



Working Group on Early Childhood Governance

Meeting 1 – October 25, 2022

RHODE
ISLAND

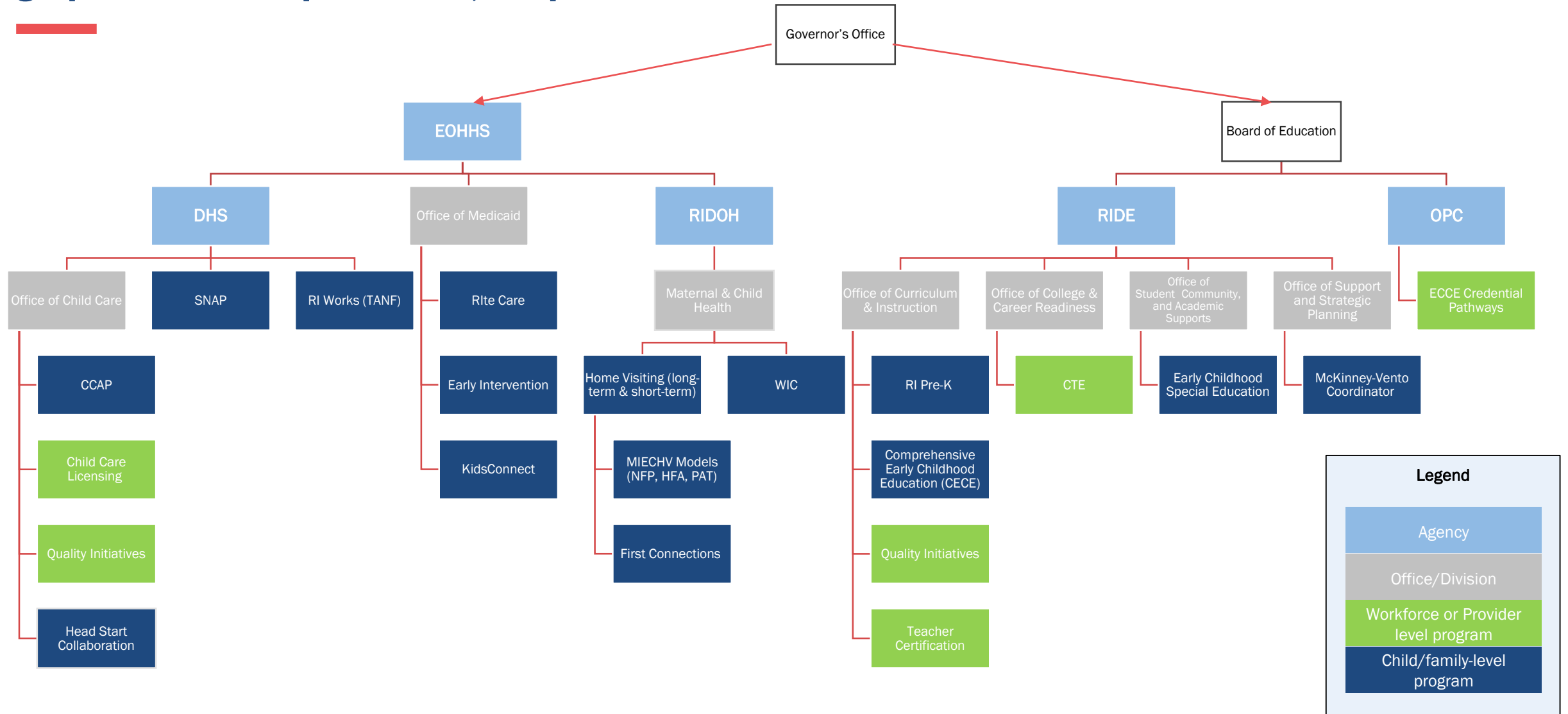
Agenda

- Legislative Charge Overview
- Overview of current governance of early childhood programs in Rhode Island
- National landscape discussion from the Education Commission of States – Matt Weyer, Principal, ECS
- Consideration of draft Mission Statement and Scope of Work
- VOTE: Mission Statement and Scope of Work
- Working Group cadence and process

