



*"High quality pre-kindergarten programs help close the achievement gap for New Mexico kids and give them a step up in developing skills that are important to school success. Our challenge is that **all** children have an equal chance to succeed."*

— Governor Bill Richardson

New Mexico's Early Learning System[s]:

The transformation of seven major early education and care systems into a "system of systems"



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State of New Mexico
Children, Youth and Families Department
Dorian Dodson, Cabinet Secretary

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I. Project Description

A. Overview



The 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) makes funding available for a three-year period to support the establishment and activities of an Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council. Governor Richardson has designated the New Mexico Child Development Board to act in this capacity and has appointed an expanded membership to ensure that the Advisory Council is as diverse and representative as possible.

Even though this is an initiative that is mandated by federal legislation and embedded within state government, the Early Learning Advisory Council firmly believes that the strengths of families and communities must be the platform from which all efforts are launched. Whether it is the local community, a community of learners, or a virtual community of practitioners, the platform of families and communities makes all work contextual and relationship-based. The commitment of the Advisory Council is that its work will be informed by and driven by the reality, the perceptions and the values of the families and communities of New Mexico. However, the extent to which communities are able to do this work is totally dependent upon the alignment of systems at the state level. So, after negotiating the establishment of common frameworks, it is expected that early learning programs will flourish - implemented in unique and appropriate ways based on the strengths of each community. Firmly establishing families and communities as the platform upon which the early learning

system is launched will ensure that programs reflect the history, culture, language and traditions that must be preserved and strengthened rather than replaced.

In order to clearly convey the work of the Advisory Council, the following words in this application are used intentionally and strategically:

System: A federal-, tribal-, and/or state-funded service with a separate funding stream that is clearly defined and identifiable. A system has regulations, policies, and procedures that govern the administration of funds and operation of funded programs. Systems usually have a clearly designated federal and/or state entity responsible for their administration.

Silo: A graphic symbol of a system's isolation within a larger context of systems, where each operates independently of the others. These systems often serve the same children and the same families within a community. Silos typically result in duplication, fragmentation, and frustration for families as well as for personnel within the programs.

System[s]: Describes an aligned and coordinated early learning system that is comprised of multiple systems. In New Mexico, this organized continuum of services is often referred to as a "system of systems". The reader can read "system[s]" as "system of systems".

Program: A local/community organization providing services that are funded through one or more systems. Increasingly, programs braid funds to provide more comprehensive services funded by multiple systems. For example, a community

program might be a Head Start grantee that also provides state-funded PreK services for children not eligible for Head Start. Many of these children might have special needs and receive early childhood special education services within the context of the preschool program. For families that need a full-day program, this same program provides wrap-around child-care services. One could assume that some of these children would be eligible for child-care subsidy.

Early Learning System[s]: This term refers to a coordinated and aligned system of systems and embraces early education, care and family support. It acknowledges and relies upon the critical, foundational importance of other systems, like health, that are essential to children's well-being and ability to learn. The New Mexico Early Learning Advisory Council has prioritized the alignment of seven major systems as its Early Learning System{s}: Early/Head Start, home visiting, early intervention (IDEA Part C), child care, Family Support, New Mexico PreK, and early childhood special education (IDEA Part B).

Align: In New Mexico's early childhood education and care community, alignment describes a transformational process that is more than collaboration or cooperation. It symbolizes the will of practitioners and stakeholders to provide a continuum of comprehensive high quality services to a group or a community of children based on the holistic needs of children and their families. This often is made possible through the braiding and/or weaving of multiple funding sources.

New Mexico Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC): The Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Council, as described in the *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*.

Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA): System-specific training typically funded and provided by a particular system for those working within it (e.g. training for child-care providers funded with state and federal child-care funds).

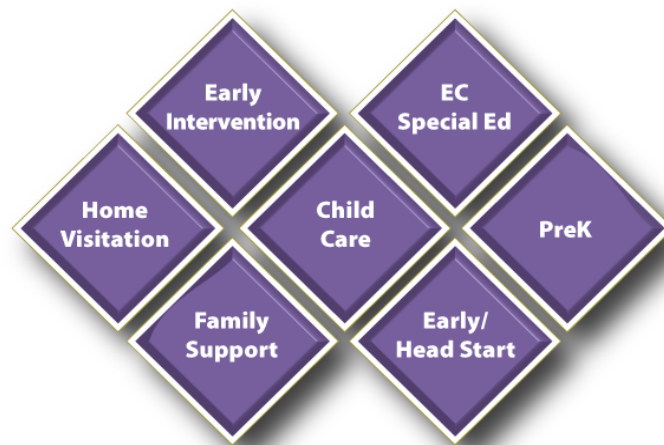
Professional Development/Preparation: Transcribed coursework in early childhood delivered by an institution of higher education leading to a degree and state-issued licensure or certification.

Early/Head Start: Early Head Start and Head Start are administered by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families. Although they can be referred to as two different systems, in this application we combine them as one system because they have a common federal funding source and provide a continuum of early learning and family support services for children pre-natal to kindergarten.

Ready Schools: The National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices' *Final Report of the NGA Task Force on School Readiness* defines Ready Schools as:

- 1) Schools that support children's transition to kindergarten;
- 2) Schools that encourage continuity and alignment between early care and education programs and elementary schools; and
- 3) Schools that ensure high quality learning environments.

B. Need for Assistance



New Mexico is geographically and culturally diverse. It is a rural state with a population of 1.8 million, 40% of whom reside in Albuquerque,¹ New Mexico is characterized by its high poverty levels and is currently ranked 43rd in the nation in child wellbeing.² This ranking is based on multiple key indicators: low birth weight babies, infant mortality, child deaths, teen deaths, teen births, teens who are high school dropouts, teens not attending school and not working, children living in families where no parent has full-time year-round employment, children in poverty, and children in single parent families. New Mexico ranks among the bottom ten states on five of the ten key indicators of child wellbeing: teen birth rate (49th among the states), teen dropouts (47th) children without secure parental employment (44th), child poverty rate (47th), and children in single-parent families (48th).

Although New Mexico's racial, ethnic and cultural diversity is one of its greatest assets, it is also one of the greatest challenges for policy makers. Navigating the socio-cultural

¹ *Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000, New Mexico.* U.S. Census, 2002. <http://factfinder.census>,

² *Kids Count, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2009.* www.kidscount.org/datacenter/databook, Overall Ranking, Profiles by State.

landscape involves challenges that are extraordinarily complex, and requires solutions capable of accommodating each community's uniqueness.

In 2003, New Mexico became a state where the typical minority is the majority: 57% of young children in New Mexico are Hispanic, 25% are Anglo, 10% are American Indian, and 8+% are other (NCCP). Thirty-three percent of children in New Mexico speak a language other than English at home. Only two other states have more children who speak a language other than English at home.³ This presents a need for services that are both linguistically and culturally appropriate.

The percentage of Hispanic children in New Mexico is greater than any other ethnic group. Unfortunately, they are also those with the greatest drop out rate and represent the largest percentage of the state's prison population. In Albuquerque, the drop out rate for Hispanic children is 63%, twice that of Anglo students. Of the Hispanic students who entered ninth grade in 2004, only 37% successfully graduated in 2008.⁴

The tribes and pueblos of New Mexico represent another unique challenge rooted in the state's diversity. Native American children in New Mexico live in nineteen Pueblos, two Apache Tribes, and the Navajo Nation as well as off reservation throughout the state. The Pueblos, Tribes and Nations – each of which is a sovereign, self-governing entity – vary considerably from one another in language, government, judicial structure, custom, and tradition. Overall, Native Americans represent about 10% of New Mexico's population. However, a disproportionate percentage of Native American children face the challenges of poverty and

³ Kids Count, Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2008. www.kidscount.org/datacenter/databook, Overall Ranking, Profiles by State

⁴ New Mexico Public Education Department

school failure. According to the 2000 Census, 47% of Navajo children live in poverty compared to only 12% of Anglo children. According to the Indian Education Status Report for 2006-2007 prepared by the NM Public Education Department, although there have been gains, only 38% of Indian children are proficient in reading and only 27% are proficient in math at third grade. Proficiency levels are even lower for eleventh graders. And, despite efforts to decrease the number of student dropouts, the Native American dropout rate has increased over the span of three years for grades seven and eight.⁴

The opportunity afforded to New Mexico through ARRA Advisory Council funds will support the implementation of an existing vision for the state's early childhood system through the establishment of data-driven policy recommendations that will expand the state's capacity to address the needs of young children and their families. Recommendations regarding the strategic expansion of services, better coordination of existing services, targeted public awareness regarding services, and information regarding the quality of available services will allow policy makers to address critical needs.

Following are some of the barriers facing our state.

Fragmentation of Services

New Mexico is fortunate to have knowledgeable and dedicated people building thoughtful and effective early childhood programs. However, this work - whether at the public, private, state or local level - is too often done in isolation or in silos. It is crucial that we work to synchronize early childhood services. The significant efforts that have been made toward

⁴ *Indian Education Status Report of 2006-07*, New Mexico Public Education Department Office of Indian Education.

aligning systems and the need for further collaboration and coordination is detailed in subsequent sections of this application.

Lack of Services and Lack of Access to Services

There is no doubt that young children and their families in New Mexico have difficulty accessing services that are necessary to their well-being. Unfortunately, it is often families that need support services the most that are the least aware of services that are readily available to them. There are many reasons for this, compounded by poverty and the rural nature of the state. Through intentional, thoughtful, innovative and strategic coordination of programs, families must be made aware of and be able to access services they and their children need.

In order to remedy the state's significant achievement gap, families with the greatest need must be assured equitable access to the highest quality services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. For example, universal access to a coordinated continuum of high quality home visiting services as an integral component of an early learning system can be especially beneficial for rural families as well as for marginalized urban populations. By planning for the universal availability of a comprehensive continuum of home visiting services and coordinating this system with other early learning systems, it is possible to overcome issues of access and equity.

Data regarding gaps in the early learning system of services, especially for those most in need of support, will allow us to pinpoint areas of the state with high need. Knowledge regarding those that are and are not accessing services will enable us to analyze reasons families are not accessing services.

For example, we know, anecdotally, that quality care for infants is difficult to find throughout the state. A comprehensive capacity analysis will allow for a better understanding of where these services are needed. Once this endeavor is underway, it is conceivable that a coordinated continuum of home visiting strategies might link to innovative child-care initiatives involving family, friend and neighbor care.

Poverty

A predominant issue facing our state is poverty and its correlate risk factors. In New Mexico, 51% of children live in households below 200% of poverty (the national percentage is 43%); only two states have more children who fall into this category. New Mexico has the highest percentage of low income working families with children (24%). This one risk factor, as identified by the National Center for Children in Poverty, affects 57% of all children in New Mexico. Making data-driven policy recommendations regarding the expansion of services, better coordination of existing services, and targeted public awareness will allow us to address the critical needs of our most vulnerable children and families.

Education and Workforce

We know very little about the early learning workforce in New Mexico, especially those working in child care. To address this, Child Care Development Block Grant ARRA Stimulus funds are being used for a comprehensive study of the child-care workforce. While significant progress in developing the professional development system has been made over the past twenty years, professional development alone is not enough to increase retention. It is estimated that there are approximately 25,000 individuals working in the state's early learning

system[s] (including home visiting, early intervention, Early/Head Start, child care, PreK, early childhood special education and family support). A small fraction of this workforce has a degree in early childhood education. Furthermore, it is estimated that fewer than half of the child=care workforce have taken any college coursework. Many of those working in child care lack even a high school diploma.

And, just as federal, tribal, and state funding streams have resulted in siloed service-delivery systems for children and families, each silo has established a system of training and technical assistance (T/TA). Historically, T/TA systems have not been expected to coordinate their work. Consequently, a classroom of children representing multiple funding streams might be visited by a number of T/TA specialists, each providing conflicting recommendations. To address this, early learning T/TA systems in New Mexico have organized themselves into a consortium called Bridging and Expanding Training and Technical Assistance, and are working to be more efficient and effective. The Advisory Council could certainly recognize their work and provide a platform for their recommendations.

