tax credit than applying for government aid.

While these benefits are important, not everyone supports tax credits. Lawmakers may be reluctant to consider changes to the tax code if they believe those changes would reduce future revenues. Another option is to restructure current tax incentives.

When the Early Learning Advisory Council offers its recommendations to lawmakers, it must demonstrate any monetary benefits and return on investment to the taxpayer if the state were to change the tax code.

### Bonuses or Tiered Reimbursement<sup>30</sup>

Most states have established higher childcare subsidy reimbursement rates, or reimbursement rate bonuses, linked to participation in QRIS. Bonuses are the preferred strategy because they provide support for higher quality without driving up the price of care for non-subsidized children.

Where	Type of Bonus or Reimbursement
Pennsylvania	Offers a quality bonus -- which they call a childcare subsidy "rate add-on" --that is available in addition to quality grants noted above. The rate add-on is based on the star rating and percentage of subsidized children served.
Louisiana	Offers a higher, tiered reimbursement rate (based on the star rating) in addition to the tax credit package described above.
New Mexico	Offers a fairly extensive tiered reimbursement system for programs that participate in STARS. Programs that provide full-time care and have a 2-STAR rating receive \$45 per month per child above the base rate; programs with a 3-Star rating receive an additional \$70 per month per child; programs with 4-Star rating receive an additional \$104.50; and programs with a 5-Star rating receive an additional \$132 per month per child.  An analysis that explores the percentage of subsidized children in participating programs, as well as the potential cost of providing services at each star level, could be helpful in making decisions regarding expansion or revision of this policy.

<sup>30</sup> Stoney, Louise. *Financial Incentives for ECE Programs and Practitioners*. p. 4.

### Pros and Cons of Bonuses and Reimbursements

It appears that including a tiered childcare subsidy reimbursement (as one part of a package of financial incentives) can be an effective strategy. However, the impact is minimal if tiered reimbursement is the only financial incentive used. A key factor in determining the efficacy of a tiered reimbursement strategy is the percentage of eligible children and families that receive childcare subsidy and are enrolled in participating programs. If this percentage is small, and the typical childcare provider serves only a few subsidized children, a tiered reimbursement approach alone is not likely to generate enough income to cover the cost of meeting higher quality standards.

### Subsidized Loans<sup>31</sup>

Several states have created subsidized loan programs for childcare providers.

Where	Type of Loan
North Carolina	Created a loan-to-grant program for providers who raised their STAR-level after receiving a childcare facilities loan. Programs that improved their star rating during the loan term may have all or part of the loan converted to a grant, depending on the degree of quality improvement in the star system.
New Mexico	Established a Childcare Revolving Loan Fund that provides low interest loans to licensed childcare providers for the purpose of upgrading childcare facilities. The fund gives priority to programs that are at levels 3, 4 and 5 of the Look for the STARS Quality Rating System. It appears that only a handful of programs have been able to tap funding from the NM Revolving Loan Fund, most likely because it is difficult for childcare program operators to borrow money due to low or (no) profits, tight cash flow, and limited credit.

### Pros and Cons

These programs typically have mixed success, largely due to the fact that childcare providers are often hesitant to borrow money.

<sup>31</sup> Stoney, Louise. *Financial Incentives for ECE Programs and Practitioners*. p. 4.

## Setting Quality Requirements to Receive Funding<sup>32</sup>

Many states have made access to a wide range of early care and education financing and/or support services contingent on participation in QRIS.

### Examples of Requiring Quality rating to Receive Government Funding

Where	Requirement
North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Denver, Colorado, and others	Require private sector programs to participate in QRIS and attain a higher star rating to receive funding from the state pre-k program. While these states do not typically require public schools that participate in PreK to be STAR-rated, public school program standards were designed to align with star standards.
Oklahoma	Oklahoma Scholars for Excellence (a higher education scholarship and support program) is only available to staff who work in a program that has a rating of One-Star Plus or higher. (Similarly, the T.E.A.C.H. PENNSYLVANIA program gives priority to practitioners who work in programs at a two-star or higher level.)
Maine	Offers contracts to programs that serve large numbers of low-income children. These programs are required to participate in QRIS. Maine also requires all state-funded Head Start programs to participate in QRIS.
Oklahoma and North Carolina	Programs must have at least one star to receive childcare subsidy funds.
Several states	Make targeted technical assistance (TA), or give priority access to TA, for programs that participate in QRIS.
New Mexico	Programs that serve subsidized children are required to meet standards that are at or above the 2-STAR rating level unless they have a waiver. While New Mexico does not limit access to TEACH funding, on-site technical assistance is limited to programs that participate in AIM HIGH and the state's QRIS. Training and technical assistance are provided at no cost.