Legislative Charge Overview

- (a) There shall be created an early childhood governance working group (“the working group”) consisting of:
 - (1) The director of the department of human services, or designee;
 - (2) The commissioner of the department of education, or designee;
 - (3) The commissioner of postsecondary education, or designee;
 - (4) The director of the department of health, or designee;
 - (5) The director of the department of administration, or designee;
 - (6) Chair of the children’s cabinet, who shall be responsible for convening the working group; and
 - (7) The executive director of RI Kids Count, or designee.
- (b) The working group shall convene any necessary subgroups of working group members and other stakeholders to inform and complete the early childhood governance recommendations required under this section.
- (c) On or before October 1, 2023, the working group shall submit a report to the governor, speaker of the house, president of the senate, and chairs of house and senate finance and education committees, that shall include recommendations regarding the governance of early childhood programs in the state. The recommendations shall address, but need not be limited to:
 - (1) The coordination and administration of early childhood programs and services;
 - (2) The governance and organizational structure of early childhood programs and services, including whether, and under what circumstances, the state should consider unifying early childhood programs under one state agency;
 - (3) The fiscal structure of proposed recommendations; and
 - (4) The implementation of early childhood data systems, for strategic planning, program implementation and program evaluation.
- (d) Staff of the children’s cabinet shall provide assistance in completing the duties of the working group identified in this section
- (e) The RI early learning council shall serve as an advisory body to the working group.

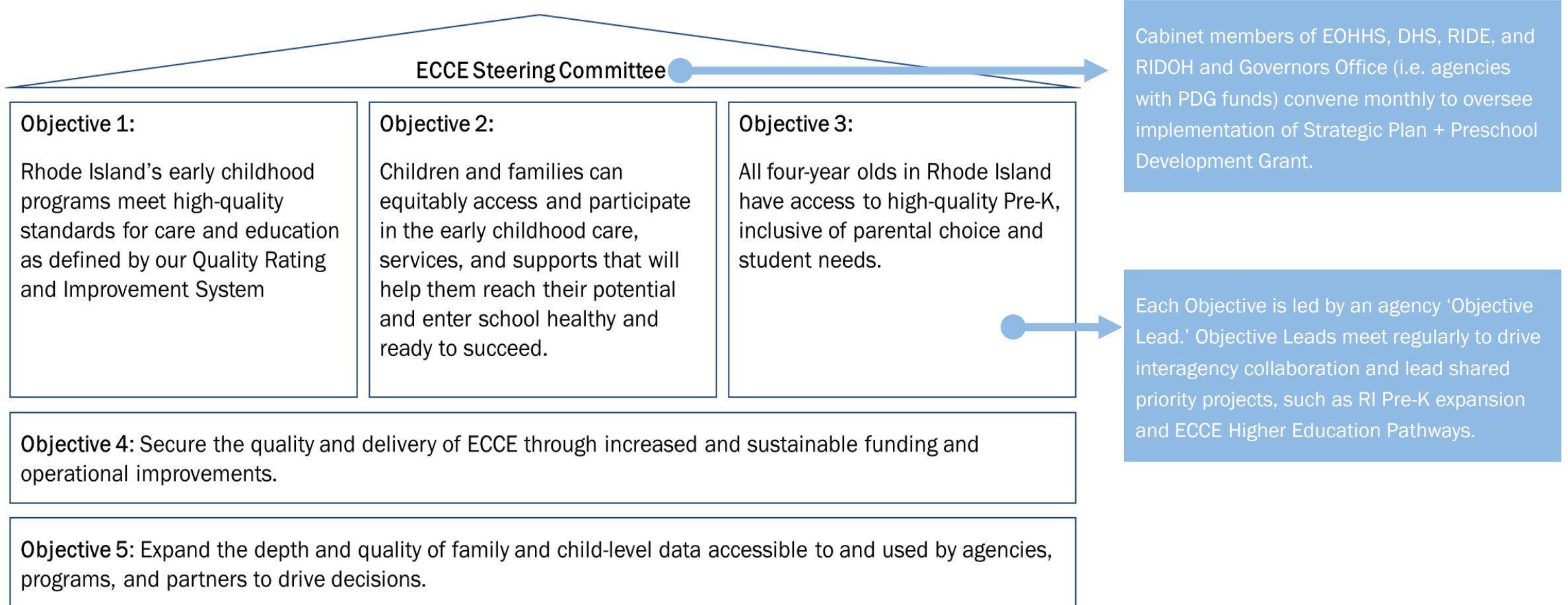
Currently, early childhood programs are embedded within several state agencies. The below graphic is not comprehensive, but provides an overview of current status.