Funding

New Mexico suffers from a lack of adequate and appropriate funding for early childhood education programs. Though there is a growing understanding of the importance of early childhood education and the necessity of making both short- and long-term investments in the early learning system, investments still fall short. Scarce dollars are not necessarily invested where they could produce the greatest return. Obviously, families with higher incomes are able to access higher quality programs for their children and expect that those programs maintain

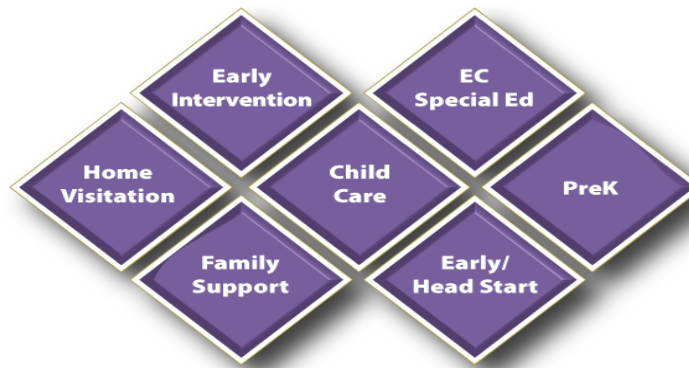
high standards. This has been significantly addressed by the child-care system in New Mexico through a differentiated subsidy based on the state's quality rating of every licensed program. Significantly increasing the highest level of subsidy has made the provision of high quality child care to low-income children on subsidy a viable business opportunity.

While policy makers and program managers are accustomed to making decisions within the constraints of a limited budget, systems will see even more severe cuts in the near future. This calls for an increasingly strategic use of all available resources.

Data Systems

Finally, as discussed throughout this proposal, our state lacks a coordinated and integrated system of data collection and analysis across early learning systems. Information, like the systems responsible for collecting it, is maintained in silos. And, while each system may (or may not) have collected its own set of comprehensive data for the population it serves, there is presently limited linkage between data systems, with neither requirement nor mechanism to share information. Although community programs might be aware that children are receiving services funded by multiple systems, there is no way to know this at the state level. Most significantly, although systems might be aware of the population that is being served, there is no mechanism to systematically gain information regarding the populations not being served. Additionally, there is limited access to information that needs to follow children as they move from system to system or from program to program within and without the early learning system. For example, there is no mechanism to know how many of the children being served in the early intervention system are also in the protective services system.

Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].



C. Goal & Objectives of the Project

Acknowledging 1) the critical importance of children's health and wellbeing to learning and success in school and 2) that there are other over-arching initiatives tracking the health, education and wellbeing of young children, the Early Learning Advisory Council will concentrate on the coordination and alignment of seven federal-, tribal-, and state-funded early childhood education systems (early intervention, home visiting, Early/Head Start, child care, family support, early childhood special education, and New Mexico PreK) and the alignment of those systems with the public school system (kindergarten through third grade).

The goal of the New Mexico Early Learning Advisory Council is that ***every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].*** To achieve this goal, we have set the following objectives:

- 1) Establish an integrated data system with two primary components that will allow us to correlate services being provided with results based accountability measures: a unique identifier system and a data warehouse.

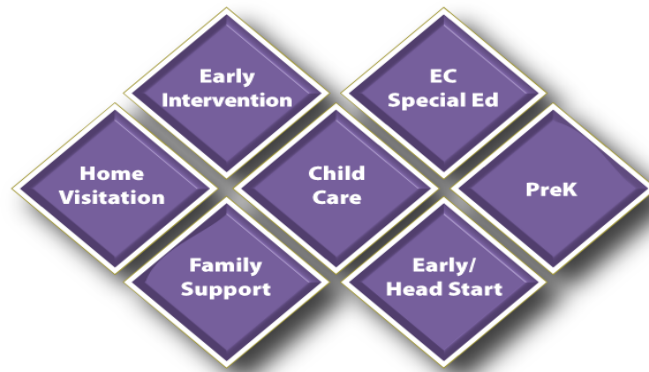
Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].

- 2) Establish an aligned early learning system[s] with programs that are more efficiently and intentionally funded so that all families have consistent access to a seamless continuum of appropriate services, with assurance that children who are most at risk for school failure have equitable access to the highest quality programs.
- 3) Increase the participation of children (especially those who are at risk for school failure) in the highest quality programs.
- 4) Establish family support as a recognized early learning system and ensure that a continuum of family support services are equitably available to all families in New Mexico.
- 5) Align the early learning system[s] with the public education (k-3) system as the foundation for New Mexico's P-20 education system through the promotion of Ready Schools.

D. Relevant Data

Planning Efforts

Several relevant planning studies have been done in New Mexico to support the proposed activities outlined in this application.



In 2003, the New Mexico legislature requested that the Child Development Board lead a study regarding the potential alignment of early care, education and family support systems by establishing an Early Childhood Alignment Task Force. The work of the Task Force was to provide a comprehensive picture of the early learning system and gather information regarding the number of children and families being served, where systems are located within state government and their relationship to one another. Of particular interest was the potential duplication of effort, the amount of money being spent, the source of the funds, and the categorical nature of each funding source.

Following the report by the Early Childhood Alignment Task Force, the Legislative Education Study Committee requested that the Child Development Board lead a collaborative effort of the Public Education Department (PED), the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), and the Department of Health (DOH) to establish an Early Learning Plan. They asked that the plan contain at least three components:

- A policy brief or vision statement describing the attributes of a coordinated and culturally-, linguistically- and historically-appropriate early learning system for children birth through third grade;
- Early Learning Outcomes for children birth through third grade, detailing what children should know, be able to do and the dispositions toward learning that they should have to be successful in school; and
- Early Learning Program Standards birth through third grade.

With input from hundreds of stakeholders and early childhood professionals throughout the state, committees worked tirelessly to research and document their recommendations. All of these documents were based upon New Mexico's adaptation of the readiness framework of the National Governors Association:

*"To be successful in school, pre-kindergarten children require: **Ready Communities** that support **Ready Families** with access to **Ready Pre-kindergarten Programs** that work collaboratively with **Ready Schools**."*

New Mexico Child Development Board, August 30, 2004

Just as this effort was getting underway, Governor Richardson announced the establishment of a state-funded PreK initiative. So, in mid-2004, the Early Learning Plan, Early Learning Outcomes and Program Standards were transformed into New Mexico PreK program documents for four-year-olds. Despite this adaptation, they remain relevant to early education for children birth through third grade.

In 2007, focus groups were convened throughout the state by the Head Start Collaboration Office to solicit feedback from the public about how to build a comprehensive early childhood service delivery system. Cross-cutting themes that emerged are as follows:

- 1) support the ongoing exchange of issues and learning at the community level;
- 2) advocate for policies that support all families and children;
- 3) increase the emphasis on parent training and ongoing parent engagement;
- 4) engage the private sector in support of early childhood services;
- 5) increase public awareness of what is known and what is available; and
- 6) invest in an infrastructure that supports a system of services, including support to parents that choose not to enroll their children in child care or Head Start.

In 2009, Project LAUNCH, administered through the Department of Health, published the results of a New Mexico State Environmental Scan, which provides a comprehensive overview of early care and education, health, mental health, family engagement and out of school time services and challenges faced by these respective service areas.

Most recently, the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) conducted a program audit of state-funded early childhood programs. Following an in-depth study, the first significant finding in their *Program Evaluation: Investments in Early Childhood* published in May, 2009 was that:

Better coordination will help ensure public investments improve outcomes for pregnant women and very young children. New Mexico faces significant challenges to ensure the health and well-being of children, which is key to future economic prosperity. Years of rigorous evaluation have demonstrated public investment in early childhood programs can improve long-term child outcomes that more than pay for the initial cost. However, multiple administering state departments and a fragmented local delivery system complicates implementation of a well coordinated early childhood system. No single state entity focuses its efforts on early childhood programs and outcomes. As such, policies, programs and focus on outcomes for pregnant women, infants and very young children do not always rise up as a priority within the larger departments.

E. Availability and Quality of Services

Home Visiting

Home Visiting is a voluntary service provided within the home by qualified professionals, primarily to first-time parents of children pre-natal to three. Home Visiting services include: (1) assisting families to identify formal and informal support networks; (2) providing referrals to community resources; (3) providing information on prenatal health, newborn care and child development; (4) determining if families have been referred to Medicaid; (5) conducting post partum visits, including assessments of the mothers' well being; and (6) guiding families, caregivers and adoptive parents through developmental curricula.



Early Intervention (FIT and FACE) Programs: IDEA Part C

The Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program within the New Mexico Department of Health works to strengthen the capacity of families to meet the developmental and health related needs of their infant or toddler who has an identified developmental condition. The FIT Program ensures that families receive supports and services that are family-centered, based on relationships, focused on the strengths of the child and family, and provided in a natural environment (where the child lives, learns and plays). There are more Family and Child Education (FACE) Programs in New Mexico than in any other state. These programs serve Native American children and are funded by the federal government. They are typically operated by the Bureau of Indian Education or tribal/community schools that contract with the

Bureau of Indian Education. Some of these programs have worked diligently to align themselves with tribally operated child care and Head Start programs, but little has been done to align federally funded tribal programs with state funded programs.

Early/Head Start

Both Early Head Start and Head Start are administered by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families. Early Head Start serves the needs of children birth to three and provides a comprehensive range of early childhood development and family support services, while Head Start serves preschool-aged children. Both programs provide a comprehensive range of early childhood development and family support services. The New Mexico Head Start Collaboration Office is located within the Children, Youth and Family Department's Early Childhood Services Division and has identified the alignment of the Early/Head Start system with the New Mexico Early Learning System[s] as its primary work objective.

Child Care

There are two types of regulated child care in New Mexico: licensed and registered. Licensed homes and centers all participate in a quality rating system based on the Essential Elements of Quality of AIM HIGH, New Mexico's quality rating improvement system, which was established in 1997. The number of child-care programs with at least a 2 STAR rating has more than doubled in the past three years, and 3 and 4 STAR level providers are quickly increasing as well. At present, approximately 70% of licensed providers hold a 2, 3, 4 or 5 STAR rating. This improvement in child-care quality is due primarily to financial incentives provided through a tiered reimbursement system and increased support from the Training and Technical Assistance

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Programs. Because of the tiered reimbursement system, there has been a correspondingly significant increase in the percentage of low income children who receive child-care subsidy attending higher quality child care.

Table 1.
#/% of Licensed Providers with 2-5 Star Licenses and #/% of Subsidy Children Cared for in 2-5 Star Facilities

	Number of providers	% of Licensed Providers	Total Capacity	% of Total Capacity	Subsidy Children Served	% of Total Subsidy Children Served
Total 2-Star Licensed Homes and Centers	489	46.13%	21289	40.86%	10196	40.38%
Total 3-Star Licensed Homes and Centers	47	4.43%	3271	6.28%	1909	7.56%
Total 4-Star Licensed Homes and Centers	64	6.04%	2960	5.68%	1769	7.01%
Total 5-Star Licensed Homes and Centers	136	12.83%	11015	21.14%	3754	14.87%
<i>Total</i>	736	69.43%	38535	73.97%	17628	69.81%

Early Childhood Special Education – IDEA Part B

Quality performance standards for early childhood special education are driven by the commitment to “provide educational guidance for adults working with young children, with and without disabilities; promote developmentally appropriate practice in daily activities and expectations for young children; provide guidance for individual educational planning for young children; and infuse and capitalize on learning opportunities in everyday activities for all children.” The need for alignment is compounded by the fact that services in New Mexico Public Schools are provided through the New Mexico Public Education Department and services

for children enrolled in tribal contract and Bureau of Indian Education schools are provided by the federal government.

Family Support

Head Start and other early learning programs provide a variety of family support services, and there are a number of innovative and powerful family support initiatives that have been established in New Mexico. However, family support is not clearly defined and these services and initiatives are not presently coordinated. Currently, these parent engagement and family support efforts and innovations are not organized in any systematic way and are not equitably available. Most family support initiatives are not institutionalized and are dependent upon short-term grants from a variety of sources, or specific interest by a particular community.

