

Children's Cabinet

February 22, 2022

Agenda – 4-5pm

- Welcome & Introductions
- ECCE Higher Education Pathways
- ECCE Strategic Plan update
- Early Learning Family Survey
- Vote on adoption of minutes
- Public Comment
- Adjournment

**Rhode Island Early Childhood Care and Education
(ECCE)**

Educator Pathway Planning & Design Grant

RI Department of Education

Spring 2021 – Fall 2023



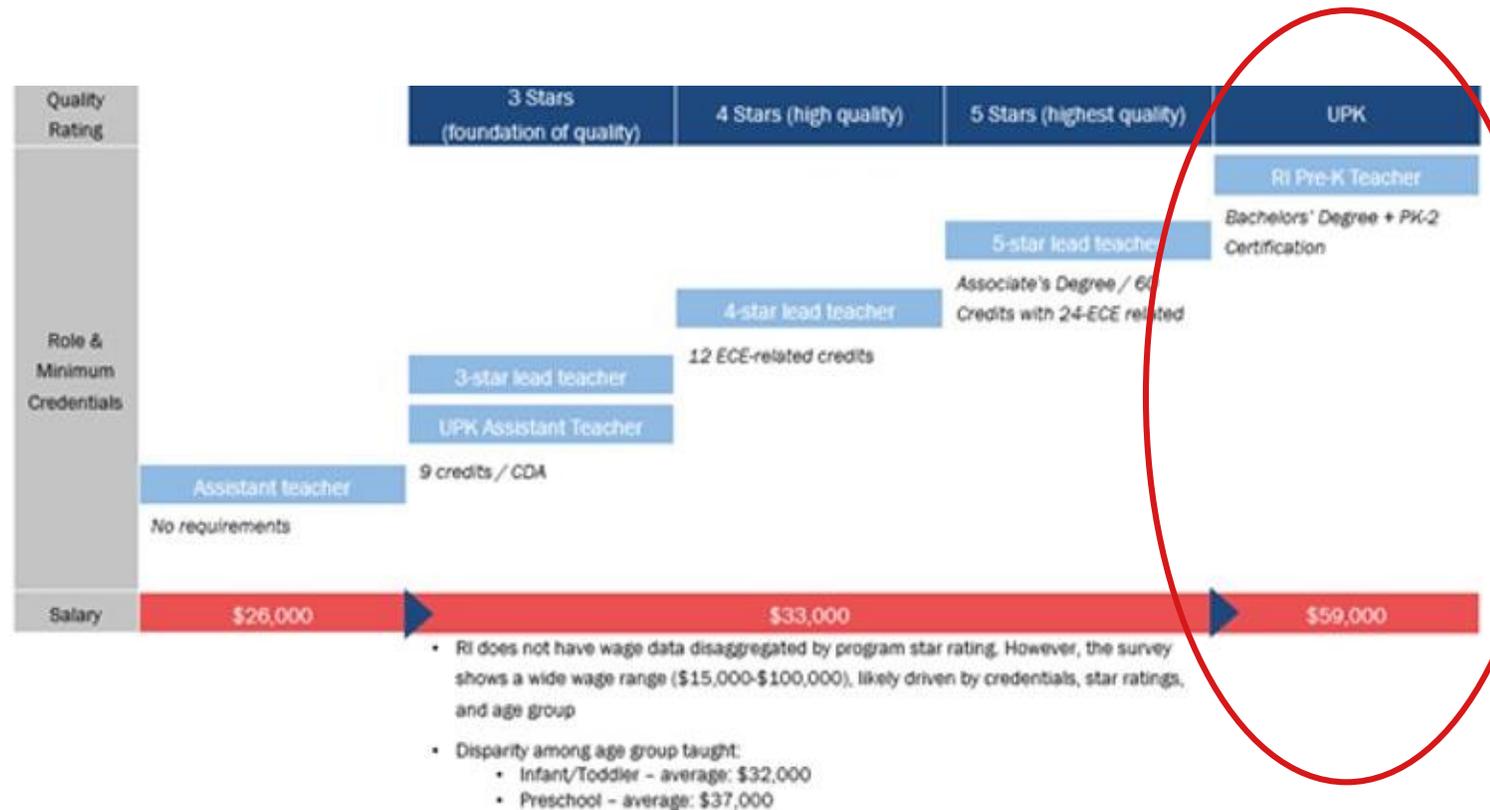
Objective 3 Priorities

Goal: To increase the number of Pre-K-2 certified teachers in community-based programs and Head Starts by creating new and innovative pathways to certification.

Lack of trained workforce prevents child care centers from moving up on the BrightStars quality rating scale, qualifying to become an RI Pre-K, and receiving CECE approval

- Of the degreed RI Pre-K Lead Teacher workforce, **only 43%** have a Pre-K-2 certification

Current Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) do not incorporate the accessibility features & supports necessary for working or mid-career educators to attain degrees, certifications, and advance their careers.