### Pros and Cons

Linking funding to compliance with quality standards is a cornerstone of accountability. It is a way to ensure that public funds are spent wisely, and are focused on results. If, however, the state does not have a single, coordinated set of standards, programs that tap multiple funding streams will be required to comply with multiple sets of standards. This is not only a duplication of effort it discourages providers and hinders effective accountability. The ideal approach, many believe, is a coordinated system of accountability based on a common quality framework rooted in tiered standards.

<sup>32</sup> Stoney, Louise. *Financial Incentives for ECE Programs and Practitioners*. p. 5.

## Appendix E:

# QUALITY STANDARDS EXAMPLES

## Types of Standards

### STANDARDS FOR PROGRAMS

- Childcare licensing regulations
- Early intervention program standards
- Head Start performance standards
- Nursery school standards
- Child and Adult Care Food Program standards
- Accreditation requirements for early childhood programs
- School accreditation requirements
- State or local childcare quality rating systems (NM STARS rating system)
- Military childcare standards
- Environmental rating scales, like ITERS/ECERS/FDCRS

### STANDARDS FOR PRACTITIONERS

- Childcare licensing pre-service and in-service requirements for practitioners
- Teacher certification standards for public school teachers
- Head Start requirements for staff
- Core body of knowledge and professional development record for childcare
- Various childcare credentials (e.g. CDA, Director Credential, Infant/Toddler Credential, etc.)
- Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

### TEACHER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Quality standards may include requiring that teachers/childcare providers become trained to objectively observe a child beginning at one-month-old and assesses whether she/he reaches certain developmental milestones on time. This type of structured assessment is quantifiable, so a child's and teacher's progress can be tracked. Quality standards for teachers may also include requiring that teachers become trained to teach parents how to assess their own child's development.

## Support to Meet and Maintain Standards<sup>33</sup>

Once quality standards are established, programs and practitioners must receive assistance to meet those standards.

- Program support can include on-site evaluation, technical assistance, accreditation facilitation, support groups for directors and staff, mini-grants for program improvements, etc.
- Practitioner support can include access to quality training and education, scholarships and loan forgiveness, mentoring opportunities, career counseling, etc.

Most early childhood funding streams include support to help programs and practitioners meet and maintain standards. In addition to the examples above, this support takes many forms. Public agencies that administer childcare subsidies often have grants to help programs directly. State education departments, on the other hand, set out requirements for certification and then rely on the college/university system to prepare good early childhood teachers. Head Start and some other agencies offer their own systems of training and technical assistance providers.

### EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTS FOR PROGRAMS

- Accreditation facilitation or support projects
- The Head Start Training and Technical Assistance system
- Special state or privately funded technical assistance initiatives
- Grants linked to attendance at specialized training
- Military technical assistance/training
- Healthy Childcare America grants
- Early intervention technical assistance initiatives

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*The key to ensuring quality early childhood education is to develop a well educated and fairly compensated early childhood workforce.”*

-- Baji Rankin, New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children

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### EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTS FOR PRACTITIONERS:

- Credit and non-credit training delivered in local communities
- Early childhood degrees and courses in two- and four-year colleges
- Teacher education programs in colleges and universities
- Leadership/administration courses and degrees
- Distance education opportunities (self-learning videos, on-line coursework, etc.)
- Professional development institutes
- Career development initiatives, including career counseling
- Early childhood apprenticeship programs
- The military childcare training system

## Monitoring and Accountability of Quality Standards<sup>34</sup>

Standards cannot be upheld without a system to ensure that programs and practitioners comply with them. Ensuring program compliance might require sufficient staff to monitor regulatory requirements, funding standards, quality rating system benchmarks, an automated system to track compliance, communication with referral agencies and other consumer education efforts. Enabling practitioner compliance might require a sufficient number of colleges

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<sup>33</sup> Id. p3. (Early care and education system reform...)

<sup>34</sup> Id. p.4. (Early care and education system reform....)

that offer relevant courses and award credentials and degrees. An automated system to track practitioner qualifications and progress (such as a personnel registry or certification database) is another important component.

Different agencies may have different ways to monitor compliance. Aligning all of these systems around a common set of standards can help to avoid duplication and make the best use of scarce resources.

