

Working Group on Early Childhood Governance
October 25, 2022
11:00AM EST
DOA Conference Room 2B
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI, 02908

Approved 11/30/22

Members in Attendance

- RIDOH: Kristine Campagna
- RIDE: Lisa Odom-Villella
- DOA: Joseph Codega
- DHS: Director Kim Brito
- OPC: Commissioner Shannon Gilkey
- RI Kids Count: Elizabeth Burke Bryant

Welcome & Overview

- Members introduced themselves and their role within the early childhood field
- Secretary Novais provided opening comments

Legislative Charge Overview

- Kayla Rosen summarized the goals and charge of the FY23 Enacted Budget establishing the Working Group

Overview of Current Governance of Early Childhood Programs in RI

- Kayla Rosen summarized the current landscape of early childhood programs across state agencies, including programs directly impacting children and programs impacting the early childhood workforce and providers
- Working Group members provided feedback on the graphic, including the importance of aligning the chart with the Children's Budget and adding further details about the varying programs and interactions in a future draft
- Kayla discussed the current approach to interagency coordination and governance, which includes a monthly meeting of Cabinet members from EOHHS, DHS, RIDE, RIDOH, and the Governor's Office to oversee implementation of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Strategic Plan and the Preschool Development Birth through Age 5 Renewal Grant

National Landscape Discussion – Education Commission of the States

- Matt Weyer, Principal, ECS presented on national trends and landscape for early childhood governance
- There is a variety of structures and approaches to organizing early childhood components
- Various components of early childhood – such as CCDF, QRIS, Home Visiting, etc – are overseen by many different agencies across states
- ECS has reviewed all 50 states and organized categories of governance structure types as either created, consolidated, or coordinated. Across the country, the majority have coordinated structures like Rhode Island, but many are moving to consolidated or created.

- Across the states with created departments, there is a variation in which components are part of the created agency. Almost all include State Pre-K, Head Start, CCDF, and PDG B-5.
- Key Takeaways include:
 - No correct model
 - Identify core functions
 - Leadership and stakeholder engagement
 - Capacities at state and local levels
 - The B-5 system is complex. Be mindful of changes and their consequences.
 - Don't rush! Phased-in, gradual implementation with capacity to manage transition.
 - Link to K-12
- Working Group members asked about the longitudinal data systems and their inclusion in early childhood created structures; the connections to higher education; more details on what a created department entails and to what extent do they have an administrative presence along with policy leadership; and whether Pennsylvania is seen as a national model.

Consideration of Mission Statement and Scope of Work

- Kayla overviewed the need to identify which programs are in scope for the analysis to ensure that the work is focused going forward, i.e. which programs would be under review, and which would be considered for potential impacts but not under consideration for changes in governance/administration/etc. In addition, the language of the statute focuses on governance and administration and not on setting new goals for early childhood.
- Kayla shared a proposed mission statement and scope for Working Group feedback
 - **Mission Statement Draft:** The goal of Rhode Island's Working Group on Early Childhood Governance is to examine systems that govern and administer early childhood programs and use this information to make recommendations to improve functionality of services and systems that will promote optimal outcomes for children and families. The Working Group will conduct a comprehensive review of the current conditions and identify gaps and opportunities for improvement to best achieve the goals set forth in the Governor's 2030 Plan and the ECCE Strategic Plan.
 - **Scope of Analysis:** The Working Group's efforts will focus on the following core programs and the associated enabling systems (i.e., workforce considerations, licensing, professional development, technical assistance, program quality, etc.):
 - **Child care licensing** (DHS)
 - **CCAP** (DHS)
 - **Head Start Collaboration** (DHS)
 - **RI Pre-K** (RIDE)
 - **Comprehensive Early Childhood Education** (RIDE)
 - **Early Childhood Special Education** (RIDE)
 - **Early Intervention** (EOHHS)
 - **KidsConnect** (EOHHS)
- Working Group members shared feedback on the draft:
 - Specify Early Head Start / Head Start
 - Early Intervention, while listed, is a Medicaid-funded program with a full set of specific regulations. It has alignment with other Medicaid-funded programs, so at the onset it is something that does not seem likely to move, but let's have the conversation.
 - Further discussion of the 'enabling systems' – should we footnote which systems we are talking about, labor, health, K-12, etc. Need to further define systems.

- Should we look at colleges of education and review what programs are offered and to what extent they are meeting the need. The Governor’s Workforce Board will address this as well, which is working parallel. Need to integrate these two workstreams.
- Many children are in home visiting who may be at home and not in early learning spaces and want to incorporate them in this discussion
- Include Family Visiting in the scope
- Incorporate legislative language which has more specificity than the current mission statement draft
- Specify what “promote optimal outcomes” means in more detail & what is the authority/role of this Working Group in “promoting.” Need to further define authority and role.
- Public Feedback
 - Strong mission statement – important to further highlight engagement with higher education and workforce
 - There is a workforce crisis across all of early childhood. Consider including workforce development and advancement as well as higher education.
 - Link to K-12 within the mission
- Kayla noted that finalizing the scope and mission will support the process of bringing on additional capacity and ensure that that capacity is focused on the right things

Vote on Proposed Mission & Scope

- Given the feedback and need for revisions, no vote was taken on the proposed mission and scope.

Working Group Cadence and Process

- Several groups will support the ongoing feedback and cadence of conversation to ensure there is communication across Working Group and Advisory Group members
 - Working Group meetings will occur on a quarterly basis when work is ready for review and feedback
 - Early Learning Council is the advisory council for this effort and meets quarterly
 - An informal advisory group will convene more frequently for feedback and discussion for more regular engagement in a more informal setting

Public Comment

- No public comments

Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 12:16PM EST