Part 1: Educator Pathway Planning Grants

Goal: \$5,000 awards intended to fuel the initial planning and development stages of an educator preparation program that will serve the unique needs of the ECCE workforce.

Awardees	Deliverable	Grant Duration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• URI• RIC• CCRI (to plan collaboratively with the 4 – year IHEs)	<p>Grantees were responsible for delivering a proposal to RIDE for the creation of 2 pathways tailored to the needs of the incumbent workforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Bachelor's with PK-2 certification✓ Post-Baccalaureate Pre-K-2 certification <p><i>Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Accessible learning opportunities○ Flexible coursework sequencing○ Employer engagement○ Program sustainability○ Mentorship & wraparound supports○ Student teaching opportunities for the incumbent workforce○ Pre-K-2 field experience continuum○ Articulation agreements	July 1 – September 3, 2021

Part 2: Educator Pathway Design Grant

Goal: A \$125,000 award to support the robust design, program approval, and launch of the Bachelor's with PK-2 Certification & Post-Baccalaureate PK-2 Certification pathways

Awardee: University of Rhode Island (in collaboration with CCRI)

Features of the proposed program:

Two 8-week sessions
per semester term

Individualized
program duration

Asynchronous online
coursework

Student teaching in
candidate's place of
employment (*if
applicable*)

Achieves a breadth of
the PK-2 certificate
continuum

Creation of the Office
of the Incumbent
Workforce

Continued
partnership with
TEACH Early
Childhood
scholarships

Tutoring &
wraparound supports

A system of
continuous quality
improvement

Potential credit for
PLUs and teaching
experience

Project Timeline

Launch and awarding of Planning Grant (CCRI, RIC, URI)
 Pathway proposal deliverables due

May – September 2021

URI internal pathway approval process at the departmental, college, and university levels

January – April 2022

Program recruitment & admissions

- *New staff hiring and onboarding*
- *Student recruitment & admission*
- *Articulation determination for new students*

January – August 2023

October – December 2021

Design Grant award announcement

Design grantee work plan development, task delegation

May – December 2022

PREP-RI (RIDE program approval process)

Program design and finalization

- *Curriculum approvals for future semesters*
- *Staff recruitment*
- *Admission guidelines*
- *Articulation/transfer pipeline with CCRI*
- *Recruitment materials*

September 2023

Program Inauguration!

Early Childhood Education Career Pathways Project



**The Governor's Office, Office of the
Postsecondary Commissioner, Department of
Human Services, Department of Education,
Department of Labor and Training, Department
of Health**

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Goals of the ECCE Career Pathways Project

Promote career progression within ECCE workforce

- Understand, organize, and communicate higher education pathways to degree attainment for ECCE
- Support development of flexible, accessible, innovative higher education pathways that meet the needs of ECCE workforce members

Barriers to Higher Education

Institutional Barriers

- Courses are designed for inexperienced educators
- Traditional course delivery is inaccessible to working adults
- Lack of support for retention and completion
- Lack of opportunity for credit based on experience and prior knowledge (PLA)
- Part-time study is needed, but it takes too long
- Student teaching requires leaving current job/workplace, and loss of income
- Evening/Weekend Courses Not Readily Available

Academic and Social Barriers

- Having past student loan or specific college debt
- Juggling school responsibilities with work and family responsibilities
- Pass the basic math proficiency exam upon admission
- Pass any required math remedial courses
- Completing language requirements
- Successfully passing the Praxis I and II

Project Plan Overview

Spring 2021

Convene interagency leaders, finalize charter and project plan

Summer/Fall 2021

Identify key gaps within the ECCE career pathways system

Institute an advisory committee to review decisions and streamline action steps

Winter/Spring/Summer 2022

Design and implement coursework that is accessible and attractive to the incumbent workforce

Design and implement incentives and supports that encourage employer participation and retain students in the program & in the ECCE workforce

Fall 22 to Spring 23

Recruit, support, and fund incumbent workers or new entrants to the field to participate in the programming

Fall 2023

Oversee implementation of new pathways and evaluate efficacy

Project Pathway Outcomes

- Support at least 80 incumbent or new early childcare educators through pathways
- Support Development and Implementation of Flexible, Accessible Pathways that may be credit or noncredit leading to credit, and must be stackable, and transferable.
- New pathways will be assessed by established criteria
- Funds for curriculum development, tuition, recruitment, wrap around support and incentives (educator and employer)
- Funds are for all early child educators regardless of funding sources (private, nonprofit, centers, family home, head start, school based, etc.) or site credentials

Progress to Date

- Interagency core team has been meeting regularly
- Landscape Mapping in process, public document Spring 2022
- Two higher education pathway proposals under consideration
- Working with TEACH to support current ECE students in current pathways
- Identifying opportunities to support expansion of PLA/credit articulation for PD
- Advisory Committee established and providing input on proposals
- Recruiting Navigators to assist with outreach and work with pathway participants

Thank You



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We are entering the third year of our Early Childhood Care and Education Strategic Plan.