There is currently no systematic effort to reach out to parents who have chosen to NOT enroll their children in one of the early learning systems identified here. It is estimated that there are as many children being cared for by parents, family and friends OUTSIDE OF the seven early learning systems as there are enrolled in them. However, there is currently no way to know much about these children. Although the regional Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Programs that are funded through the child care system are available to all parents and providers in the community, very few know about or take advantage of this resource.

To achieve our goal, an organized family support system must be established to ensure equitable access to training and resources for **all** parents and their chosen caregivers so that **all** children are ready to enter kindergarten. A thorough assessment of existing family support

initiatives will need to occur, as well as the development of concrete action steps that will both broaden and strengthen the role of families and communities in the further alignment of early childhood programs and service systems.

New Mexico PreK

The New Mexico PreK Program is jointly administered by the Public Education and Children, Youth and Families Departments, with 50% of PreK funds allocated to each department. This enables a vibrant and diverse service delivery system. The PreK program is successful in its goal to close the achievement gap between students when they enter kindergarten as confirmed by external evaluation results of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). The PreK program has also begun to realize the vision of a seamless education system that begins in pre-kindergarten and continues through higher education. Extensive work has been done to align the context standards for PreK and Kindergarten programs, and studies show that PreK has significant, positive effects on children's learning in the areas of language, literacy, and math skills. Children who attend PreK enter kindergarten knowing more letters and more letter-sound associations, and with a heightened familiarity with words and book concepts. Since New Mexico PreK was initiated in Fiscal Year 2006, PreK has served approximately 3,600 children throughout New Mexico through CYFD, and about the same number through PED.

The table below provides the number of programs and number of children served in each of these systems.

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Table 2.
Number of Programs and Children Served by System

Program	Number of Programs	Total Number Served
Licensed Child Care Total	1060	52,096*
Licensed Centers	714	48,948*
Licensed Homes	346	3,148*
Registered Child Care Homes	4589	18,356*
Early/Head Start	32	8,722**
New Mexico PreK	151	4,963
Early Childhood Special Education***	284	5,390
Early Intervention***	40	12,625
Home Visiting	17	903

*capacity

**slots

*** does not include federally/tribally funded programs

F. Need for Coordination & Collaboration



Table 3
Systems by State or Federal Agency

Home Visiting	- NM Department of Health - NM Children, Youth and Families Department
Early Intervention	- NM Department of Health - Bureau of Indian Education/Federal
Early/Head Start	- US Department of Health & Human Services
Childcare	- NM Children, Youth and Families Department - Various Tribal Entities
Early Childhood Special Education	- NM Public Education Department - Bureau of Indian Education/Federal
Family Support	- US Department of Health & Human Services - NM Public Education Department - NM Children, Youth and Families Department - NM Department of Health - Various Tribal Entities - Bureau of Indian Education/Federal
New Mexico PreK	- NM Public Education Department - NM Children, Youth and Families Department

Each of the Early Learning Systems listed above is administered by a different state, tribal or federal agency. Each system has been established, championed, and funded over time to ensure that specific services are provided to a particular population, usually categorical in nature. As a result, each system has stakeholders with powerful vested interests, often financial. Legislators often bemoan the fact that advocates of early childhood systems compete with one another for limited funding.

Together, these systems provide the possibility of a rich continuum of services. However, operated separately as they are now, each system exists independently with its own program standards and expectations for curriculum, assessment, and reporting. This fragmentation has led to duplication of services and administrative costs, lack of efficiency, and possibly a lack of effectiveness. Contradictory policies, regulations and funding requirements make it confusing for parents seeking services and nearly impossible for programs – and sometimes even communities – to braid funding in order to realize the full potential of this rich continuum of services. Until these systems are aligned, children and families will continue to experience the early childhood system as disjointed and incoherent.

Even though New Mexico has taken great strides, more work needs to be done to establish and support an infrastructure that builds on the strength of commitment that exists and links systems at all levels.

Status of Governance

New Mexico is working diligently to establish a system of governance that will facilitate the creation of a comprehensive and coordinated high quality early learning system[s]. With unprecedented support from the Legislature, this system of governance is comprised of an Executive Infrastructure as well as a Stakeholder Infrastructure.

Executive Infrastructure:

CYFD's Early Childhood Services Division - In an effort to consolidate early childhood programs and increase the status of early childhood within the infrastructure of state government, the CYFD established an Early Childhood Services Division in 2008, which includes

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the child care, home visiting, NM PreK systems as well as the Head Start Collaboration Office in addition to numerous other early childhood initiatives and programs such as infant mental health within three bureaus – the Office of Child Development, Child and Family Nutrition, and Child Care Services.

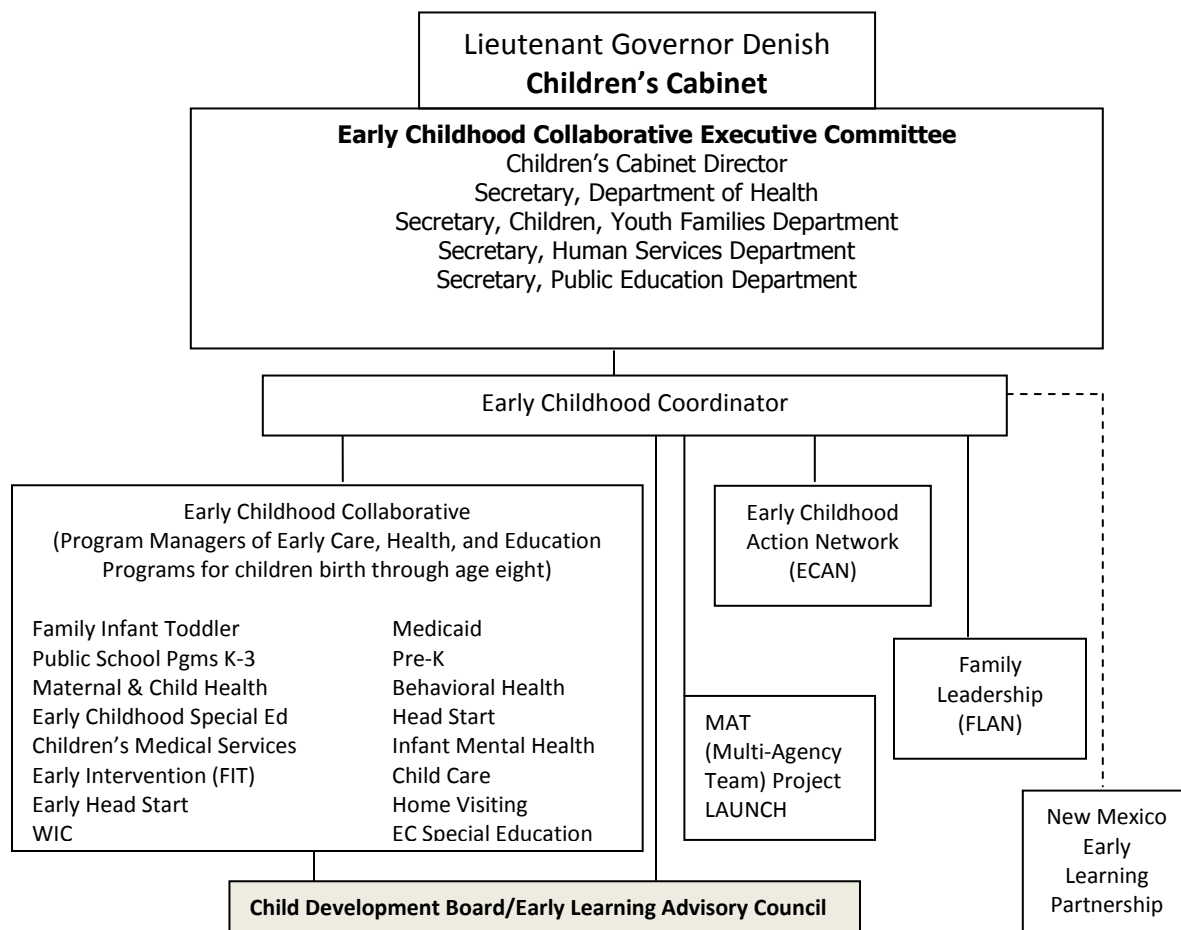
New Mexico Children's Cabinet - Governor Richardson created the Children's Cabinet by Executive Order in 2003. Now in statute, it is chaired by Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish. The Children's Cabinet consists of Cabinet Secretaries representing thirteen state agencies charged with ensuring that state government at every level is meeting the health, education and growth needs of New Mexico's children. The Children's Cabinet publishes an annual children's budget and report card, which tracks indicators in five outcome areas (healthy, educated, safe, supported, and involved) and analyzes state and federal spending on programs serving children and youth administered by, or through, the State.

Early Childhood Collaborative - Over the past year, during the discussions surrounding the re-application for Early Childhood Comprehensive Services (ECCS) funds, it was recommended that they be used to establish an Early Childhood Coordinator position within state government who will coordinate mid-level program managers of all early care, health and education services. This will move the primary focus of the grant from strategic planning *outside* state government to strategic implementation *inside* state government. The Early Childhood Coordinator will act as a liaison to the Children's Cabinet through an Executive Committee, comprised of Department Secretaries that meet regularly regarding children's issues (Health, Education, Human Services, and Children, Youth and Families). This

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recommendation has been approved and each of these four departments has now supplemented ECCS funds to support the establishment of this position. There is great promise that through the coordinating efforts of the Early Childhood Coordinator position, an Early Childhood Collaborative, made of the health, education, and human services departments within New Mexico, will take the lead in coordinating early childhood system issues across government agencies. Because of its composition, the efforts of the Early Childhood Collaborative will be much broader in scope than the work of the Early Learning Advisory Council.

Early Childhood Collaborative



Stakeholder Infrastructure:

Early Childhood Action Network - For the past five years, the Early Childhood Action Network (ECAN) has acted as the advisory group to the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant as well as an *ad hoc* subcommittee to the Children's Cabinet. With members appointed by the Lt. Governor and funded through the ECCS grant, a vibrant and committed group of stakeholders and state government personnel meet regularly to advance a common vision for a more coordinated and comprehensive system of early care, health and education that would be equitably available to all New Mexicans. It is within these conversations that the vision of a "system of systems" was born.

Early Learning Advisory Council – The governor-appointed Child Development Board, which provides oversight of the myriad programs within the Office of Child Development (including but not limited to, state-funded child development programs, a statewide system of Training and Technical Assistance Programs (TTAPs), and the STARS program for the enhancement of quality within childcare programs) has been appointed to serve as the Early Learning Advisory Council. Embedded within the Early Childhood Services Division of the larger Children, Youth and Families Department, the Advisory Council is strategically located to work with other early childhood programs, as well as link efforts with the juvenile justice, protective services and behavioral health programs located within CYFD.

Indian Education (Act) Policy Council - The New Mexico Indian Education Act includes assurances regarding the inclusion of Native American children in the P-20 education system. Government-to-government efforts include discussion of early childhood education. The

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Advisory Council will establish a Native American Subcommittee, which will link to the Policy Council in order to liaison with tribal governments regarding early learning system[s] needs.

New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership - Sustainable funding of high quality early learning services has always been a concern of policymakers and stakeholders in New Mexico. Even though the commitment is present, the funds often are not. This year, the Lt. Governor and the Children's Cabinet have secured foundation funds to establish a public-private partnership to explore long-term funding options. The New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership, a team consisting primarily of business leaders and policy makers, has now been established. Their goal is to identify methods by which to engage private industry to assist in the funding and support of early childhood programs on an ongoing basis.

Status of Early Learning Standards (Guidelines/Outcomes)

The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines provide a foundational framework for the alignment of the early learning system[s] in a way that is practical and welcomed by practitioners across systems. The state is currently finalizing Early Learning Guidelines/Outcomes for children birth through kindergarten, expanding upon the Early Learning Outcomes that have been used for the past four years in New Mexico PreK. The entire continuum is being field tested in all early learning systems as well as in kindergarten programs this year with ARRA Stimulus Child Care Development Block Grant Quality Funds.

