

Updated:

Mission

The goal of Rhode Island’s Working Group on Early Childhood Governance is to examine systems, structure, and authorities that govern and administer early childhood programs (as defined in the Scope). The Working Group will use this information to make recommendations that would advance RI’s vision for children enter kindergarten educationally, social-emotionally, and developmentally ready to succeed, putting them on a path to read proficiently by 3rd grade that sets Rhode Islanders up for successful completion of postsecondary education. 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 ECCE Strategic Plan and the Governor’s 2030 Plan. The Working Group shall develop a report that includes 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.

Scope of Analysis:

The Working Group’s efforts will focus on the following core programs:

- **Child care licensing** (DHS)
- **Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)** (DHS)
- **Head Start / Early Head Start Collaboration** (DHS)
- **RI Pre-K** (RIDE)
- **Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Standards (CECE)** (RIDE)
- **Early Childhood Special Education – IDEA Part B, 619** (RIDE)
- **Early Intervention (EI)** (EOHHS)
- **KidsConnect** (EOHHS)
- **Family Visiting** (RIDOH)

To conduct a comprehensive review, the Working Group’s scope will also include analysis of the gaps and opportunities of the supporting systems for ECCE programs, including but not limited to:

- Workforce development, career pathways, and higher education pathways (in collaboration with the Governor’s Workforce Board report in April, 2023)
- Professional development and technical assistance
- Quality evaluation, improvement, and support (with focus on Quality Rating and Improvement System, the RI Early Learning and Development Standards, and the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies)