



Implementation Session: Early Childhood Care and Education

FINAL REPORT

- April 20-21, 2011
- 9 am-5 pm
- Bishops Lodge, Santa Fe, NM

CONVENERS

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

ORGANIZER

New Mexico First



new mexico **early childhood development** partnership



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INTRODUCTION

New Mexico's young people are our greatest asset. High quality early childhood care and education is vital to ensuring all New Mexico's children can enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed. Achievement of this goal will substantially influence the success of our youngest children and reap the economic success this will bring to our state. We now know that 85% of the brain develops before the fifth year of life. We also know the economic burden that every New Mexico taxpayer bears because of inadequate preparation of more than a third of New Mexico's pre-school age children. Informing the public and urging legislators and community leaders in both the public and private sectors to make a commitment to children of today and those in the years to come will help our state enhance its education and economic outcomes.

Key Outcomes

Participants at the *Implementation Session on Early Childhood Care and Education* held in Santa Fe, New Mexico on April 20-21, 2011, saw the need for an aligned plan that will ensure statewide coordination in establishing a comprehensive early childhood care and education system in New Mexico. They proposed ways families could be included in the decisions that affect them and their children. Participants focused on strategic ideas that will align early childhood programs that benefit children and families through:

- Better data systems that integrate outcomes to identify gaps in service, vulnerable communities, and best practice programs
- Valid measures to assess readiness and ensure children enter the public school system ready to learn
- Quality standards that align the professional development system to ensure positive impact
- Coordination of resources to maximize funding

This report summarizes the results of four implementation teams that worked during the two-day summit to create detailed action plans that will help align an early childhood care and education system for New Mexico. These plans are in the early stages of development and will be refined as the implementation teams continue with their work over the next few months. The 52 state and national early childhood development experts who participated in the session represented business, early childhood providers and advocates, education, healthcare, government and legislative staff, and elected officials.

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. During the planning session, participants were asked to create their action plans in consideration of the following:

1. Who are the cultural/ethnic groups affected by the policy/practice/decision, and are they at the table?
2. How will the policy/practice/decision affect each group?
3. How will the policy/practice/decision be perceived by each group?
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?

Conveners

The **New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership** (NMECDP) convened this implementation session. The NMECDP was established to spread that word, inform the public, and urge legislators and leaders in both public and private sectors to make a commitment to our youngest children. The **New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department** and **New Mexico Business Roundtable** joined the NMECDP as co-conveners.

Organizer

The session was organized by **New Mexico First** an organization that 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 their best ideas for policymakers and the public. New Mexico First also produces nonpartisan public policy reports on critical issues facing the state. These reports – on topics like water, education, healthcare, the economy, and energy – are available at www.nmfirst.org.

DATA SYSTEMS AND OUTCOMES

Team Vision

Children, our most valuable asset, need informed adults. The Data Systems and Outcomes Team will be successful when we create a flexible and sustainable system of data gathering and reporting that is useful to families, communities, agencies, and policy makers. We know adults who care for young children require data that enables them to:

1. Identify underserved children and communities
2. Create effective programs for all children and families that integrate community norms, expectations, culture, and language
3. Develop appropriate data structures and measurement systems
4. Determine the most effective and efficient use of limited funds

Team Action Plan

Proposal One: Evaluate current and future data collection and linkage needs based on the state's critical policy questions and desired outcomes (refer to SB120, P. 29 i).

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Identify agencies that manage Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs identified in the act	NA	Done
2. Identify key data systems utilized for each program and determine existing linkages	Implementation team	Within 30 days
3. Determine if each program/data system collects data necessary to answer critical policy questions		Within 3-6 months
4. Articulate missing data and prioritize additional needs		Within + 1month
5. Identify current measures and agree on appropriate new measures	Implementation team in coordination with others	Incremental
6. Determine desired linkages and take incremental steps to create a coordinated system		Incremental – begin with low hanging fruit and build over time

Proposal Two: Develop the best way to track individual children through the education system from pre-natal to early childhood to kindergarten to higher education (refer to SB120, P. 29 h).