The Guidelines are organized in three sections: Infant/Toddler Early Learning Guidelines (birth to three), Three- and Four-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines, and Kindergarten Early Learning Guidelines. Oversight for the development of each section has been the responsibility

of a steering committee with focus groups held statewide to assure stakeholder input. Those who are field testing the Guidelines will recommend supplemental materials that need to be developed. It has already been recommended, for example, that parent materials and activity/curriculum guides be written.

The three sections of the Early Learning Guidelines provide practitioners and parents with a continuum of growth, development and learning objectives. Not only are the three sections aligned vertically, but the Guidelines themselves are aligned horizontally with program standards for New Mexico PreK, Head Start, child care, early childhood special education (“619”), and kindergarten programs, providing a common source that can be used for curriculum planning, observation, documentation and reporting for all children in a variety of settings regardless of program funding. Additionally, the Three- and Four-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines/Outcomes provide commonly agreed upon criteria to determine school readiness across seven domains.

Status of Professional Development

In New Mexico, a distinction is made between professional development and training. Professional development is transcribed coursework offered through institutions of higher education, while training (and technical assistance) programs are system-specific, enabling individuals to perform the work responsibilities of a particular system.

In the mid 1990s, the New Mexico Child Development Board established a standing committee with responsibility for the establishment and implementation of the early childhood professional preparation system. As a result, the Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force

has met nearly every month since then. The current Five-Year Plan for the Professional Development of Early Care and Education Professionals was approved by the Child Development Board in 2007. Due to the current administration's commitment to early childhood, most of the recommendations from the plan have been implemented.

New Mexico has had a fully articulated, competency-based professional preparation system or career lattice with a universal course of study in place for many years. It is often referred to as the New Mexico Early Care, Education and Family Support Career Lattice. The system is based on seven competency areas: Child Growth, Development and Learning; Health, Safety, and Nutrition; Family and Community Collaboration; Developmentally Appropriate Content; Learning Environment and Curriculum Implementation; Assessment of Children and Evaluation of Programs; and Professionalism. With multiple levels of licensure and certification, New Mexico's Career Lattice is used in all early learning systems, and public school through third grade and provides a common framework or standard across systems.

As in a true lattice, the Career Lattice provides multiple pathways for growth and professional development, allowing individuals to move horizontally, vertically or diagonally within a single system or across systems as professional preparation allows them to seek and move into positions with more responsibility and increased compensation. The levels of the career lattice are as follows:

- 45-Hour Entry Level Course
- Child Development Certificate (the state-issued equivalent to the CDA)
- Associate Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctoral Degree

Common Core Competencies with leveled indicators of competence detail the level of competence that is expected of individuals that exit preparation programs at each level of the career lattice. In other words, it describes what all early childhood professionals must know and be able to do when they complete the entry level, the certificate/associate degree level, bachelor's and master's levels. At each level, content is based on the same set of competencies with the indicators of competence representing increased depth and breadth. All institutions of higher education in the State of New Mexico include the common core content in their coursework, thereby assuring each student's level of competence when exiting the program, regardless of the particular institution. Higher education faculty in the state have also designed a universal catalogue of courses at the associate degree and bachelor's degree levels with common course syllabi, titles, and numbering. Based upon this universal catalogue of courses, a statewide system of credit for prior learning and on-line courses has been implemented.

Institutions of higher education have recently agreed to recognize and adopt two degree pathways for an early childhood teaching degree. The pathways have been developed to distinguish the developmental needs of very young children (degree pathway for birth through age four) versus the curriculum alignment and core content knowledge necessary for teaching children entering the early grades (degree pathway for age three through third grade).

Professional preparation pathways at the associate degree and bachelor's degree levels have also been established for Early Childhood Program Administration and Family, Infant Toddler Studies. The latter is designed for those wanting to become early interventionists and home visitors. Like teacher preparation, these two professional development pathways lead to

state-issued certification at the associate's degree and bachelor's degree levels. Increasingly, the state is investing in early childhood practitioners accessing the career lattice through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program.

Ultimately, these professional preparation programs within state institutions of higher education will become a part of the same P-20 data system as the early learning system[s].

Status of Training and Technical Assistance

As mentioned before, each early learning system has established its own T/TA system. The largest of these is the statewide T/TA system that supports the child-care system with eight Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Programs (TTAPs).

New Mexico has established innovative, vibrant and coordinated training and technical assistance programs. Representative examples include:

The six hour *Quality Early Childhood Programs for ALL* course is offered by all TTAPs and is required for all staff employed in 3-STAR and 4-STAR licensed child care programs. The course was developed specifically for administrators and teachers to learn about opportunities to include young children with disabilities and their families as full members of the community and society.

In an effort to reach family home child care providers, the TTAPs also offer "*Conversations*" (often called the "*18-Hour Course*") throughout the state. The course consists of 9 modules regarding child development, families and communities, learning environments, health and safety, business practices, social-emotional development, discipline, language, literacy, and numeracy.

A Training and Technical Assistance Network coordinates the TTAP infrastructure, which includes the establishment of performance measures and the assessment of the effectiveness of training provided by the eight TTAPs throughout the State. These assessments are captured in an annual report, the first of which was published for 2007 – 2008. Among the assessments are pre and post tests on all training conducted. During the last year of training, pre- and post-testing indicates a 25.65% increase in trainee knowledge of the training material.

The TTAPs also recently began implementing TRAIN HIGH, a strategy aimed at assisting early child-care programs with on-site implementation of information gained at off-site training. Programs who participated in TRAIN HIGH reported that 83.3% achieved or made significant progress in meeting their training goals.

Trainer approval is also a function of the TTAPs. Each early childhood trainer seeking approval must contact the local TTAP and is guided through the trainer approval process on the NewMexicoKids.org website. The four categories of early childhood trainers include Community Trainer, Competency Trainer, Level I Master Trainer of Adult Learners in all Competency Areas, and Level II Master Trainer of Adult Learners in all Competency areas.

The Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program maintains an in-service presence throughout the state that addresses specific issues of early intervention, as well as support for larger systems, including public schools, early care, Early Head Start, and mental health supports. Training events are widely publicized. The Early Childhood Network at the University of New Mexico's Center for Development and Disability (CDD) maintains a centralized training presence that includes an electronic training calendar, on-line and in person courses, bilingual resources,

coordination of training, and multiple documents and publications in electronic and hardcopy formats. Parent staff members and collaborative training with parent advocacy organizations help ensure that family issues are central to professional training efforts.

A significant percentage of the total funding for the state's PreK program is devoted to training and technical assistance and professional preparation. On-site mentoring is provided to all programs and an annual PreK Institute ensures that all teachers are trained on observing and documenting early learning outcomes.

Other statewide organizations also provide system-specific training for practitioners, parents and the general public. For example, the newly established Head Start Training and Technical Assistance office has already been instrumental in supporting alignment efforts with the Early Head Start and Head Start system.

The state's numerous early childhood training and technical assistance initiatives joined together in 2007 to form a work group called Bridging and Expanding Training and Technical Assistance for Early Childhood. The group's purpose is to "support and strengthen high quality services for young children and their families through the development of partnerships working towards coordinated early childhood training and technical assistance systems that build on strengths, maximize efforts, identify needs, reduce duplication, and capitalize on resources." Membership includes CYFD (including the TTAPs and the Head Start Collaboration office), PED, CDD, the Department of Health's Family Infant Toddler Program, Parents Reaching Out, Booz Allen Hamilton (contractor for Region VI Head Start), and other interested stakeholders.

Due to the rural and economic characteristics of New Mexico, access to higher education is a significant issue. This is being addressed through the development of on-line courses and the provision of T.E.A.C.H. scholarships. The current limitations on expansion are limited by the lack of funds. While the number of scholarships has increased each year, it is insufficient. In the 2007-2008 school year, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® project was able to support 404 scholars even though there are over 12,000 early childhood educators in New Mexico who are eligible.

Retention is also an issue in New Mexico's early learning programs, particularly for teachers who attain college degrees. The public education salary schedule is significantly higher than for early childhood educators outside the public school system. Many early childhood teachers leave the field for higher salaries upon completion of their degrees. New Mexico continues to explore opportunities, such as the Child Care WAGE\$® Project, for increasing benefits and compensation.

The rich diversity of the state provides a particular challenge for professional development programs. Even though the system of professional preparation has worked diligently to make coursework relevant to the diverse populations of the state, recruitment and retention of a diverse student body has been a challenge. A particular need is professional preparation programs that support the establishment of culturally and linguistically appropriate early learning programs that also provide opportunities for dual language acquisition.

Status of Data Systems

With the exception of Family Support, the other early learning systems have established data systems in isolation. While detailed information about child-care providers and child-care assistance clients can be accessed through CYFD's Family Automated Client Tracking System (FACTS), this system does not interface with the PreK database or any other early learning data system. Although the Children, Youth and Families Department has a long-term plan to integrate all of its early care database systems into an integrated web-based program, this will require significant funding – and will still need to be integrated with other early learning data systems.

Other than the data system being proposed within this application, there are two other initiatives that, upon funding, will need to be integrated with this effort. One is a major data system for the behavioral health system. The other is a P-20 initiative, New Mexico Achieving Collaborative Heights in Education Via e-Systems (NM ACHIEVeS), that will close technology, data collection, and reporting capability gaps in the State. This multi-departmental effort will reform the collection and integrated use of education and economic data. Policy leaders in New Mexico understand that a longitudinal data system of this type is the necessary first step in addressing critical educational issues such as the achievement gap. Early learning representatives have been actively involved in the conceptualization of this initiative and will continue to integrate the work of the Advisory Council to ensure an integrated and aligned data system that will build upon the success of the New Mexico PreK system, which issues a unique identifier that follows children into the public school system. New Mexico will continue to work

in collaboration with the other data warehouse initiatives, specifically the behavioral health and P-20 plans, and will continue to build upon data and reporting initiatives already underway.

Status of Family Support

Family engagement and support is a high priority for early childhood stakeholders committed to the establishment of the early learning system[s] in New Mexico. A shared belief is that parents are a child's first and most influential teacher - and that all parents should be supported in this responsibility. Innovative and powerful initiatives have been established outside of state government that demonstrate the impact and potential of engaging and empowering parents. However, these efforts and those that are a part of early learning systems are not well coordinated or aligned. A clear understanding exists amongst all stakeholders that additional steps must be taken to strengthen and further support family and community involvement. Organizations and initiatives currently in place include the following:

Educating Parents of Indian Children with Special Needs (EPICS) has a long history in New Mexico and provides family support services to Native American families. EPICS has now become a non-profit agency and is best known for the Indian Family Leadership Institute that they hold every year. EPICS is a perfect example of a family support program that would welcome the possibility of becoming part of a larger aligned system of family support.

Parents Reaching Out (PRO), a non-profit organization with a long history in New Mexico, and the home of the Family Leadership Action Network (FLAN), funded through the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant. FLAN holds a statewide annual conference for families to identify community needs that inform public policy, advocacy and training efforts.

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Over the past five years, 1500 families have used this opportunity to network with one another and participate in this conference.

Family Leadership for Education, Culture, and Health Access (FLECHA) is another statewide initiative of PRO. FLECHA was established to help parents of preschool children master their role as learning advocates. The program is a “facilitated peer-to-peer curriculum to develop parents as learning advocates.”

In New Mexico’s economically disadvantaged communities – both urban and rural, where there often are large educational achievement gaps – many parents do not seek help when they encounter problems with their children’s development, health care or education. As a result, they often do not do the best possible job advocating for their children’s interests.

FLECHA

Family support services provided through the Child Care Development Block Grant quality funds are available to all parents, whether their children are in a child-care program or not. The www.NewMexicoKids.org website provides web-based child-care referral information to parents, links to other websites, and a wealth of other information. A toll-free NewMexicoKids Warmline is available to parents who do not have computer access or who would like to have a conversation with someone regarding questions they might have or resources they are seeking. Eight Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Program (TTAPs) are also available to parents statewide, where they can access resources such as a Toy Lending Library, information regarding community resources and training. The TTAPs also employ Child Care Inclusion Specialists as consultants to parents and child-care providers.