#### **EXAMPLES OF MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAMS**

- Childcare licensing compliance monitoring
- Childcare and adult food program compliance monitoring
- Early intervention program review process
- Quality rating improvement system monitoring
- Head Start regional office monitoring (PRISM)
- Accreditation validation visits and reports
- Military Child Development Office compliance monitoring

#### **EXAMPLES FOR PRACTITIONERS**

- Teacher certification process
- Career development practitioner registries
- T.E.A.C.H. Educational Scholarship Program compliance reporting

## Appendix F:

## EDUCATION PROGRAMS BY AGENCY

New Mexico Children's Cabinet  
2010 Report Card & Budget Report  
(Total Funding FY 08)

NM DEPARTMENTS & PROGRAMS	FUNDING AMOUNT
<b>CHILDREN YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT</b>	
Child Care Scholarships, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood NM	\$338,000
T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood NM, NM PreK Scholarships	\$200,000
Community Based Family Resources	\$337,600
Head Start	\$1,947,800
PreK	\$5,500,000
Teen Parent Services	\$611,300
<b>CYFD Agency Sum</b>	<b>\$8,934,700</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS</b>	
Art Across the Years; Art is Fine; Arts Alive on Milner Plaza; Artworks Program	\$52,900
Classes; Presentations; School Days – School Projects; School Tours; Statewide Classroom	\$24,350
Dia de los Ninos; Discovery Center; Prehistoric Preschool-Celebra la Ciencia	\$53,500
F&R Museum Demonstrations; Hand on Programs	\$54,000
NHCC Family Days	\$10,000
HPD Outreach; HPD State Archaeology Fair; Archaeology Outreach	\$26,360
Hale Bopp Star Party; In-House Space Programs; Outreach Space Programs; Space Museum Camp In; StarLab	\$67,385
MIAC Outreach Program	\$3,500
Naturalist Center; NMMNHS Family Days; NMMNHS Outreach Program	\$182,500
Palace Special Events; State Library Youth Services	\$87,500
Sun Mountain Gathering; Tours with Hands-on Activities; Van of Enchantment; Winterfest	\$51,500
Teacher Training	\$25,000
<b>DCA Agency Sum</b>	<b>\$638,495</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH</b>	
Family Infant Toddler Program	\$27,718,681
<b>DOH Agency Sum</b>	<b>\$27,718,681</b>
<b>INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT</b>	
Leadership and Public Policy Program	\$410,000
<b>IAD Agency Sum</b>	<b>\$410,000</b>

<b>DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS</b>	
At-Risk-Youth	\$800,000
Workforce Investment Act	\$3,889,732
<b>DWS Agency Sum</b>	<b>\$4,689,732</b>
<b>PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT</b>	
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers – 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC	\$5,934,205
Advanced Placement	\$2,090,597
Career-Technical Education; Tech-Prep Education	\$6,112,353
Educational Technology	\$9,398,340
Charter School	\$3,960,000
Core Curriculum	\$1,900,000
Family & Youth Resource Program	\$1,500,000
Full Day Kindergarten Program; Kindergarten Three Plus; Reading First; William F Goodling Even Start Family Literacy	\$151,933,804
GED Testing Program	\$163,000
Graduation Reality and Dual-role Skills – GRADS; Homeless; Mentoring Diverse Abilities; Truancy & Dropout Prevention; Title I-D – Neglected and Delinquent	\$3,312,298
Incentives for School Improvement	\$1,550,400
Indian Education	\$3,000,000
NM Standards Based Assessments Grades 3-8 & 11; NM Alternate Assessment; NMHSCE	\$13,486,154
NM PreK	\$6,875,943
Rural Low Income Grant	\$1,997,662
Safe & Drug Free Schools	\$1,900,000
Special Education Bureau; Special Education for Gifted	\$110,875,753
State Bilingual Education-Title III Programs	\$39,621,000
Summer Reading Math & Science Institutes; Three Tier Teacher Licensure; Transition to Teaching; Professional Development Fund	\$7,237,554
Title I School Improvement; Title I-A	\$102,752,795
Title I-C – Migrant	\$858,675
Title II – Part A	\$22,498,507
Title V – A	\$551,001
<b>PED Agency Sum</b>	<b>\$499,510,041</b>
<b>HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT</b>	
Legislative Lottery Scholarship	\$38,704,000
College Affordability Scholarship	\$2,000,000
<b>HED Agency Sum</b>	<b>\$40,704,000</b>

