

CONNECTICUT ARRA HEAD START
GRANT APPLICATION

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Objectives and Need for Assistance

The Problems

Connecticut has long sought to ensure that all the state's youngest children grow up healthy, safe and ready for school success. Connecticut has historically established broad constituencies to address these issues by forming partnerships between state and local government, business, philanthropic and education, economic and workforce sectors and family and service providers. We, as a state, have succeeded in getting stakeholders to the table but have yet to establish a *governance structure* that provides coherence to the mélange of funding streams, programs and agencies that compose early care and education in Connecticut.

The 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results in reading and mathematics show that, overall, Connecticut's students are some of the highest performing in the country. However, the achievement gaps in reading and mathematics between students from our wealthiest districts and those who are disadvantaged are among the largest in the nation. The differences in achievement are striking in the fourth-grade reading and mathematics test scores, and continue on into the eighth-grade reading and math tests as well. In a competitive global economy, the gaps translate into an unaffordable loss for students. We know that early childhood education plays a significant role in children's learning outcomes. Building a comprehensive, integrated early care and education system in Connecticut will give the most vulnerable children the opportunity to build a strong foundation for future success.

Connecticut's Early Care and Education Landscape

In 2005, the Connecticut legislature established an Early Childhood Education Cabinet consisting of state agency heads, community representatives and legislative leaders. The Cabinet identified three foci for Connecticut's children:

- to reach appropriate developmental milestones from birth to age 5;
- to begin kindergarten with the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed for success in school; and
- to have kindergarten-Grade 3 educational experiences that extend their birth-to-5 learning and ensure consistent progress in achieving reading mastery.

In July 2006, the cabinet identified 10 action items as needing immediate attention with the top priority being the provision of high-quality preschool for 3- and 4-year-old Connecticut children living with families at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level. To assist the cabinet with its systems building work, Governor M. Jodi Rell established the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council by executive order in February 2006 with membership from business, philanthropy, higher education, K-12 education, the workforce and economic development sectors, and mayors. She also invited the participation of key leadership from the Connecticut General Assembly.

The council was charged with developing specific policy recommendations for each of these action items and projecting the fiscal investment necessary to achieve them. The resulting Early Childhood Investment Plan was published in November 2006 and guided the development of the state's early childhood budget for the 2008-09 biennium. Due to an unprecedented fiscal crisis, Governor Rell dissolved the Research and Policy Council effective March 1, 2009. In January

2010, a newly reconstituted cabinet was legislatively designated by the Governor as the State Advisory Council pursuant to the federal Head Start Act of 2007.

Current Status of the Quality and Availability of Early Childhood Education and Development Programs and Services for Children from Birth to School Entry

Connecticut estimates the population of children from birth to 3 years old at approximately 120,000 and the population of students eligible for preschool at approximately 80,000; this is based on approximately 40,000 students that register for public school kindergarten each year. This number underestimates the population given that some students attend private school. Federal and state programs, including Birth to Three (IDEA Part C), Care4Kids (child care subsidies), Child Care Infoline (statewide information and referral), Department of Social Services (DSS) Child Care Centers, Early Head Start, Family Resource Centers, Head Start, Nurturing Families Network, Parents as Teachers, and State Department of Education (SDE) and DSS School Readiness have provided services to over 10,000 infants, toddlers and preschool-age children annually (See Appendix I *Connecticut Strategic Report* pp. 4-8 for descriptions of these programs). Connecticut serves over 24,000 3- and 4-year-old children in publicly funded preschool programs. This represents more than 30 percent of all 3- and 4-year-old children in the state. In addition, over 9,500 children per year, birth to age 3, are served by the IDEA Part C program, which is approximately 10 percent of each age cohort under the age of 3.¹

¹ March 2010. Presentation by the Department of Social Services to Early Childhood Education Cabinet.