Status of Ready Schools

Many years ago, early childhood professionals in New Mexico adopted the National Association for the Education of Young Children's position that early childhood education spans birth through third grade. As a result, early childhood initiatives in New Mexico have historically included the primary grades. Even though the expectation of the Head Start Act that mandated the establishment of Early Childhood Care and Advisory Council is that the

Council address the early learning system for children birth to kindergarten, the New Mexico Early Learning Advisory Council has determined to link their efforts with the New Mexico Public Education Department to support the establishment and recognition of ready schools that will ensure the success of every child and eliminate the achievement gap in New Mexico. Several national models have emerged from this commitment:

Joining Hands is an initiative of the New Mexico Community Foundation that has been funded by the Kellogg Foundation. This transition model was first developed by the New Mexico Head Start Collaboration Office in the late 90's and has provided a powerful model of partnering at the community level.

The inclusive New Mexico Professional Preparation System of licensure and certification initiated in the early 90's spans birth through third grade. Competencies and professional preparation pathways have been established for teachers, administrators and family support personnel.

Early Learning Guidelines provide a continuum of growth, development and learning of children birth through kindergarten. These Guidelines serve as a foundational strategy to link

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all early learning system – and to link the early learning system with kindergarten and the primary grades. The 3- and 4-Year-Old Early Learning Outcomes provide criteria for school readiness and are defined as “what children should know, be able to do, and the dispositions toward learning that are necessary for success in kindergarten.”



II. Approach

A. Plan of Action

New Mexico is well positioned to take on this ambitious agenda because of its long-standing commitment to early childhood systems development. A visionary plan has been in place since the early 1990s and the state has implemented whatever was possible through the cooperative use of whatever funding could be identified at any given time.

Full participation is a core value in New Mexico and we will use work groups, community focus groups and public hearings to inform and validate the work. Such involvement will influence action steps to be taken, as well as the policy recommendations that will be made. An important asset to New Mexico is its strong network of community programs and early childhood stakeholders' committed to advancing the early learning system as a whole. Leadership provided by the Early Learning Advisory Council will capture the interest and expertise that is already in place, provide guidance and policy recommendations to the Executive, and inform the work of the Early Childhood Collaborative. While the objectives, strategies and key activities are outlined to the best of our ability at this time, it is impossible to fully project how the process will unfold. In keeping with similar efforts in the past, early educators in New Mexico are committed to the integrity of a "bottom-up" system-building process while, at the same time, cognizant of state and federal regulations.

This approach is extremely important in New Mexico, as the diversity of the state and the unique history, culture and linguistic heritage of communities throughout the state means a

cookie-cutter approach simply won't work. Public policy recommendations must be fully explored to ensure their appropriateness statewide and to support the establishment of an infrastructure that can accommodate the uniqueness of communities throughout the State.

This application represents the organizational work thus far of the New Mexico Early Learning Advisory Council members with input from early childhood stakeholders. During June 2009, the Child Development Board met to establish a plan for responding to the application. Potential members of the Advisory Council were convened twice: first to develop the planning and action step format to be used, then to develop the substantive content for organization, coordination and implementation of already established plans. An open work day of key early childhood stakeholders was held to present the plan to the larger early childhood community and to engage their assistance in providing additional input to further refine the plan. July and August were spent documenting this input. And, finally, the Child Development Board/Advisory Group members met the first week of September and again in December to review and provide input to the final drafts of the application. A public hearing was held on December 18, 2009 to ensure stakeholders are aware of the application's contents.

Although there is currently a commitment to early childhood education and care by policy leaders, attention to state budget issues is taking precedence. The state of the economy could potentially delay implementation of recommendations made by the Advisory Council. This could be the best possible time to establish a planning infrastructure. Other macro-level early childhood initiatives have momentum and will continue regardless of the budget situation since federal funds are supporting their efforts (e.g., Project LAUNCH and the Early Childhood

Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) initiatives). State government program staff have been dedicated to collaboration and alignment for many years. For example, mid-level program managers voluntarily created the Early Childhood Interagency Action Team in the early 1990's and still meet as needs arise.

There is no doubt that early childhood education is viewed as integral to the success of a comprehensive P-20 system. Never in the history of New Mexico has such a focus been placed on early childhood; therefore, we are well positioned to carry out and accelerate this work. Both the Executive and Legislative branches fully support and recognize the importance of this work. The proposed activities have been chosen to assure continuity and build upon the strengths of efforts already underway. As confirmed by focus groups held throughout the state, the early childhood community owns this vision and is excited by the opportunities this funding presents.

Beyond year 3, it is anticipated that funding will be necessary for maintenance of planning efforts, as well as for further and long-term implementation of the Advisory Council's recommendations. Therefore, we are hopeful that the Early Learning Challenge Fund will become available to continue these efforts.

Fundamental to the success of the Advisory Council, in year one:

- Bylaws will be established to assure that the Advisory Council functions effectively and efficiently as an expanded Child Development Board. The bylaws will specify the relationship of the Advisory Council to the Executive and the Children's Cabinet.

- The Early Learning Plan that was initiated in 2004 will be reviewed and updated, providing a common theoretical, philosophical, ethical and practical vision; articulating the key principles that will support the development of the early learning system[s]. An essential component of the Early Learning Plan will be Program Standards for children birth through third grade that describe what early childhood education programs in New Mexico should look like based on research and best practice. The completion of these Program Standards will be a priority of the Advisory Council so that there is a clear vision for program development at the community level and policy development at the state level.
- Results Based Accountability, a strategic planning methodology, will guide our efforts. Results based accountability is research based and has demonstrated its effectiveness in making macro systems change. The methodology is geared toward measurable outcomes, or the “ends”. The approach will be most effective in focusing the work by the partners across the early learning system[s]. Results Based Accountability uses a participatory process for defining indicators of success and measuring performance. The Early Learning Advisory Council will track progress by utilizing the outcomes and indicators of success and make policy recommendations based on these findings.
- Native American and Hispanic Early Learning Subcommittees will be established by the Advisory Council. Gaining an understanding of underserved and at-risk populations within the state is a priority of the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council does not want to make the assumption that the unique needs of Indian or Hispanic children will

adequately surface through the planning process and as such, specific focus will be placed on cultural and linguistic relevant strategies for ensuring educational success for Native and Hispanic children and their families.

- A Process That Engages Local Communities will be established to provide input and oversight for community organization and quality improvement efforts, and to provide local input to the statewide Advisory Council. New Mexico has in existence a variety of local councils that focus on physical health, behavioral health, and other services aimed at family and community well-being.. Efforts will be made to build upon existing community strengths and structures as community-based models are explored.

B. Objectives

The first-year activities, as well as on-going work, will all be focused on accomplishing the goal established by the Advisory Council that **every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s]**. To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been established:

OBJECTIVE #1: Capacity Analysis/Needs Assessment

Establish an integrated data system with two primary components that will allow us to correlate services being provided with results based accountability measures.

This will be accomplished by establishing and implementing:

- A unique identifier system for each child entering a federal-, tribal-, or state-funded early learning program that is linked to the P-20 system. Coupled with strategies to achieve Objectives #2 and 3, a unique identifier will enable programs to:

- Consistently monitor children’s growth and development based on early learning guidelines used across systems, pro-actively engage parents, and assure seamless transition from program to program and into kindergarten. (This has already been established through the state-funded PreK program by giving pre-kindergarten children their unique public school ID number upon enrollment, regardless of whether the program is operated within or without the public school system.)
- A data warehouse that will intentionally and strategically collect, aggregate and analyze information necessary for an ongoing Capacity Analysis/Needs Assessment process, which will allow us to recommend necessary coordination and investment. The information within the data warehouse will enable us to analyze the early learning system[s] on four levels:
 - A comprehensive county-by-county mapping and analysis of child and family demographics (analyzed, in particular, on research-based risk indicators), including the programs children are attending.
 - A comprehensive county-by-county mapping and analysis of the attributes, availability and quality of early education, care and family support programs, including the qualifications of program personnel and population of children being served. This analysis will include the appropriateness of programs as determined by the cultural and linguistic heritage of the children and families being served;

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- A comprehensive county-by-county mapping and analysis of the availability and quality of state- and federally-funded training and technical assistance services;
- A statewide inventory of the availability and quality of early childhood education professional development/preparation programs available through state institutions of higher education: and
- An inventory of funding sources with the early learning system to analyze the matching of funding to need and to explore ways to weave funding and achieve efficiencies and increase the most effective use of funds.

Objective 1: Establish an integrated data system with two primary components that will allow us to correlate services being provided with results based accountability measures.			
Activities	When	Projected Accomplishments	Person/Org Responsible
Develop a Data Warehouse - Conduct Needs Assessment & Capacity Analysis	Year 1	1) Data: mapping county-by-county child and family demographics, program capacity, early childhood educator qualifications, higher education and training and technical assistance capacity and quality. 2) Analysis: apply criteria for the determination of risk	Dan Haggard & Kathy Armijo-Etre
	Years 1 & 2	A data warehouse that maintains state level, county level and child specific data.	Work to be done by contractor determined by RFP
Conduct study of public funding.	Year 2	Financing study. Plan for the braiding of funding to enhance service delivery capacity.	Kathy Armijo-Etre & Ad Hoc Work Group
	Year 3	Increased number of programs with multiple funding sources	
Develop a unique identifier system to track the growth and development of children.	Year 3	Child tracking for systems level planning and resource allocation. Record system for families to use containing tracking of child growth and development.	Kathy Armijo-Etre & Ad Hoc Work Group with P-20 data project

These ambitious objectives and strategies are all consistent with the work of the P-20 Data Task Force, being led by the Governor's Office. The Advisory Council will work closely with

the Task Force to ensure that efforts are coordinated and systems are integrated and compatible as they are established.

The work contained in this objective is essential to the function of the Advisory Council and is therefore our top priority. The focus of year one will be to build the data warehouse and a protocol for the capacity analysis. To gain full understanding of the task at hand, additional study may be required in particular focus areas. Maintenance of current data and an on-going analysis of that information will become an important aspect of the Council's work. Ultimately, the purpose of the capacity analysis is to ensure that the children most at risk for school failure have equitable access to high quality early learning programs. Therefore, it is essential that demographic information about children and families be collected and correlated with program capacity and quality data.

Attention will be especially given to children who are at risk due to adverse childhood conditions. In a study conducted by Vincent Felitti⁵, seven categories of adverse experiences were identified and found to have life long consequences in engaging in high risk behavior, poor health status, and disease. The categories are: psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, substance abuse in home, mental illness in parent, violence against mother, and incarceration of a parent.ⁱ Families who face these conditions are often isolated and their children do not access early childhood services. Demographic data regarding children and families will be analyzed based on these seven adverse conditions in order to determine risk. The Advisory Council is well positioned to obtain this data since CYFD is not only the lead

⁵ Vincent Felitti, MD, *Adverse Childhood Experiences*. 1998. Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program, San Diego. www.acestudy.org.

agency for early care and education services, but also administers the state child welfare, juvenile justice, domestic violence, and behavioral health services.

The data analysis will be modeled after the impressive ongoing work already being done in two other states: Pennsylvania's *Risk and Reach report* and Chicago's *Mapping Today's Capacity for Tomorrow's Investment* study.

As we move into an implementation phase, the data will be essential in the Results Based Accountability analysis. The data will help to refine and will drive the work of the Advisory Council as it unfolds over the three year planning period. We anticipate that the establishment of this data collection and analysis process will support efforts to be funded through the Early Learning Challenge Fund.

OBJECTIVE #2: Alignment of the Early Learning System[s]

Establish an aligned early learning system[s] with programs that are more efficiently and intentionally funded so that all families have consistent access to a seamless continuum of appropriate services, with assurance that children who are most at risk for school failure have equitable access to the highest quality programs.