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Identify current methods for tracking individual children	Implementation team in coordination with Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), Department of Health (DOH), Public Education Department (PED), Higher Education Department (HED), and tribes	Within 30-60 days
2. Determine compliance and privacy issues associated with the unique identifiers		Concurrent
3. Determine whether and how to link existing systems or adopt a unified ID		Within 6 months
4. Engage cultural brokers to ensure that cultural, community, and family sensitivities are respected while designing and implementing a tracking system		Concurrent
5. Engage cultural broker to develop plan to effectively communicate benefits of program for children		Concurrent within 6 months
6. Develop government to government MOUs on the best way to track children through the education systems		Governor, Department Secretaries, Tribal officials, and Federal agency officials

Proposal Three: Develop strategies to effectively mitigate skepticism and address concerns about potential misuse of data by ensuring that transparency, privacy protection, and security practices/policies are protected.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Identify concerns of all stakeholders regarding data, utilizing cultural brokers	Implementation team in coordination with communities and cultural brokers	Concurrent (~1yr)
2. Engage cultural brokers to help create methods to address concerns and translate to local communities		
3. In response to concerns, develop and communicate transparent, publically-available policies that ensure privacy protection and security practices, in terms of who has access to data, how data are used and linked, and how long-term data are retained		

Proposal Four: Develop strategies to better utilize existing resources and identify additional resources in terms of funding, technology, human capital, communications, and other support necessary to maintain a coordinated ECE system.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Inventory existing budgets for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. System maintenance b. System enhancement c. Hardware and software d. Contractual costs e. Human resources (FTEs) f. Professional development and training 	Governor and Department Secretaries' directive to agencies	Within 3 months
2. Determine flexibility within the system to better utilize existing resources and align systems	Agencies	Within 3-6 months
3. Determine gaps		Within 6 months
4. Identify resources to fill gaps and identify other existing coordination efforts	Implementation team and agencies	Concurrent

Proposal Five: Develop governance structure to manage effective data collection systems to support the necessary functions of a coordinated system of ECE.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Identify the coalition leader/champion who will oversee the implementation of the plan and coordinate with the Governor and Cabinet Secretaries	NMECDP	ASAP and ongoing
2. Insure that action on the plan is an agency priority and there is cooperation among all agencies, including necessary MOUs	Governor and Cabinet Secretaries	ASAP and ongoing
3. Develop government to government MOUs on the best way to track children through the education systems	Governor, Department Secretaries, Tribal officials, and Federal agency officials	ASAP and ongoing

Proposal Six: Develop strategies to communicate the data outputs to all stakeholders.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Engage cultural brokers to help examine the data and identify data usefulness for their community	Implementation teams with cultural brokers	Not identified
2. Target communication to identified communities		
3. Determine communication and dissemination methods (e.g., websites, newspapers, radio and TV, brochures, clinics, community centers, etc.)		
4. Train professional stakeholders regarding interpreting and using data		

Proposal Seven: Develop strategies to collect data on the current ECE workforce and identify data needed to determine the most effective strategies to recruit, prepare, and retain the future ECE workforce.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Inventory what we currently know about ECE workforce	Implementation team	Within 6 months
2. Inventory all public programs that prepare and certify ECE workforce		Concurrent
3. Bring together providers to determine what is important to measure		Concurrent

SCHOOL READINESS

Team Vision

Children are born learning and have amazing and equal potential to learn. Current thinking about school readiness does not reflect the needs of 21st century children in New Mexico. The School Readiness Team will be successful when we develop an approach that is inclusive, collaborative, and culturally competent. This approach will look at the whole child in terms of preparedness, culture, environment, and diversity of needs. We recognize that parents and families are a critical part of the early childhood learning system and beyond, and that the system needs to incorporate their needs for support, incentives, and involvement. As families, schools, and communities are ready for children’s potential, young children will enter welcoming schools with knowledgeable leadership and staff and strong connections to families and the community. We will work to align the continuum of learning programs based on programs that are scientifically proven, meaningful, and measurable. We will work to close the gaps in this continuum of learning programs.