Legend

- Agency
- Office/Division
- Workforce or Provider level program
- Child/family-level program

To facilitate cross-agency collaboration, RI has developed and implemented a shared strategic plan and governance steering committee.



Early Childhood Governance



SPEAKER

Matt Weyer

PRINCIPAL

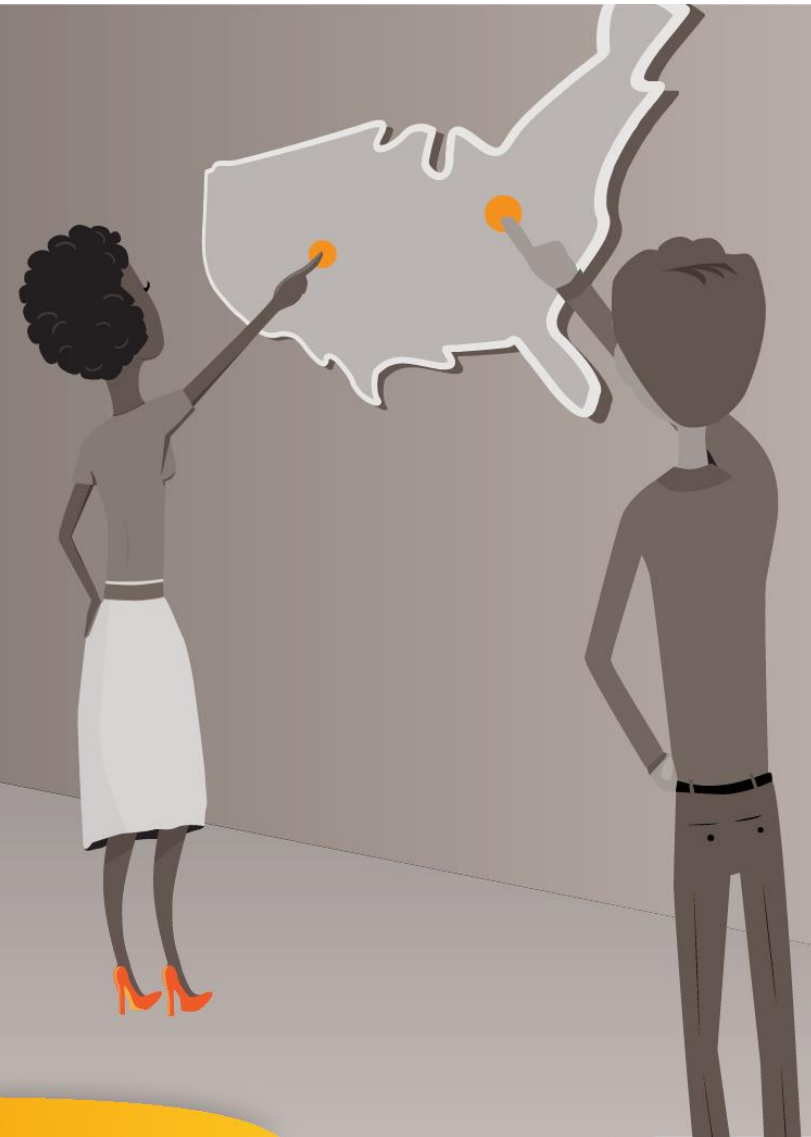
mweyer@ecs.org



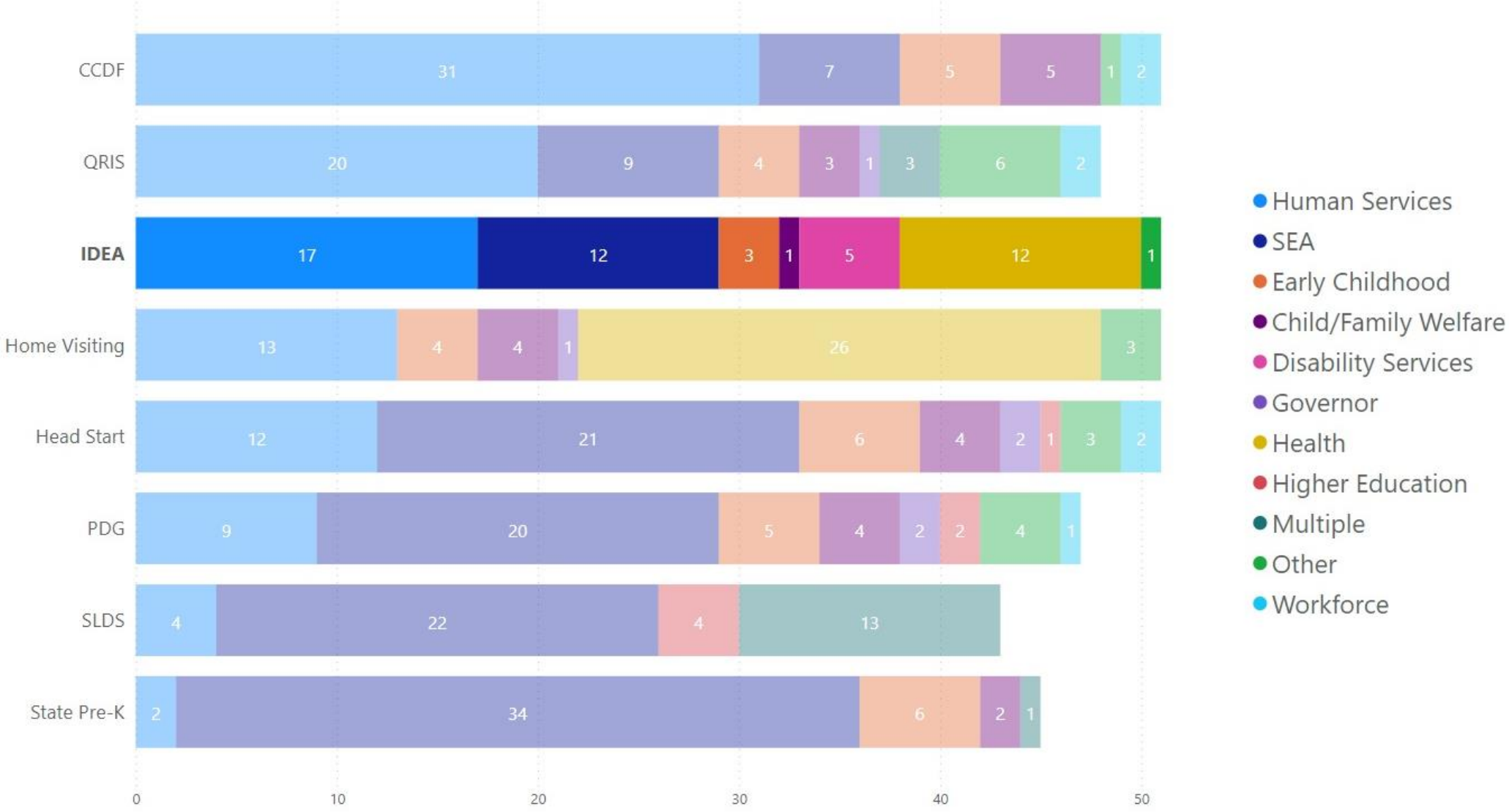
 50-STATE COMPARISON

Early Care and Education Governance

Explore the **agencies that oversee these programs**, their level of **alignment** and **more**.



Distribution of Early Childhood Components by Oversight Agency



Programs and services are sometimes grouped by a common oversight agency, but in many cases there is a lot of variation.

Early Childhood Governance Structures

Types of Governance Structures

CREATED



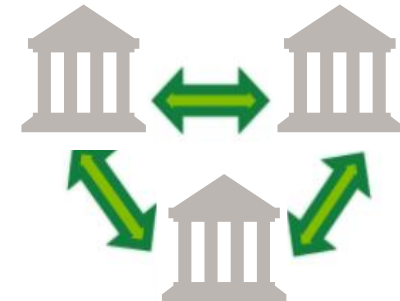
8 states have **created** a new entity to oversee several early care and education components.