This will be accomplished through:

- Building upon the strengths and unique features of each system;
- Focusing on the diversity and strengths of the families and communities in the state;
- Aligning curricula, assessment, reporting, program and learning standards;
- Further establishing, aligning and implementing program quality rating criteria and a corresponding quality improvement infrastructure;
- Aligning Early Learning Guidelines; and
- Aligning professional development and T/TA.

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Objective 2: Establish an aligned early learning system[s] with programs that are more efficiently and intentionally funded so that all families have consistent access to a seamless continuum of appropriate services, with assurance that children who are at most risk for school failure have equitable access to the highest quality programs.

Activities		When	Projected Accomplishments	Person/Org Responsible
Align program standards, learning standards, curriculum, assessment and reporting methods including id of barriers & recommendations to address.		Years 1 - 3	Side-by-side analysis. Id of strengths, commonalities & gaps. Draft common standards & assessment/ reporting methods.	Kathy Armijo-Etre and Ad Hoc Work Group
Field test implementation in all early childhood settings.		Years 2 & 3	Implement standards and assessment/reporting.	Early Child. Collaborative
Assess quality of programs		Year 2	Determine quality criteria to be used across systems	Kathy Armijo-Etre and Ad Hoc Work Group
		Year 3	Recommend infrastructure for universal assessment of quality of programs for children, T&TA and professional development.	
Fully implement Early Learning Guidelines across Early Learning System[s]	Field test Early Learning Guidelines – Integrate alignment issues into the plan.	Year 1	Selected site(s) to test changes identified through the pilot.	Gaye Gronlund
	Develop Early Learning Guidelines training	Years 1 - 2	Video-based and print training materials	
	Gain input and develop supplemental materials	Years 1 & 2	Materials for parents and teachers will be developed	
	Train early childhood providers in Early Learning Guidelines.	Years 2 - 3	Increased number of trained providers in integrated funding and program requirements.	
	Continue to develop Birth – 8 year Early Learning Outcomes, i.e., rubrics for learning guidelines.	Years 2 - 3	On-going refinement of Early Learning Outcomes.	
Professional Development and Training and Technical Assistance	Continue the phase-in of TEACH	Years 1 - 3	Increased numbers of early childhood educators with higher education.	Kathy Armijo-Etre and Ad Hoc Work Group
	Develop incentives for retention of early learning educators.	Years 1 - 3	Feasibility study and pilot of WAGES-type incentive program.	
	Universal syllabi finalized and revised career pathways implemented	Years 1 - 3	Fully articulated common course of study with levels of licensure and certification universally available.	EC Higher Education Task Force
	Align T/TA across Early Learning System[s]	Years 1 – 3	Coordinated T/TA system	Bridging & Expanding T/TA Work Group

Assessment and Reporting Methods: One of the greatest barriers to the alignment and coordination of services at the local level is that each of the early learning systems has well-defined program standards and expectations for curriculum, observing and documenting children's learning, and reporting. Historically, there has not been a commitment at the state level (supported at the federal level) to facilitate the practical braiding of funding streams within a community, a program, or even a classroom. There is tremendous motivation in New Mexico's early learning community to work on this aspect of alignment, and significant work has already been done. For, as community programs are increasingly responsive to the comprehensive needs of families, they are asking for support and guidance in the braiding and weaving of multiple funding sources.

Quality Rating and Program Improvement: The establishment, alignment and recommendations for the implementation of program quality rating criteria and a corresponding quality improvement infrastructure will be a priority. This will be done in anticipation of the need to determine the level of quality of all early learning programs, in much the same way that the Quality Rating System now rates the quality of all licensed child-care programs. This effort will be directly correlated with the Program Standards and build upon the strengths of the child-care quality improvement and rating system already in place. This determination of program quality – and strategies for supporting quality improvement – is essential to assuring that the children with greatest risk for school failure have access to the highest quality programs. This is particularly challenging taking into account the diversity of the

state. Therefore, particular attention will be paid to ensuring that the quality rating system acknowledges and is respectful of faith-based, cultural and linguistic strengths within the state.

Early Learning Guidelines: This year, New Mexico’s Early Learning Guidelines will be field tested in all seven early learning systems as well as in kindergarten programs throughout the state. The purpose will be to test the extent to which the guidelines facilitate alignment – within the program (e.g. in planning curriculum and reporting progress made by children funded through multiple sources) – and within the community (e.g. in transitioning children from program to program). During the first year, supplemental materials that are needed will be identified, such as parent materials that enable parents to support and follow their children’s growth, development and learning.

In subsequent years, practitioners will be trained in the use of the Guidelines, for just as the quality program criteria will be used to track the continuous quality improvements made in programs, the early learning guidelines will enable practitioners and parents to track the continuous growth, development and learning of children. A consistent statewide system – used in all early learning systems - will not only support parent partnerships and enhance the learning of children, but will significantly reduce the burden on program personnel.

Professional Development and Training & Technical Assistance: Through the capacity analysis and implementation of the quality rating system, data will become available regarding program quality, including teacher qualifications by program and by geographic area. Data provided through strategic and intentional analysis of all the data will help to identify where future resources should be allocated. A comprehensive picture will become clear regarding

needs for training, technical assistance and professional development – especially taking into account the specific cultural and linguistic attributes of the targeted communities where children are most in need of high quality early learning programs. This is certainly an area that will easily link to the P-20 data initiative.

It is in the area of professional preparation that New Mexico has experienced the most alignment. The Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force, a standing committee of the Child Development Board, will continue the work they have been committed to for the past fifteen years. All higher education institutions have implemented a fully articulated common course of study for those working in all early learning systems – testimony to the fact that alignment is possible. Common Core/Universal Curriculum will be established and new early learning career pathways will be implemented. T.E.A.C.H. will continue to be phased in to the extent that funding grows. And, efforts to establish a wage incentive program will continue to retain a diverse and highly qualified workforce.

Efforts of the Bridging and Expanding Training and Technical Assistance Task Force will be honored and they will play a significant role by becoming a Task Force of the Advisory Council, working to align the T/TA systems throughout the state.

It is anticipated that these efforts will yield public policy recommendations alongside a framework for pooling funds, joint training curricula and coordinated provision of training and technical assistance in order to reduce administrative costs and duplication of services.

OBJECTIVE #3: Increased Participation

Increase the participation of children (especially those who are at risk for school failure) in the highest quality programs.

This will be achieved through:

- Establishing a diversified strategic communication plan that is appropriately reflective of the different populations being targeted. For, key to increasing participation is: 1) increasing awareness of the importance of early education, and 2) improving awareness of early childhood programs that are available. Currently, public awareness campaigns occur on a piecemeal basis throughout the seven systems of early learning and are usually about a specific aspect of a particular system (e.g. child find). A strategic communication plan to increase public awareness of the importance of early childhood development and early education will be designed and implemented that assures the delivery of messages that are linguistically and culturally appropriate. Additionally, innovative strategies will be established to assure universal awareness of programs that exists. The communication plan will include branding, comprehensive media coverage, materials for families, and mechanisms for recognizing and acknowledging families for positive parenting. In order to fully utilize resources and link with other efforts, the Advisory Council will link these efforts with those of the New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership, funded by the Kellogg Foundation.

Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].

Objective 3: Increase the participation of children (especially those who are at risk for school failure) in the highest quality programs.

Activities		When	Projected Accomplishments	Person/Org Responsible
Establish a Native American Subcommittee to enhance coordinated planning and delivery of integrated early childhood services.		Years 1 - 3	Increased number of Native American children receiving high quality early childhood services.	Charlotte Begay & Subcommittee
Establish an Hispanic Subcommittee to enhance coordinated planning and delivery of integrated early childhood services		Years 1 – 3	Increased number of Hispanic children receiving high quality early childhood services	Kathy Armijo-Etre & Subcommittee
Through Needs Assessment/Capacity Analysis study, identify specific needs of Hispanic children.		Years 2 - 3	Increased number of Hispanic children receiving quality early childhood services.	Kathy Armijo-Etre & Ad Hoc Work Group
Develop a plan to assure equal access to services for children who face adverse conditions such as those whose parents are incarcerated, have addictions or, are mentally ill. Media outreach to include specific strategies for reaching these children.		Years 2 - 3	Increased number of children who face adverse conditions receiving services.	Kathy Armijo-Etre & Ad Hoc Work Group
Increase access, understanding, and knowledge of what is available in communities.	Develop and implement a strategic and communications plan to increase public awareness of the importance of early childhood development.	Yr 1-3	Increased public and family awareness of early childhood development. Indicators include number of television, radio and other electronic sources, e.g., web-sites airing the social marketing campaign.	Kathy Armijo-Etre & Ad Hoc Work Group in collaboration with Early Learning Partnership, Kiwanis, and other initiatives
	Coordinate with initiatives, e.g., United Way, that disperse information using a commonly defined logic model, via telephone.	Yr 1- 2	Increased communities with “211” or other approaches that disperse information.	
Insure availability of high quality early childhood programs.		Yr 1-3	Consistent quality standards across early childhood systems into a consistent approach to identify and recognize high quality such as the Star Rating System.	Early Childhood Collaborative

Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].

OBJECTIVE #4: Establish a System of Family Support

Establish family support as a recognized early learning system, and ensure that a continuum of family support services are equitably available to ALL families in New Mexico.

Family support has always been a core value of those working with young children in New Mexico and tremendous progress has been made in this area. It is essential that these efforts be coordinated and aligned in order for New Mexico to move this work forward.

This will be achieved through:

- Development of a clear, concise and inclusive definition of family support;
- Identification of family support services that should be universally available;
- Development of a plan to intentionally and strategically ensure that all families in New Mexico have equitable access to the family support system.

Objective 4: Establish family support as a recognized early learning system, and ensure that a continuum of family support services are equitably available to ALL families in New Mexico.			
Activities	When	Projected Accomplishments	Person/Org Responsible
Establish a clear definition of family support.	Year 1	A definition of family support to guide family support initiatives	Sallie VanCuren and Ad Hoc Work Group
Inventory family support initiatives and services.	Year 1	Inventory family support and engagement initiatives by type: (1) strengthening the family/child relationship, (2) delivering information on child development, health, school readiness, transition and assessment, (3) public policy, (4) advocacy leadership.	
Identify family support services that should be available.	Year 2	Report including recommendations.	
Plan for gaps and needs for family services.	Year 3	Strategic plan for family services	

OBJECTIVE #5: Ready Schools

Align the early learning system[s] with the public education (k-3) system as the foundation for New Mexico's P-20 education system through the promotion of Ready Schools.

This will be achieved through:

- Partnering with the Public Education Department to identify and promote Ready Schools;
- Alignment of standards, curriculum and professional development between early learning (birth to kindergarten) systems and the public school system; and
- Promoting transition initiatives between early learning systems and the public school system.

Objective 5: Align the early learning system[s] with the public education (k-3) system as the foundation for New Mexico's P-20 education system through the promotion of Ready Schools.			
Activities	When	Projected Accomplishments	Person/Org Responsible
Establish an inter-agency work group including Public Education Department designee and leadership to define and implement a Ready Schools Initiative.	Year 1 - 3	Creation of an established mechanism for collaboration with Public Education that will continue beyond the life of the grant.	Early Childhood Collaborative
Identify and promote transition initiatives.	Years 2 - 3	Pilot transition initiatives. Transition is a criteria of a Ready School	
Identify alignment issues in standards, curriculum, and professional development	Years 2 - 3	Clearly specify areas where alignment is needed along with strategies to address them	

New Mexico is a leader in the establishment of a research-based model of transitioning children from community early care and education programs to kindergarten. The *Joining Hands* model was established nearly ten years ago by the New Mexico Head Start Collaboration Office as a collaborative effort of Head Start grantees, public schools and other early care and

education stakeholders from throughout the state. In 2005, the Kellogg Foundation funded the implementation of *Joining Hands* in six diverse communities as part of the SPARK Project. Research conducted as a part of the implementation process found that children whose teachers participated in the Joining Hands transition process were more successful in kindergarten.

The National Governor's Association has done considerable work gathering research and best practices regarding Ready Schools. The Advisory Group will work collaboratively with representatives from the Public Education Department and others to explore this body of information and to determine how this information can most appropriately be shared and implemented in New Mexico.