Team Action Plan

Proposal One: Organize and define administration of school readiness team.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Involve team members who are in alignment with the vision and reach out to those beyond the “usual” suspects	Implementation team	ASAP
2. During team meetings, reserve all viewpoints		
3. Identify team communication and link with other implementation teams		
4. Identify agencies that should be involved to ensure alignment		
5. Emphasize transparency		
6. Use a concentric circle model with core group informed by a larger body		

Proposal Two: Define school readiness.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Collect definitions appropriate to the state from others and build on prior work including input that represent people of color and checking in with the quality standards team	Implementation team in coordination with Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC)	Within 6 months
2. Analyze and review definitions collected and draft a definition with a focus on cultural equity and competency		
3. Solicit feedback and make changes to definition		
4. Recommend a final definition		

Proposal Three: Measure school readiness.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Become informed about national readiness tools that use a cultural lens	Implementation team	Within 3 months
2. Establish a simple measurement tool for a child's preparedness that aligns with team's definition of readiness		
3. Foster assessment of multisystem effectiveness and its impact on child preparedness		
4. Integrate the recommendations from the data systems and quality standards teams to assess effectiveness of ECE system as a whole in support of school readiness		
5. Build on existing knowledge		

Proposal Four: Achieve school readiness.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Simplify and standardize assessments 0-8	Implementation team	Within 9 months
2. Incorporate more play-based academics		
3. Align funding according to research on brain development stages		
4. Simplify application process so that existing benefits follow the child		
5. Find full funding for existing ECE programs		
6. Institute universal home visitation (perhaps rename as parent coaching) by identifying families when child is released from hospital		
7. Align with ABC community schools partnership and others		
8. Institute new coursework before middle school (e.g., Imagine Your Future, Joys & Responsibilities of Parenthood, etc.)		
9. Implement public relations/outreach campaign (e.g., Can't Start Too Soon, The Earlier the Better, etc.)	Governor	
10. Implement public relations/outreach campaign (e.g., "Early Learning Prevents a Ton a Grief") linking education with health	CYFD Cabinet Secretary	
11. Develop toolkit of tangible rewards, incentives ,and deliverables	Implementation team	
12. Deputize people in early learning who will recognize and reward examples of excellent parenting (e.g., \$25 gift cards, movie tickets etc.)		
13. Fund statewide version of Santa Fe incentives program		
14. Tie funding and other organizations, including anti-abuse programs, into ELAC		

QUALITY STANDARDS

Team Vision

The Quality Standards Team will be successful when we ensure a quality NM early childhood system, where quality standards align all early childhood programs and services and focus on:

1. Professionals who are intentional in what they do and build positive relationships
2. Environments that facilitate play as a means for learning
3. Effective systems that are child- and family-centered and available to all
4. Families and community members who are engaged leaders in the development and achievement of the quality standards

Team Action Plan

Proposal One: Study NM early childhood governance issues and develop an aligned governance plan.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Require all ECE classrooms and family childcare homes to use authentic assessment cycle (i.e., Observe, Evaluate, Plan, Reflect, Repeat)	Implementation team in coordination with CYFD	By end of FY14 for 3, 4, and 5 STAR providers By end of FY16 for all licensed providers Landmark of Accomplishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All programs using authentic assessment cycle
2. Align all ECE programs and services around NM Early Learning Guidelines (ELG)	Implementation team in coordination with CYFD	By end of FY14 for 3, 4, and 5 STAR providers By end of FY16 for all licensed providers, home visitors, pre-k, early intervention, home care, head start, mental health professionals, family support,

		<p>family-infant-toddler, special education, and all other ECE professionals</p> <p>Landmark of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All programs using ELG
<p>3. Build an early childhood “one stop shop” around each Training and Technical Assistance Program (TTAP):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure each community is covered Include all ECE services available for families Make parents aware 	<p>Implementation team in coordination with CYFD, DOH, Human Services Department (HSD), PED, and NM Kids Network</p>	<p>By end of FY 13</p> <p>Landmark of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-stop shops implemented in all regions

Proposal Two: Increase quality standards and requirements for ECE teachers and administrators in programs birth-3rd grade and require coursework.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
<p>1. Require lead ECE teachers at 3 STAR and above to have at least a NM Childhood Development Certificate (CDC)</p>	<p>Implementation team in coordination with CYFD</p>	<p>By end of FY12</p> <p>Landmark of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone has NM CDC
<p>2. Require lead ECE teachers to have at least a CDC comprised of appropriate college courses</p>	<p>Implementation team in coordination with CYFD to change licensing law</p>	<p>By end of FY14</p> <p>Landmarks of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised licensing laws All have NM CDC by end of FY16
<p>3. Fully fund ongoing professional development for early care,</p>	<p>Implementation team in</p>	<p>By end of FY12</p>