CONSOLIDATED



13 states plus D.C. have **consolidated** several agencies or programs into an existing entity that oversees multiple components.

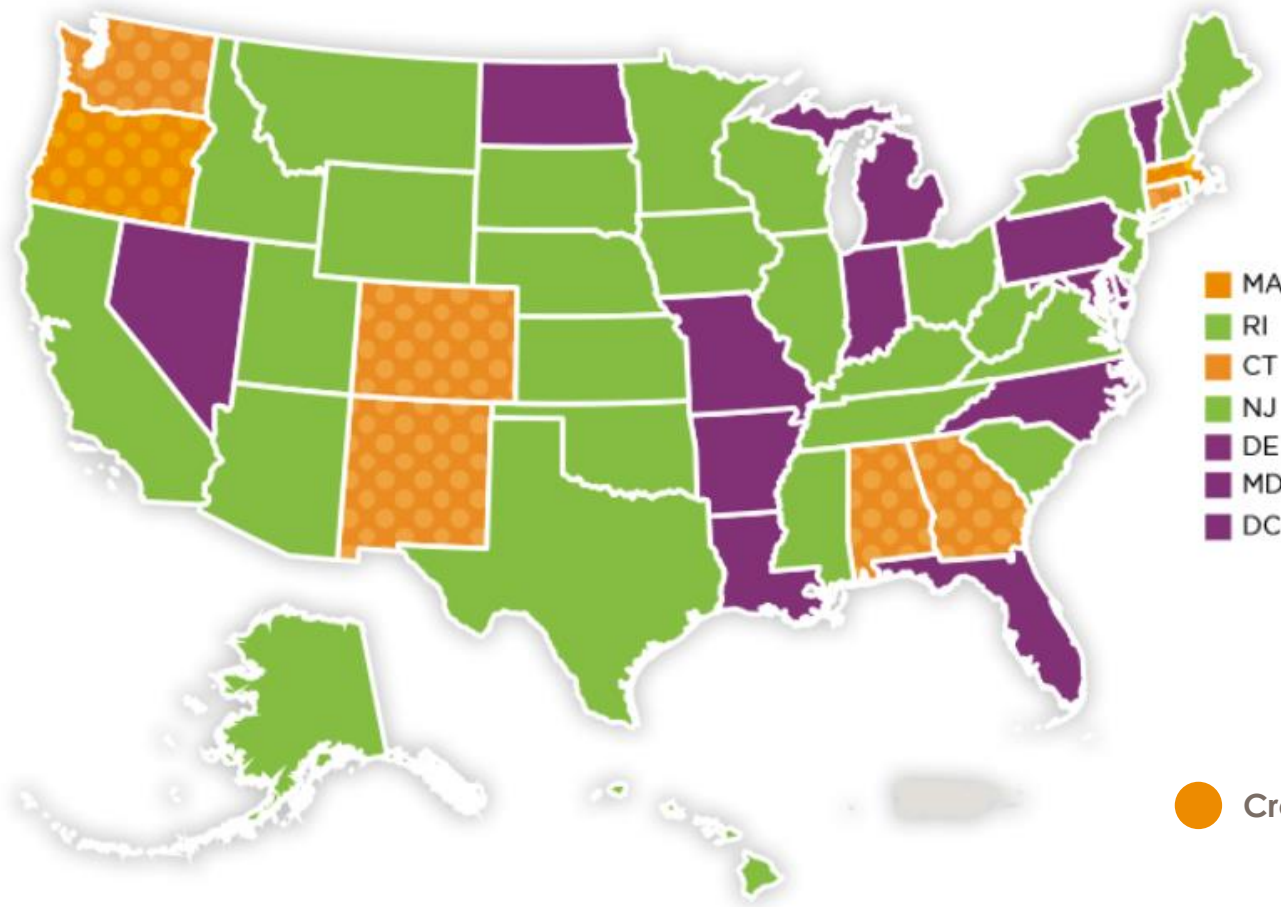
COORDINATED



29 states have agencies that provide programs and services that require a **coordinated** approach between agencies.

Early Childhood Governance Structures

National Landscape, 2021



Since 2017, at least 182 early care and education governance bills have been introduced in 36 states.