Governance

As previously stated, Connecticut is faced with a fragmented system of early care and education funding and service delivery. Children birth to age 5, including children with disabilities enrolled in IDEA Part B and C, are served in a variety of education and care settings that are funded by several sources, many of which overlap. Early childhood programs may receive state and federal funds such as School Readiness which is jointly administered by the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education under state statute and within available state appropriations. Additionally, there is funding for childcare through the Department of Social Services and federal and state Head Start. Children with disabilities in those settings may also be receiving services through Part C or Part B funding. Much of the administration and funding for early care and education in Connecticut is siloed. Our challenge is to create a viable governance structure that can coordinate diverse programmatic needs and funding requirements to enable a coherent and sustainable system to care for and educate our youngest learners. Our goal is to bring together agencies and other service providers to improve quality outcomes for all children and families.

The former Research and Policy Council began the work to address these governance challenges. In 2006, the council commissioned a report on governance options based on a review of models in other states. In 2009, Dr. Charles Bruner of the Child and Family Policy Center conducted focus groups and interviews with Connecticut stakeholders and prepared an assessment of our work toward building an early childhood system with recommendations for next steps. Unfortunately, the state was not able to act on Dr. Bruner's recommendations due to the dissolution of the Research and Policy Council. The re-formation of the Early Childhood

Cabinet now provides Connecticut with the opportunity to take the exemplary work of the past and look at it from a fresh perspective.

Using the tenet that “form should follow function,” the Cabinet seeks to determine which governance options will be the most effective in creating a cohesive, unified and sustainable system of early care and education. Management, planning and system building, resource allocation, fundraising, accountability and communication are key areas that require additional consideration to inform the choice of an optimal governance structure for Connecticut. This structure will foster state-level, cross-agency collaboration and support local system-building capacity. The Cabinet acknowledges that there is no best governance option, that changes are evolutionary, and that leadership is vital to change. Connecticut seeks to build on its strengths, stimulate cross-agency collaboration, and remain flexible in our approach, allowing for mid-course corrections that will lead to stability and sustainability in a governance structure.

The overall objective is to provide an aligned system of early childhood education delivery in Connecticut. To achieve this objective, with the support of this grant, the cabinet has articulated four priority areas: data systems, early learning standards, professional development, and family involvement/home visitation. Addressing these four priorities will assist Connecticut in meeting the responsibilities of the State Advisory Council as stated in the Head Start Act of 2007.

Data Systems

The capacity to effectively collect, monitor and report on the progress of student programs and services from early childhood through postsecondary education and into the workforce is essential for making policy and fiscal decisions based on desired outcomes for the children being served in Connecticut. Connecticut is noted for its capacity and ability to collect and analyze early childhood data. The State Department of

Education has two state longitudinal data systems (SLDS) grants from the federal government, in addition to state funds that support the ongoing development of a system to track the educational progress of students from school entry, including preschool, throughout their school career. This system will eventually link students to their teachers and courses.

In 2002, under Connecticut General Statute (CGS) 10-10a, the SDE developed and implemented the Public School Information System (PSIS) to collect enrollment data, demographic information and program information for students enrolled in prekindergarten through Grade 12 in the state's public schools. All public school students are given a state-assigned unique identifier (SASID). In addition, students participating in the IDEA Part C system are assigned a SASID that follows them into the public school system. This has worked extremely well to allow tracking of children from Part C into Part B and then into kindergarten. In 2007, the statute was expanded to include all preschool students who are in nonpublic school programs receiving state and/or federal funds. The SDE implemented the Pre-Kindergarten Information System (PKIS), which collects information similar to that found in PSIS. Within the State Department of Education's Division of Assessment, Research and Technology are designated staff members for the management of the PSIS, PKIS and other data collection systems for special education and kindergarten assessment. Staff members are able to provide information at both student and program levels.