education, and family support professionals	coordination with CYFD and each TTAP	Landmark of Accomplishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds are directed to TTAPs
4. Require ECE program administrators have a minimum of an associate degree in ECE. Allow grandfathering of current directors and administrators who have <ol style="list-style-type: none"> minimum of 5 years work experience in an early childhood care center passed required testing or portfolio requirements to demonstrate knowledge 	Implementation team in coordination with CYFD to change licensing law	By end of FY16 Landmark of Accomplishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised licensing laws
5. Fully fund Teacher Education and Compensation Help (TEACH) scholarships so teachers and administrators can access higher education	Implementation team in coordination with CYFD and NM Association for Education of Young Children (NMAEYC)	By end of FY12 Landmark of Accomplishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds available

Proposal Three: Educate legislators and public about the importance of ECE.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Develop grassroots education campaign and convene community talks	Implementation team in coordination with all ECE professionals and organizational leaders, parents, business leaders in each county as well as PED representatives, legislators, and government officials	End of FY 12 Landmarks of Accomplishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unified clear message articulated by all parties Community talks occurred, logged, summarized, and summary disseminated

<p>2. Market importance of ECE through media to business organizations (e.g., newscasts, newspapers, TV commercials, etc.)</p>	<p>Implementation team in coordination with coalition of early childhood development organizations</p>	<p>End of FY 12</p> <p>Landmark of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and consistent information to public • Unified, clear message articulated by all parties
<p>3. Market importance of ECE to legislators</p>	<p>Implementation team in coordination with early childhood development organizations, parents, and state committees</p>	<p>Pre-legislative session 2012</p> <p>Landmarks of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unified clear message articulated by all parties • Meetings and other contacts logged with legislators

Proposal Four: Align NM Public Education Department with NM Children, Youth and Families Department and early childhood professionals to build relationships and understanding among the groups.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
<p>1. Convene community or district-wide meetings between PED and early childhood professionals</p>	<p>Implementation team in coordination with PED, CYFD, early childhood professionals, and community leaders</p>	<p>End of FY 12</p> <p>Landmark of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus reached
<p>2. Representative from each community works on a state level to formalize the alignment</p>	<p></p>	<p>End of FY 13</p> <p>Landmark of Accomplishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus reached

FUNDING STRATEGIES

Team Vision

The Funding Strategies Team will be successful when there is a significant increase in funding and an expansion of early childhood education services. Early childhood funding should link to common standards. The goal is increased accessibility and affordability while prioritizing high quality services that meet the diverse needs of families and children, maximizing all available public and private resources, and building on existing services.

Team Action Plan

Proposal One: Create a set of high quality common standards for the ECE system and link those standards to funding.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Review current standards and show how they link to incentives	Implementation team in coordination with common standards expert (i.e. STAR expert), communications expert, CYFD; Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) analyst, PED finance expert, and parents	Within 9-12 months for standards
2. Develop common standards for home visiting linking to tiered levels and incentives		Within 12-24 months for linking standards to funding mechanism
3. Explore best practice standards from other states for programs, teachers, and outcomes		
4. Market to providers how improved standards will attract funding		
5. Build a package of ECE services		

Proposal Two: Examine existing funding streams that could support the common standards for the ECE system, with the goal of maximizing funding opportunities.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Identify and map current funding streams by service category	Implementation team in coordination with CYFD, LFC, DFA analyst, PED finance expert, parents, Federal Head Start	Within 9-12 months for standards
2. Identify gaps in services		Within 12-24 months for linking standards to funding
3. Identify potential funding streams		

4. Prioritize funding	representative, NM Community Foundation; ECE provider representative; philanthropic community, and Brindle	mechanism Ongoing for mapping services and funding sources
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Proposal Three: Develop a comprehensive marketing and communication plan that creates buy-in for a common vision that shows ECE benefits birth through K12.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Gain commitment from Governor, Chief of Staff, Budget Director, NM Department of Finance and Administration Secretary as champions for ECE	Implementation team in coordination with communication experts, NM Business Roundtable, and legislators (e.g., Senators. Sapien, Fischmann. Beffort and Nava and Representatives King and Miera	Within 24 months
2. Gain support of political parties, legislators, local elected officials, general public, families, businesses, philanthropic organizations, faith communities, neighborhood associations, school boards, unions, K-12 educators, and ECE providers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Produce a common vision for a ECE system b. Develop a system that supports the whole child on a continuum of birth through K-12 with a special attention to linking services and avoiding silos 		
3. Educate the public, elected officials, and other stakeholders through a marketing plan that communicates why ECE should be a priority (i.e., enhances economic development, improves the workforce, strengthens families, improves public safety, improves K-12 outcomes, and supports teachers) – key message is return on investment of prioritizing ECE funding – pay now or pay later		
4. Build a value proposition for key stakeholder groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Legislators: legacy, alignment with constituents, votes, altruism, recognition, good policy b. K-12: students ready, teacher’s life is easier, more engaged community of students/parents/others, 		