Timeline

A more detailed timeline for the accomplishment of these objectives has been included in the Appendix.

Plan for Conducting Advisory Council Meetings and Gaining Public Input

Open meetings of the Early Learning Advisory Council will be held on a quarterly basis. Additionally, two retreats will be conducted to provide adequate time to assess progress, receive feedback, and further refine the action steps necessary for implementation of the objectives.. The retreats will take advantage of a larger block of time to address specific issues, such as research, findings and recommendations regarding dual language learners in the state. Work groups will meet continually throughout the state on a variety of topics, and will be representative of the many committed early learning practitioners, families, and other

stakeholders throughout the state. Additionally, public hearings will be held annually to share progress and key products that have been developed. The New Mexico early childhood community has a long history of assuring public input. This will continue and be integral to the planning and implementation process.

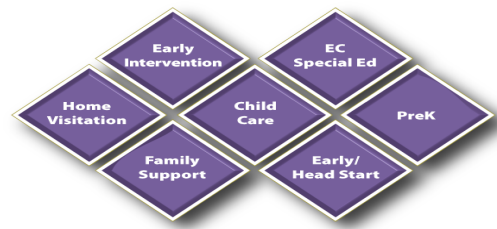
Plan to Sustain Efforts

The grant is dedicated to early childhood system development and infrastructure development, rather than to support basic or on-going functions. A well-established foundation will be able to stand following the completion of the activities and cessation of funding support beyond the lifetime of the grant. We have a track record of doing early childhood systems development work that, regardless of changes in the administration, legislative priorities, or state agency staff turnover, has continued. The grant will enable us to focus on key systems development issues that we have been unable to financially support. The intention is to conduct planning and development through the grant followed by full implementation using Challenge Funds to support sustainability.

C. Organizational Profile

The huge task of developing and administering New Mexico's early learning systems lies primarily with the state's Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), Department of Health (DOH), Public Education Department (PED) and Human Services Department (HSD). Contained among these departments, there are several offices, networks and boards charged with increasing the quality of and access to early learning systems. One of these is the Children, Youth and Family Department's Office of Child Development (OCD), located within the Early Childhood Services Division. Established by statute in 1989, OCD is charged with (1) developing preschool program standards and criteria (2) funding child development and preschool programs serving children from birth to age five and (3) developing a system of professional development with corresponding certification and licensure requirements, policies, and procedures for individuals working in early care, education, and intervention programs for children birth through third grade. In recent years, OCD has also been given responsibility for administration of the Child Care Block Grant quality funds and the establishment and management of resource and referral, training and technical assistance, quality improvement and rating efforts and the Head Start Collaboration Office.

A governor-appointed Child Development Board provides oversight of the Office of Child Development's activities. It is this Board that the governor has appointed to act as the Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Council, with expanded membership when serving in that capacity (see Appendix I).



D. Budget and Budget Justification for Year 1

	Description	Basis	Calculation	Sub-totals	Total
Personnel	Office of Child Development Bureau Chief	\$78,000.00	0.25	\$19,500.00	\$26,631.28
	OCD Administrative Support	\$28,525.12	0.25	\$7,131.28	
Benefits	Office of Child Development Bureau Chief	\$21,282.32	0.25	\$5,320.58	\$7,868.72
	OCD Administrative Support	\$10,192.56	0.25	\$2,548.14	
Travel				\$0.00	\$0.00
Equipment				\$0.00	\$0.00
Supplies				\$0.00	\$0.00
Contractual	Data	\$75,000.00		\$75,000.00	\$251,382.00
	Kathy Armijo-Etre	\$50,000.00		\$50,000.00	
	Gaye Gronlund	\$25,000.00		\$25,000.00	
	Betsy Cahill	\$20,000.00		\$20,000.00	
	Sallie VanCuren	\$15,000.00		\$15,000.00	
	Rosalinda Altamirano-Carreon	\$2,500.00		\$2,500.00	
	Charlotte Begay	\$2,500.00		\$2,500.00	
	Materials Development	\$22,000.00		\$22,000.00	
	Meeting Expenses	\$10,382.00		\$10,382.00	
	Travel	\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00	
	Administration	\$26,000.00		\$26,000.00	
Other				\$0.00	\$0.00
Indirect				\$0.00	\$0.00
Federal				\$285,882.00	\$285,882.00
Non-Federal	General Fund In-Kind Match			\$667,055.00	\$667,055.00

Personnel – Two CYFD staff will be actively involved in the Advisory Council and its activities.

Benefits – FICA, retirement, insurance, retiree health care.

Contractual Services – A contract for the remainder of the funds will be given to a

Governmental entity, Region 9 Education Cooperative (REC9). They will be responsible for issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the data work and then sub-contract for that and for the remainder of the work to be accomplished. They will maintain funds to support the work of the sub-contractors, develop and print publications and other materials in support of the work of the Advisory Council.

Data – Accomplish objectives to establish data warehouse and protocol for analysis.

Gaye Gronlund – Accomplish objectives regarding Early Learning Outcomes.

Betsy Cahill – Write Early Learning Plan and Program Standards.

Sallie VanCuren – Accomplish Family Support Objectives.

Rosalinda Altamirano-Carreón – Establish and provide leadership to the Hispanic Early Learning Work Group.

Charlotte Begay – Establish and provide leadership to the Native American Early Learning Work Group.

Materials Development – There are many materials and publications that are necessary for the success of this project. Early Learning Guideline materials must be developed and published – often in languages other than English. Materials must be published to support the professional development system. Reports and other publications (e.g. RBA reports) must be developed and printed regarding the work of the Advisory Council, work groups, and sub-contractors. This could include the cost of writing proposals to fund/implement recommendations.

Meeting Expenses – Host and provide per diem and mileage to Advisory Council (@\$95/day and 44¢ per mile), subcommittee, work group and other meetings. Numerous focus groups will be held throughout the state and many work group meetings that will involve stakeholders outside the Advisory Council. To the greatest extent possible, the project will use facilities that will be made available free of charge.

Administrative Costs – Costs incurred to the REC 9 to administer the contract and to support the work of the sub-contractors. For example, considerable time will be spent to make

logistical arrangements, manage expenses, and provide per diem for many individuals who will be participating in the project as well as making payments to sub-contractors.

Travel – Travel to meetings regarding the implementation and administration of the Early Learning Advisory Council. Although not currently planned, these could be sponsored by organizations such as the ACF, National Governor’s Association, or others.

Non-Federal – The state (general fund) in-kind match will be made by programs located within the Early Childhood Services Division of CYFD that are directly related to the building of the Early Learning System[s]: T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships and the statewide system of Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Programs (TTAPs).

Budget: Years 2 and 3

	Year Two	Year Three
Personnel	\$26,631.28	\$26,631.28
Benefits	\$7,868.72	\$7,868.72
Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00
Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contractual	\$251,380.00	\$251,380.00
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00
Indirect	\$0.00	\$0.00
Federal	\$285,880.00	\$285,880.00
Non-Federal	\$667,055.00	\$667,055.00
Total	\$952,935.00	\$952,935.00

E. Key Personnel and Position Responsibilities in Year 1

Dan Haggard, M.Ed. is the Deputy Director for Programs of the newly created Early Childhood Services Division within the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department. This new Division has been created as an initial effort to begin a structural alignment of early care and education programs for young children, including child care, PreK, Head Start, home visiting and other state-funded initiatives for young children. Formerly, Mr. Haggard served as the Director of New Mexico's Office of Child Development, an office which he continues to oversee in his role of Deputy Director of the Early Childhood Services Division. This leadership will provide a critical link with the early childhood programs within the Office of Child Development such as home visiting and PreK, as well as the statutory responsibilities of the Office such as professional development and the establishment of early childhood program standards.

Mr. Haggard has held administrative positions in a range of programs including Head Start, early intervention, higher education, school systems, and an international community development agency. He holds an M.Ed. from Bank Street College of Education in elementary and early childhood education and has taken post-masters coursework from the University of New Mexico in school administration. His undergraduate degree is in human development and cross cultural studies. His professional area of expertise is the development and transition of early childhood programs and systems.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: Mr. Haggard, as the Deputy Director of the Early Childhood Services Division of CYFD and the Acting Director of the Office of Child Development

will work to coordinate and oversee all activities of the Early Learning Advisory Council. He will facilitate internal state coordination, including reporting progress and accounting for activities of the initiative. As a number of the described activities require participation and coordination with all of the health and human services agencies, Mr. Haggard will work closely with the Early Childhood Coordinator position mentioned previously and funded in part by the ECCS grant. This will ensure clear communication and collaboration with all of the statewide agencies responsible for administration and implementation of early childhood services

Region 9 Education Cooperative (R.E.C. 9) is a state agency administratively attached to the New Mexico Public Education Department, which is able to receive funds directly from state government. R.E.C. 9 has provided direct services to students, school staff, and communities since 1984. Originally established to act as a cooperative for small rural school districts, R.E.C. 9 serves nine school districts in the southern part of New Mexico. R.E.C. 9 is also a Head Start grantee, contracts with the state to provide early intervention (Part C) services, and administers school-based services with Medicaid funding. For many years, the R.E.C. 9 Coordinating Council has demonstrated the alignment of a comprehensive array of services through the braiding of public and private funds. With sixty-five full-time staff, services are provided to over 9,000 students and 2,300 families within the service area. Through training and other professional services contracts with the state, more than 3,000 professional staff are impacted. R.E.C. 9 has had numerous contracts with the Early Childhood Services Division of CYFD, including the management of quality child-care projects funded through the ARRA Stimulus funds.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: . A contract will be established with the Region 9 Education Cooperative to administer funds as directed by Mr. Haggard and other administrators of the Early Childhood Services Division of CYFD. The Cooperative will issue the RFP for establishment of the data system, and sub-contract with consultants and other entities deemed necessary to carry out the initiative. Additionally, the Cooperative will provide all logistical and other necessary support for the project. This will include securing meeting spaces, printing materials, and ensure that administrative tasks are accomplished.

Kathy Armijo-Etre, Ph.D., has an extensive background in early childhood, health, and human services. Her doctorate studies concentrated on Human and Organizational Systems. Dr. Armijo-Etre has worked as part of the Executive in New Mexico state government, management of non-profit community-based programs, and nationally as a consultant. The focus of her work has been in the arenas of policy and program development. Her expertise is in the areas of organizational development, strategic planning, facilitation, and public engagement.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: Ms. Armijo Etre will act as the Program Manager for the Initiative. In this capacity, she will coordinate all aspects of the project, facilitate meetings of the Advisory Council and:

- facilitate the establishment of Advisory Council By-Laws;
- establish and track Results Based Accountability measures;
- assist in the establishment of a process to engage local communities;
- facilitate focus groups and public hearings throughout the state;

- conduct the financing study and provide recommendations to facilitate the braiding of funding for early childhood providers;
- facilitate coordination of efforts to increase public and family awareness, and provide recommendations for a comprehensive media plan that is both culturally and linguistically relevant to the children and families of New Mexico;
- provide meeting minutes and compile reports as required.

Betsy Cahill, Ph.D., is the Associate Department Head of the Curriculum and Instruction Department at New Mexico State University. She is also the Director of the Early Childhood Teacher Education program in the College of Education. Her teaching and research areas are early childhood education, social policy and teacher education. At the state level, Betsy has served as the Co-Chair of the NM Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force and was the primary author of the New Mexico PreK Program Standards.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: Ms. Cahill will be responsible for convening a work group that will inform her writing the Early Learning Plan, including program standards for children birth through third grade.

Gaye Gronlund, M.A., is an early childhood education consultant who works with programs across the country helping them implement best practices in curriculum and authentic assessment for young children and their families. She is the author of five books (a sixth will come out in 2010), and has written several articles that have been published in the NAEYC journal, Young Children. She is also the Project Manager for NAEYC for all resources related to the new edition of Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

Publications by Gaye Gronlund include:

Developmentally Appropriate Play: Guiding Young Children to a Higher Level by Gaye Gronlund, to be published by Redleaf Press, 2010.