Connecticut has recently developed the Connecticut Professional Workforce Registry administered by Connecticut Charts-a-Course to collect data on early childhood teachers serving children outside the public school system. Teacher preparation programs in

Connecticut's higher education system are using these data to track the educational attainment of the early childhood workforce. However, this database is still separate from our public school licensed teacher database that resides in the SDE. While the SDE does assign a unique educator identification to every teacher in Connecticut's public school system, the SDE does not yet have the ability to link teachers to students. However, as required by the Federal State Fiscal Stabilization Fund application, Connecticut has a plan to do so by August 2011. Furthermore, the state currently does not have a uniform way of identifying early childhood programs across state agencies. These are data elements that will need to be developed to have a fully functioning early childhood data system.

Connecticut has made significant progress in early childhood data collection, and the state's P-20 Council is actively building support for this effort. A governance structure, which sets requisite interoperability policies and procedures for all program and service providers, is the foundational element needed for advancement toward a unified early childhood data system.

Early Learning Standards

Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework was last reissued in 2006. The preschool curriculum framework is organized into four domains of development:

- personal and social
- physical
- cognitive creative
- expression/aesthetic

The following principles guide the curriculum framework:

- Early learning and development are multidimensional.
- Developmental domains are highly interrelated.
- Young children are capable and competent.
- There are individual differences in rates of development among children.
- Children will exhibit a range of skills and competencies in any domain of development.
- Knowledge of child growth and development and consistent expectations are essential to maximizing educational experiences for children and to developing and implementing programs.
- Families are the primary caregivers and educators of their young children.
- Young children learn through active exploration of their environment through child-initiated and teacher-selected activities.

The Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework is a curriculum-embedded tool developed to be a companion to *The Preschool Curriculum Framework*. These curriculum and assessment frameworks provide a system for using standards in both planning curriculum and assessing children's progress.

In 2009, Connecticut published *Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning*. This publication is intended as a handbook for infant and toddler caregivers. This work was sponsored by the Department of Social Services with the help of a broad range of constituents representing Head Start, family childcare, special education, public schools and health care. These guidelines, based on principles consistent with *The Preschool Curriculum Framework*, are designed to inform and

support infant and toddler primary caregivers, including parents and childcare providers. The cabinet intends to use the infant and toddler guidelines and the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks as a foundation for developing and adopting early learning standards for children ages birth to 5.

In addition, the Connecticut State Board of Education has recently adopted the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics developed by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Chief Council of State School Officers (CCSSO). Connecticut's new early learning standards will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

Professional Development

Significant efforts have been made to strengthen Connecticut's early childhood workforce. *Connecticut General Statutes*, Section 10-16p (b), requires all teachers in preschool programs receiving public funds to have a bachelor's degree by 2015. In the fall of 2007, the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council convened a workforce subcommittee whose charge was to develop a plan to raise the educational qualifications of early childhood teachers. The workforce subcommittee was co-chaired by the Commissioner of the Department of Higher Education (DHE) and the Director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness. The Office of Workforce Competitiveness is focused on preparing Connecticut's workforce for the rapidly changing and competitive economy of the 21st century. The subcommittee membership included 43 representatives from state agencies, higher education, business, workforce and economic development and philanthropic and advocacy organizations.

In 2009, the DHE surveyed early childhood education graduates statewide and found

that approximately 70 percent of these students were already working in early childhood community-based programs before graduation. The survey also found that students who obtained bachelor's degrees and state teacher certification often leave community-based programs for public school teaching positions. The results indicated that out of 500 early childhood graduates annually, only 143 new staff are added to the early childhood workforce. Of these graduates, 89 became employed in community programs and 54 became teachers in public schools. The implications of these findings are that for many students enrolled in early childhood programs, further education is a pathway from current teaching positions in community programs to positions in public schools.²

The workforce subcommittee also analyzed data from Connecticut's Professional Registry administered by Connecticut Charts-a-Course (CCAC). This registry offers program administrators a way of tracking the qualifications of their staff and can be used to create staff development plans to assist in meeting staff credentialing requirements. Analysis of the resulting information indicated that the projected workforce picture was not as hopeful as had been anticipated. The registry indicated that fewer teachers had college degrees than had been projected from earlier analyses. As of fall 2008, only 378 (31 percent) of the teachers in publicly funded programs have at a minimum a bachelor's degree and 12 credits in early childhood education. This data demonstrated that the first, and by far the greatest challenge, to meeting the requirement of the bachelor's degree by 2015 is the status of the current workforce. The majority (69 percent) of the current