## Appendix G:

## EARLY CHILDHOOD FUNDING

Per County: FY10: Data from Multiple Sources, NMECDP Compiled

Location/ County	2008 Est. Population <sup>1</sup>	Population under 5yrs <sup>1</sup>	Child Care <sup>2</sup>	Home Visiting <sup>3</sup>	Pre-K <sup>4</sup>	Total	State Per Capita	Per Capita < 5yrs
<b>New Mexico</b>	1,984,356	148,827						
Bernalillo	635,139	48,271	\$35,694,888	\$361,910	\$4,079,855	\$40,136,652	\$63.19	\$831.49
Catron	3,405	129	\$4,496	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Chaves	63,060	4,982	\$4,329,808	\$74,882	\$469,930	\$4,874,621	\$77.30	\$978.45
Cibola	27,285	2,128	\$1,052,700	\$16,463	\$335,770	\$1,404,934	\$51.49	\$660.21
Colfax	12,962	726	\$206,769	\$14,798	\$0	\$221,567	\$17.09	\$305.19
Curry	43,755	4,288	\$2,394,110	\$0	\$0	\$2,394,110	\$54.72	\$558.33
De Baca	1,907	84	\$75,558	\$0	\$0	\$75,558	\$39.62	\$899.51
Dona Ana	201,603	17,338	\$21,067,107	\$269,529	\$2,329,845	\$23,666,481	\$117.39	\$1,365.01
Eddy	51,360	3,749	\$1,654,914	\$41,168	\$0	\$1,696,081	\$33.02	\$452.41
Grant	29,844	1,880	\$1,444,568	\$234,000	\$238,013	\$1,916,581	\$64.22	\$1,019.46
Guadalupe	4,346	200	\$97,563	\$0	\$58,020	\$155,583	\$35.80	\$777.92
Harding	684	14	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Hidalgo	4,910	309	\$150,368	\$0	\$0	\$150,368	\$30.62	\$486.63
Lea	59,155	5,383	\$2,639,803	\$53,518	\$334,977	\$3,028,298	\$51.19	\$562.57
Lincoln	20,793	1,164	\$730,144	\$0	\$204,561	\$934,705	\$44.95	\$803.01
Los Alamos	18,150	926	\$72,210	\$60,000	\$0	\$132,210	\$7.28	\$142.77
Luna	27,227	2,124	\$1,062,317	\$40,941	\$218,271	\$1,321,529	\$48.54	\$622.19
McKinley	70,724	6,436	\$1,249,508	\$0	\$570,998	\$1,820,506	\$25.74	\$282.86
Mora	5,052	217	\$33,493	\$4,228	\$0	\$37,721	\$7.47	\$173.83
Otero	62,776	4,269	\$2,769,143	\$18,196	\$556,180	\$3,343,519	\$53.26	\$783.21
Quay	8,929	563	\$77,451	\$0	\$92,246	\$169,697	\$19.01	\$301.41

Background Report: Implementation Session on Early Childhood Care and Education

<b>Rio Arriba</b>	40,692	3,418	\$474,323	\$114,000	\$342,142	\$930,465	\$22.87	\$272.23
<b>Roosevelt</b>	18,889	1,587	\$1,119,490	\$0	\$0	\$1,119,490	\$59.27	\$705.41
<b>San Juan</b>	122,500	10,290	\$3,899,387	\$45,285	\$1,135,747	\$5,080,419	\$41.47	\$493.72
<b>San Miguel</b>	28,558	1,771	\$1,192,855	\$1,116	\$371,888	\$1,565,859	\$54.83	\$884.17
<b>Sandoval</b>	122,298	8,316	\$4,149,855	\$40,681	\$1,300,541	\$5,491,077	\$44.90	\$660.30
<b>Santa Fe</b>	143,937	8,348	\$2,532,371	\$304,820	\$565,476	\$3,402,667	\$23.64	\$407.60
<b>Sierra</b>	12,437	560	\$450,273	\$19,333	\$230,386	\$699,993	\$56.28	\$1,249.99
<b>Socorro</b>	18,180	1,254	\$225,022	\$90,000	\$261,139	\$576,161	\$31.69	\$459.46
<b>Taos</b>	31,546	1,830	\$464,458	\$300,198	\$302,597	\$1,067,253	\$33.83	\$583.20
<b>Torrance</b>	18,269	1,005	\$273,965	\$63,000	\$0	\$336,965	\$18.44	\$335.29
<b>Union</b>	3,777	234	\$36,114	\$0	\$0	\$36,114	\$9.56	\$154.33
<b>Valencia</b>	72,207	5,054	\$2,904,902	\$9,878	\$879,712	\$3,794,492	\$52.55	\$750.79
<b>Totals</b>			<b>\$94,529,932</b>	<b>\$2,177,945</b>	<b>\$14,878,294</b>	<b>\$111,581,675</b>		

Sources: <sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates (2009) <http://quickfacts.census.gov>

<sup>2</sup> FACTS (Family Automated Client Tracking System) Monthly Expenditure Reports July 2009 - June 2010

<sup>3</sup> Internal Accounting System "SHARE" July 2009 through June 2010

*State Per-capita* \$56.23

*Total*

*Pop Under 5yrs Per Capita* \$749.74