Created Consolidated Coordinated

Common Configurations Among Created Departments

State Entity	CCDF	Head Start	State Pre-K	Home Visiting	IDEA Part C	PDG B-5	QRIS	Longitudinal Data
Alabama	Human Resources	X	X	X	Rehabilitation Services	X	Human Resources	n/a
Colorado	X	X	X	X	SEA	X	X	SEA
Connecticut	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Interagency
Georgia	X	X	X	Health	SEA	X	X	SEA
Massachusetts	X	X	X	Health	Health	SEA	SEA	SEA
New Mexico	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	SEA
Oregon*	X	X	X	Health	SEA	X	X	Exec.
Washington	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Financial

*Opens 7/1/2023

Key Takeaways

- No correct model.
- Identify core functions.
- Leadership and stakeholder engagement.
- Capacities at state and local levels.
- The birth-to-age-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.

Related Resources

- Making Sense of Governance in Early Childhood (blog [link](#)).
- Early Care and Education Governance (infographic [link](#)).
- 50-State Comparison: Early Care and Education Governance (database [link](#)).
- State Policies to Enhance Transitions Into Kindergarten (report [link](#)).
- Effective State Offices of Early Learning: Structural Features, Enabling Conditions and Key Functions in Four States (executive summary [link](#); full report [link](#)).
- Early Childhood Governance: Getting There From Here (decision guide [link](#); full report [link](#)).

ECS LIAISON

Joel Moore

STATE RELATIONS STRATEGIST

jmoore@ecs.org



To focus our efforts, it is important that we identify a clear mission statement that states what is in scope and what is out of scope for the report.

On or before October 1, 2023, the working group shall submit a report to the governor, speaker of the house, president of the senate, and chairs of house and senate finance and education committees, that shall include recommendations regarding the governance of **early childhood programs** in the state. The recommendations shall address, but need not be limited to:

- The **coordination and administration of early childhood programs and services**;
- The **governance and organizational structure** of early childhood programs and services, including whether, and under what circumstances, the state should consider unifying early childhood programs under one state agency;
- The **fiscal structure** of proposed recommendations; and
- The implementation of **early childhood data systems**, for strategic planning, program implementation and program evaluation.

Consideration: The legislation **does not specify which “early childhood programs and services” are in scope**. Defining which programs are in scope and which are out of scope will help clarify our Working Group purpose and discussion going forward.

Recommendation: The WG should use the following criteria to determine the scope to programs and related enabling systems (data systems, workforce, etc): (1) programs that primarily serve young children (2) programs governed and funded by the state. This builds on the ELC definition from 2016: “*home visiting, Early Head Start, Head Start, State Pre-K, Early Intervention, Preschool Special Education, child care... and include critical infrastructure components – licensing, BrightStars, professional development, higher education, developmental screening, etc.*”

Consideration: The legislation focuses on **governance, organizational structure, fiscal structure, and data systems** and does not put discussion of overall goals for early childhood in scope for the Working Group to determine.

Recommendation: the Working Group should focus on identifying recommendations that advance the Governor’s goals as described in the RI 2030 Plan and the ECCE Strategic Plan.

Draft mission statement and approach to defining scope.

For Working Group discussion and consideration

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)

VOTE: Decision on Mission & Scope

**RHODE
ISLAND**

Working Group + Advisory Group Cadence Going Forward

Meeting	Members (*can have designees)	Public Meeting	Purpose	Frequency
Working Group on Early Childhood Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary Novais, Chair (EOHHS) • Commissioner Infante-Green (RIDE) • Director Brito (DHS) • Director Bandy (RIDOH) • Director Thorsen (DOA) • Commissioner Gilkey (OPC) • Elizabeth Burke Bryant, RI Kids Count 	Yes	Legislatively established Working Group responsible for developing and delivering a final report in October 2023 that addresses the legislation	Quarterly
Early Learning Council	30+ members of the early learning sectors, co-chaired by DHS, RIDE, and RI Kids Count	Yes	The ELC has existed for 10+ years to advise the Governor and Children’s Cabinet on items related to young children. The ELC is officially designated as the advisory body for the Working Group.	Quarterly
Informal Advisory Body	Volunteers from ELC and broader early childhood sector	No	Regular opportunity for input for members of the early childhood sector who will want to be highly engaged	Monthly