ECCE Governance Committee

Objective 1:

Rhode Island's early childhood programs meet high-quality standards for care and education as defined by our Quality Rating and Improvement System

Objective 2:

Children and families can equitably access and participate in the early childhood care, services, and supports that will help them reach their potential and enter school healthy and ready to succeed.

Objective 3:

All four-year olds in Rhode Island have access to high-quality Pre-K, inclusive of parental choice and student needs.

Objective 4: Secure the quality and delivery of ECCE through increased and sustainable funding and operational improvements.

Objective 5: Expand the depth and quality of data accessible to and used by agencies, programs, and partners to drive decisions.

Objective 1: Rhode Island's early childhood programs meet high-quality standards for care and education as defined by our Quality Rating and Improvement System.

2021 Highlights:

- \$15M Early Learning Facilities Bond passed
- RI Rebounds down payment investments in Family Child Care (\$0.3M) and Early Educators (\$18.7M)
- Implementation of the BrightStars Governance Process
- Pilot program for CCAP access for full-time students

2022 Projects Underway:

- ECCE Higher Education Pathways project moving forward and evaluating proposals for initial planning awards
- Implementation of the Facilities Bond
- Expansion of eligibility for CCAP for first time in two decades, pending FY23 budget approval

Objective 2: Children and families can equitably access and participate in the early childhood care, services, and supports that will help them reach their potential and enter school healthy and ready to succeed.

2021 Highlights:

- RI Rebounds investments in Early Intervention and Pediatrics to support service stability and re-engage families in vital services
- Expansion of Parents as Teachers
- Implementation of the HEZ Parent Support Programs and Family Navigators

2022 Projects Underway:

- Supporting doulas to be ready for implementation of the insurance coverage for doula services in July 2022
- Year 3 of HEZ Parent Support Programs and Family Navigators
- Prenatal to Age 3 Grant implementation

Objective 3: All four-year olds in Rhode Island have access to high-quality Pre-K, inclusive of parental choice and student needs.

2021 Highlights:

- Expansion of RI Pre-K by 516 seats, 27 classrooms, and 18 communities for school year 2021-2022
- Implementation of four pilot service delivery models that maximized family choice, supported the mixed delivery system, and optimized funding resources
- Curriculum review to ensure high quality curriculum options are up to date and have an infant/toddler component
- Implementation of the higher education pathways grant funding to support access to PK-2 certification

2022 Projects Underway:

- Expanding the pilot service delivery models to other programs
- Sustainability planning for classrooms funded with time-limited grants

Objective 4: Secure the quality and delivery of ECCE through increased and sustainable funding and operational improvements

2021 Highlights:

- \$37M in federal and stimulus funding invested in ECCE priorities
- Supported the drafting and input on the RI 2030 Plan
- Ongoing implementation of the ECCE Governance structure across DHS, EOHHS, RIDOH, RIDE, and Governor's Office

2022 Projects Underway:

- Refresh of the ECCE Strategic Plan aligned with the RI 2030 Plan
- FY23 Budget support and implementation
- Implementation of stimulus-funded projects

Objective 5: Expand the depth and quality of family and child-level data accessible to and used by agencies, programs, and partners to drive decisions.

2021 Highlights:

- Discovery phase analysis of the Early Learning data systems that support core functions, such as the workforce registry, licensing system of record, and CECE certification
- Development of draft ECCE dashboard and engagement with the EOHHS Ecosystem to support development and implementation

2022 Projects Underway:

- Family needs assessment survey focused on experiences with the early learning system in Rhode Island
- Continued exploration of options to enhance and integrate early learning operational data systems to improve experience for family, provider, and state agency users
- Development of the ECCE dashboard to track progress on the strategic plan key priorities

Updating the ECCE Strategic Plan

- The ECCE Strategic Plan is meant to be a living document – similar to 2021, we are taking another look at the plan to refresh its strategies and actions to guide our work going forward.
- At the next Children’s Cabinet meeting, we will discuss proposed updates to the ECCE Strategic Plan for public feedback and input.
- We will also have an online form to collect input and feedback

Early Learning Family Survey

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ECCE Strategic Plan focuses on having relevant and timely information to make decisions.

ECCE Governance Committee

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Objective 5: Expand the depth and quality of data accessible to and used by agencies, programs, and partners to drive decisions.

Recent family surveys – funded by PDG -- have helped to identify key opportunities to better support families with young children.