Early Learning Standards and Staff Development: Best Practices in the Face of Change by Gaye Gronlund and Marlyn James, Redleaf Press, 2008.

Make Early Learning Standards Come Alive: Connecting Your Practice and Curriculum to State Guidelines by Gaye Gronlund, Redleaf Press and NAEYC, 2006.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: Ms. Gronlund will hold primary responsibility for finalizing and publishing the Early Learning Guidelines. She will also be responsible for gaining stakeholder input, developing supplemental materials and training early childhood providers. Ms. Gronlund will also lead continued refinement of the guidelines including developing rubrics for early learning.

Sallie VanCuren is the mother of four children, three daughters and one son. Her third child was diagnosed as having Cerebral Palsy at about six months of age. Ms. VanCuren realized very early that she needed to get as much information as possible about disabilities and also learned early on that it was imperative to become involved. She felt strongly about reaching out to other families who were in her same situation. As such, Ms. VanCuren, along with about a dozen other parents, founded Parents Reaching Out in early 1981. In the fall of 1986 she was hired by the Board of Director's of Parents Reaching Out to run the Family Support Project. Within the first several years of her employment with Parents Reaching Out she wrote several successful grants, hired new staff and was promoted to Executive Director. She has served in that capacity ever since, but will soon be retiring. She continues to be committed to building capacity in all families to be strong advocates for their children whether disabled or not.

Ms. VanCuren believes that all families want what is best for their children yet may not have the tools they need to negotiate the systems of care that are essential to achieving that best.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: Ms. VanCuren will be responsible for establishing and leading the work of an ad hoc work group charged with defining and establishing a system of family support.

Charlotte Begay is the Department Head of Family and Early Childhood Education at Wingate Elementary School on the Navajo Nation. Ms. Begay is Navajo and lives near Gallup, New Mexico. She is an avid voice for the importance of parental support in determining children's educational progress. Ms. Begay currently serves as Vice-President of the Child Development Board and in 2003 received the Milken Family Outstanding Educator Award. Ms. Begay has been in the field of education for over 25 years, working in a range of programs from early childhood to college. She has taught Navajo History in her home to those who are interested. In the summer months, Ms. Begay teaches young Navajo girls about puberty rites with the help of her mother. They teach sessions that cover traditional practices, history and the explanation of traditional practices that are quickly being lost. She stresses to others that our needs throughout Navajo communities have changed and we must change as educators to meet these needs. She believes that success in our schools means success in our communities and in the future.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: Ms. Begay will be responsible for establishing and providing leadership to the Native American Early Learning Task Force.

Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].

Rosalinda Altamirano-Correon is widely recognized as one of New Mexico's foremost expert regarding bilingual early childhood education, advocating for dual language learning. She has served as a bilingual kindergarten teacher, Spanish language teacher, and Bilingual Specialist for the past 34 years.

During that time she has served on nearly every board, task force and commission regarding early childhood, bilingual education and professional preparation – often acting as the Chairperson. These have included the Child Development Board (currently serving as Chair), the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education (serving two terms as Chair), the National Education Association of New Mexico, and the New Mexico Professional Standards Commission. She is also active in her local community and is currently a member of the Las Cruces Hispano Chamber of Commerce, serving as Chair of the Education Committee.

Project Responsibilities in Year 1: Ms Altamirano-Correon will be responsible for establishing and providing leadership to the Hispanic Early Learning Task Force.

Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].

III. Appendix

Appendix I. NM Early Learning Advisory Council

State of New Mexico CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

DIANE DENISH
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



DORIAN DODSON
CABINET SECRETARY

BILL DUNBAR
DEPUTY CABINET SECRETARY

MARISOL ATKINS
DEPUTY CABINET SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM FOR DECISION

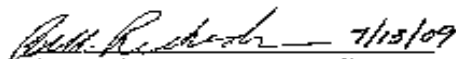
TO: Governor Bill Richardson
FROM: Dorian Dodson, Cabinet Secretary
DATE: July 10, 2009
SUBJECT: Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Council

The 2008 federal reauthorization of Head Start requires the governor of each state to appoint an Early Childhood Education and Care State Advisory Council to improve the coordination and collaboration among Head Start agencies, pre-kindergarten programs, and other early childhood care and education programs. The Council may be an existing entity or an entirely new body. The governor is also instructed to appoint an individual responsible for coordinating the Council's activities as well as to appoint individuals to the Advisory Council (see Attachment 2).

It is my recommendation that the New Mexico Child Development Board within the CYFD be designated as New Mexico's Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Council with an expanded membership when acting as the Advisory Council. And, that the Director of the Office of Child Development be designated as the individual responsible for coordinating the activities of the Council.

The Child Development Board was established by statute in 1989 with members appointed by Governors since then to do much of the work that is being asked of the Early Education and Care Advisory Council. Furthermore, the statute that created CYFD in the early 1990s supports the functions expected of the Advisory Council.

The Child Development Board/Office of Child Development has been working diligently for twenty years to establish a comprehensive and coordinated system of early care and learning (see Attachment 1). I recommend they continue these efforts by building upon the foundational strengths that have been established.


Approved _____ Date 7/13/09

Not Approved _____ Date _____

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Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].

Membership of the NM Early Learning Advisory Council

CHILD DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERS

	Name	Affiliation/Represents	Contact Information
1.	Rosalinda Carreon-Altamirano	Child Development Board, Chair Public School Bilingual Education	P O Box 245 Dona Ana, NM 88032
2.	Charlotte Begay	Child Development Board, Chair Bureau of Indian Education	P O Box 324 Ft. Wingate, NM 87316
3.	Barbara DeDera	Child Development Board Child-care center owner	3369 Eastridge Las Cruces, NM 88005
4.	Jolene Maes	Child Development Board Early Childhood Ed. Consultant	P O Box 531 Corrales, NM 87048
5.	Dr. Mary Dudley	Child Development Board Early Childhood Ed. Consultant	2628 Granada SW Albuquerque, NM 87105
6.	Carol Rapisardi	Child Development Board Director, faith-based child care center	11308 Academy Ridge Rd. NE Albuquerque, NM 87111
7.	Linda Pruit	Child Development Board Public School Early Childhood Administrator	P O Box 862 Carlsbad, NM 88220

EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATION

8.	Dorian Dodson, Cabinet Secretary/or designee	Children, Youth and Families Department	P.O. Drawer 5160 Santa Fe, NM 87502
9.	Veronica Garcia, PhD Cabinet Secretary/or designee	Public Education Department	300 Don Gaspar Ave. Santa Fe, NM 87501
10.	Alfredo Vigil, MD Cabinet Secretary/or designee	Department of Health	1190 St. Francis Dr. Santa Fe, NM 87504
11.	Katie Falls, Cabinet Secretary/or designee	Human Services Department	P.O. Box 2348 Santa Fe, NM 87504
12.	Claire Dudley Children's Cabinet Director	Children/Youth Policy Advisor Office For Lt. Gov. Diane Denish	State Capitol Building, Room 417 Santa Fe, NM 87501

Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school, based upon equitable access to an aligned and high quality early learning system[s].

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATION

13.	Angie Vachio	Founder, Peanut Butter and Jelly Social-service agency	1101 Lopez Rd. SW Albuquerque, NM 87105
14.	Elizabeth Cahill, PhD	New Mexico State University Early Childhood Education Professional Development	College of Education MSC 3CUR, NMSU - Box 300001 Las Cruces, NM 88003
15.	Jaime Diaz	NM Head Start Association, President Regional Head Start Grantees	549 Don Pasqual Los Lunas, NM 87031
16.	Baji Margaret Rankin	NM Association for the Education of Young Children Executive Director - EC Professional Organization	PO Box 575 Arroyo Seco, NM 87514
17.	Alvino Sandoval	Regional Trainer, National Indian Parent Information Center Native American Parents	5140 Prospector Way NW, Apt. D Albuquerque, NM 87114
18.	Emily Darnell-Nunez	SPARK Project, Director New Mexico Community Foundation/EC Transition	243 Gossett Lane Corrales, NM 87048
19.	Nan Schwanfelder/ or designee	Brindle Foundation, Philanthropy Early Opportunities Initiative	P O Box 31696 Santa Fe, NM 87594-1696
20.	Rosa Barraza	NM Child Care and Education Association, President Elect Child Care Programs	2103 E First St. Alamogordo, NM 88310
21.	Sophie Bertrand	CDD/EC Special Education Programs, Senior Program Manager EC & Specialized Personnel Development,	2300 Menaul Blvd. Albuquerque, NM 87107

STATE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES -- EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

22.	Cesar Uriarte	Family Nutrition Bureau Chief/ECS – CYFD	P O Drawer 5160 Santa Fe, NM 87502
23.	Dan Haggard	Early Childhood Services, Deputy Director CYFD	P O Drawer 5160 Santa Fe, NM 87502
24.	Mohammed Hussien	Child Care Bureau Chief Early Childhood Services – CYFD	P O Drawer 5160 Santa Fe, NM 87502

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25.	Soledad Martinez	Home Visiting & Infant Mental Health Program Mgr – Early Childhood Services – CYFD	P O Drawer 5160 Santa Fe, NM 87502
26.	Judith Paiz	New Mexico PreK Program Manager – Early Childhood Services – CYFD	P O Drawer 5160 Santa Fe, NM 87502
27.	Ann Zuni	New Mexico PreK Program Manager Early Learning Bureau – PED	300 Don Gaspar Ave., Rm 205 Santa Fe, NM 87501
28.	Andy Gomm	Family Infant Toddler Program, Bureau Chief Department Of Health	P O Box 26110 Santa Fe, NM 87502
29.	Emelda Martinez	Maternal Child Health Bureau Chief Department Of Health	2040 S. Pacheco St. Santa Fe, NM 87504
30.	Karen Ziegler (to be appointed – newly hired)	Head Start Collaboration Director Early Childhood Services – CYFD	P O Drawer 5160 Santa Fe, NM 87502

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Appendix II. Plan Time Frame

Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
Oct-Dec 2009	Jan-Mar 2010	Apr-June 2010	July –Sept 2010	Oct-Dec 2010	Jan-Mar 2011	Apr-June 2012	July –Sept 2012	Oct-Dec 2013	Jan-Mar 2013	Apr-June 2013	July –Sept 2013
<u>Needs assessment & gap analysis studies</u>											
Conduct Needs Assessment & Capacity Analysis				Develop a data warehouse-----→				-----→			
Map demographics, programs, qualifications--→				Conduct financing study-----→				Train providers in braiding funding-----→			
								Develop unique child identifier system-----→			
<u>Alignment</u>											
Align standards, curriculum, assessment, reporting				Field test implementation -----→				Implement common standards-----→			
				Assess program quality-----→				Infrastructure for universal quality assessment-----→			
Field test Early Learning Guidelines-----→				Develop supplemental materials-----→				Continue to refine Early Learning Guidelines-----→			
				Train providers in Early Learning Guidelines-----→				-----→			
Professional Development											
Continue to phase in TEACH-----→				-----→				-----→			
Develop systems for retention-----→				-----→				-----→			
Align T/TA across early learning systems-----→				-----→				-----→			
<u>Increase Participation</u>											
Increase participation of special populations-----→				-----→				-----→			
Establish Native American Task Force-----→				Increase Native American children-----→				-----→			
Identify specific needs of Hispanic children--→				Increase Hispanic children-----→				-----→			
Develop a plan to reach children at risk-----→				Increase children at risk-----→				-----→			
Increase knowledge of early childhood-----→				Develop strategic communications plan-----→				-----→			
Coordinate with other initiatives-----→				-----→				-----→			
Insure availability of high quality programs-----→				Consistent quality standards -----→				-----→			
<u>Family Support</u>											
Clearly define family support-----→											
Inventory family support initiatives-----→				Identify family support services needed-----→				Plan for gaps and needs for family services-----→			
<u>Ready Schools</u>											
Establish inter-agency work group-----→				Identify and promote transition initiatives-----→				-----→			
				Identify standards, curriculum, prof. devel issues--→							

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