<p>fewer behavior problems, less remediation</p> <p>c. Families: stronger, more educated, engaged in community, more stability, reduces isolation, increases network/connections, hope, security</p> <p>d. Business: better workforce, better return on investment, provider tax breaks</p> <p>e. Providers: financial security, more respect, higher skills, elevates profession, increased enrollments</p>		
5. Build a broad grass roots effort that champions ECE issues		
6. Develop a leadership program for ECE advocates and professionals		

Proposal Four: Demonstrate to partners (i.e., pre-K, Head Start, private funders, etc.) that common standards that are tiered and tied to funding and quality are in their best interest and they will benefit from them.

Action Step	By Whom	By When
1. Reach out to all state agencies that ECE impacts both positively and negatively, then share benefits and common standards and ask for funds to be linked	Implementation team in coordination with common standards expert (i.e. STAR expert) and communications expert	Within 9-12 months for standards
2. Understand needs of the agencies and share how ECE helps reach their goals		Within 12-24 months for linking standards to funding mechanism
3. Create a communication strategy for the legislature that shows how common standards and linked funding benefits each community and district		Ongoing for mapping services and funding sources
4. Create simple message for private philanthropy funders and conduct outreach to show how common standards and linked funding is good for their goals		
5. Convince all funders to fund ECE more broadly		

Proposal Five: Develop bold funding strategies that fill gaps and consider multiple funding mechanisms that provide access to every child for high quality level ECE.

Action Steps	By Whom	By When		
1. Assess a basket of funding mechanisms examining the pros/cons, as well as the potential dollars, associated with each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Distribute an additional portion of the school permanent fund b. Tap into the tobacco settlement fund c. Earmark amounts of any general fund increase in FY13 d. Restructure K-12 funding formula to include ECE e. Develop a system of tax credits linked to standards f. Create new tax credits – refundable and non-refundable g. Roll back regressive tax cuts h. Close tax loopholes 	Implementation team in coordination with NM Speaker of the House, NM Chief of Staff, NM Legislative Finance Committee Director, NM CYFD Secretary, NM Department of Finance Administration Secretary, NM Legislative Education Study Committee, and national experts	Not identified		
2. Audit services and current funding sources				
3. Examine/reprioritize current funding (e.g., public schools)				
4. Reconfigure early childhood services to prioritize at-risk children				
5. Provide incentives, opportunities, and program requirements to involve parents				
6. Determine government and private constituents				
7. Determine incentives for each constituency				
8. Determine financial impact of federal issues (e.g., immigration, outmoded education policies)				
9. Leverage federal funds (e.g., Medicaid)				
10. Develop public/private partnerships to establish shared services, scholarships, etc.				
11. Prioritize significant share of spending growth				

APPENDIX A: SESSION LEADERSHIP

Session Speakers

Barry Downing, Founder, Northrock, Inc. and The Opportunity Project

Jerry Kinkade, Psychologist

Carey McCann, Senior Policy Advisor, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Karen Ponder, Owner, Karen W. Ponder, Inc.

Helene Stebbins, President, HMS Policy Research and advisor to the Birth to Five Policy Alliance

Louise Stoney, Co-founder, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance

Session Leadership Team

The following people served on the Leadership Team to support and facilitate the session.

Sharon Berman, Recorder

J. D. Bullington, Recorder

Lynne Canning, Discussion Leader

Barbara Kimbell, Recorder

Jessica Lawrence, Recorder

Lillian Montoya-Rael, Discussion Leader

Ed Moreno, Discussion Leader

Kathleen Oweegon, Discussion Leader

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APPENDIX C: SESSION SUPPORTERS

SPONSOR



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