Recent surveys

Surveys	Key Findings
<p>2019 Family Needs Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mixed methods survey with focus groups and survey questionnaire• In-person recruitment at events and through family-serving organizations for paper & online surveys in English and Spanish (N=724)• 10 in-depth focus groups; of these, 3 conducted in Spanish and 7 in English• Questions focused on experience navigating the early childhood programs and systems, such as barriers to accessing services, where families find information about programs, and access to early learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to affordable child care and child care close to home are the top needs identified by families, regardless of age of child, vulnerability or geography. The next most common need is information about available programs for families and children.• Families that speak a language other than English and low-income families are more likely to rely “only on family and friends” to get information. They are also less likely to use the Internet as a source of information on programs.• Gaps in access among families that speak a language other than English is especially prevalent among families with infants and toddlers.
<p>2020 Family Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted in conjunction with the statewide Health Insurance Survey to reduce number of family surveys and enable a statewide sample• Phone-based survey of statewide population in English and Spanish (N=319)• Questions focused on what services families accessed, barriers to access, and experience with early learning programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Affordability and difficulty finding a child care setting families liked were the most common difficulties for families related to early learning.• Lower income families (under 100% of State Median Income) reported that it was “very difficult” to find care at almost 3 times the rate of the highest income bracket (above 200% State Median Income)• More than half of respondents said that difficulty finding child care has impacted ability to work or attend school.

The survey findings have driven state actions and priorities.

Recent surveys

Key Findings	Highlighted Actions
Access to Information about available programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health Equity Zone Navigator Pilot Program: In Q4 2021, more than 200 families connected with Family Navigators, with 180 referrals resulting in connections to services for families.• Health Equity Zone family support programs: Nine HEZ's received funding for programming to support family choice and knowledge that responds to community needs. Programs include: information on child development for parents, parental programming from the Autism Project, and community engagement to ensure that community needs are represented in programming• Kids.Ri.Gov + family informational campaigns: Targeted campaigns to support families in accessing key services, including RI Pre-K, child care options, and pediatric care.
Child care affordability and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CCAP Rate Increases & proposed eligibility expansion: In FY23 budget, propose to support more families with accessing CCAP program, including families with income up to 200% FPL and full-time college students at public institutions• Family Child Care capacity: Focused stimulus investment in increasing the family child care capacity in RI, offering \$2000 start-up grants and TA for up to 100 new FCCs• Facilities Bond: In March 2020, the state passed a \$15M bond to invest in child care facilities to expand capacity and options for families• Expanded RI Pre-K: Expanded the number of free RI Pre-K by 944 seats since 2019 to serve more 4 year olds

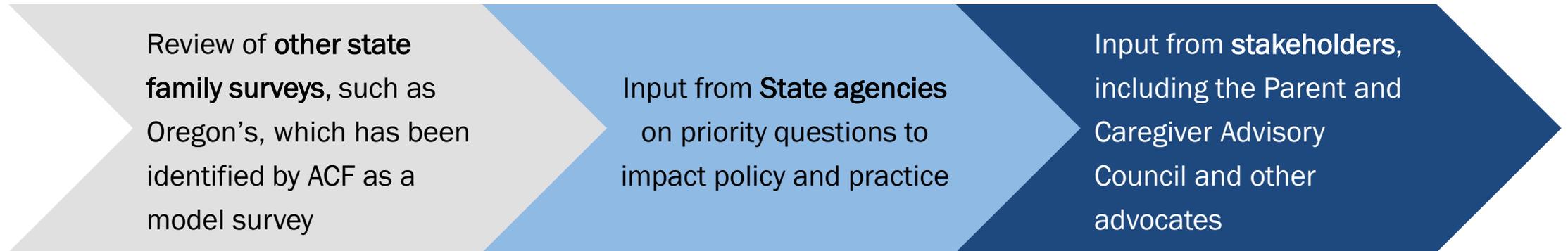
In 2022, we are conducting another family survey, focused on early learning.

Goals

- Understand family experience with navigating the early learning sector now, given significant impacts from the pandemic
- Gain insight into not only what barriers families experience, but also understand what types of care and aspects of early learning families want to see in Rhode Island.
- Understand prevalence of exclusion and disciplinary practices and the potential impacts for children with disabilities.

The survey relies on national best practice and stakeholder input.

Development Process



In 2022, we are conducting another family survey, focused on early learning.

Approach & Next Steps

- In conjunction with the Health Insurance Survey, conduct a phone-based survey of the statewide population to gather a representative sample of families with young children
- Phone-based surveys will be supplemented with an online survey to ensure adequate sample size
- Process will allow us to analyze results with a holistic view of how a family engages with both healthcare insurance and with early learning access
- Anticipate initial results in the late spring 2022 and final report in by mid summer 2022
- The results will inform initiatives going forward and provide important insights into the types of early learning that families want to have in the RI early learning system

Public Comment