² Schechter, Carlota (2009). *The higher education pathways for the early childhood workforce: A leaky pipeline.*

teachers (857 individuals) are well below this degree requirement.³ Based on these data the subcommittee developed a multiyear plan to increase both the size and the qualifications of the workforce in publicly funded and center-based early childhood education programs. This plan targets public preschools, Head Start, School Readiness Programs and DSS childcare centers. In addition, recommendations were made to increase the minimum requirements for the staff in publicly funded early childhood education programs. This plan is designed to be aligned with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) State Policy Blueprint, NAEYC public report.⁴ A recommendation was made by a workforce subcommittee to develop the Connecticut Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC). This is a competency-based credential that would be awarded to students who graduate from approved associate and baccalaureate degree early childhood programs of study. The ECTC will allow for a more flexible and efficient approach to education for this financially challenged workforce, while also ensuring that those individuals who work with young children have both the knowledge and competencies to be effective. The ECTC is an alternative legislative proposal to the legislation that called for 50 percent of the teachers to have a bachelor's degree and the remaining to have an associate's degree by 2015. This proposal has twice been considered by the legislature as a revision to the state statute but has not yet been passed. It is slated to be reconsidered in a future legislative session.

³ Gilliam, Water & Schechter, Carlota (2008). *Early Childhood Workforce*. Presentation to the Research and Policy Council.

⁴ LeMoine, Sarah (2008). *Workforce Designs: A policy blueprint for state early childhood professional development systems*.

Family Involvement/Home Visitation

Children's earliest years provide a core foundation for school achievement and eventual success in life. In these first few years, children's development and learning are influenced by a wide array of factors in their homes and communities that can put them at risk. These factors include poverty, inadequate health care, limited exposure to language and literacy, developmental disabilities and delays, and child abuse or neglect. Children that experience these and other problematic early life circumstances often lag in their development as preschoolers and consequently enter formal schooling behind their peers. With adequate supports from family and community members, many of these risk factors can be lessened.

Connecticut leads many states in its strong commitment to parents as partners in learning. Proven models include the People Empowering People, the Parent Leadership Training Institute and Parents Supporting Educational Excellence. These model leadership initiatives teach parents how to lead for the next generation in program and policy. A Parent Trust was established through legislation that allows for competitive community grants in family civics.

Approach

For each of the four identified priority areas described above, the cabinet has developed a plan of action with goals, strategies, activities, deliverables and expected outcomes.

Work groups for each priority were formed by publicly posting a request to all interested stakeholders. Four work groups met for two half-day sessions to develop strategies, activities/actions, timelines and deliverables to carry out the work to meet these goals over the next three years.

Priority Area: Data

Goal: Increase integration, quality and accessibility of Connecticut early childhood data for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
<p>Assign unique identifiers to all:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. young children b. early childhood programs c. early childhood staff 	<p>Ask the P-20 Council to convene meetings of people responsible for child IDs in each agency to reach a solution on unique identifiers for children.</p> <p>Ask the P-20 Council to convene meetings between the SDE and Department of Public Health and 211 Child Care on program IDs.</p> <p>Investigate expansion of SDE State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) to other types of private and public programs for young children.</p> <p>Improve SASID portability for children who already have them to reduce duplication. Give all children’s SASIDs to their parents or guardians.</p>	<p>Agreement across all relevant state agencies on the use and implementation of unique identifiers for all young children.</p> <p>Agreement across all relevant state agencies on the use of unique identifiers for all early childhood programs.</p> <p>Increased numbers of children under 5 will have a unique identifier.</p> <p>Quality of SASID assignments will improve, reducing duplication.</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Q1: Begin meetings with P-20 Council workgroup to define early childhood data questions.</p> <p>Q2: Meet with P-20 Council technical group to determine what is feasible. Convene initial meetings with DPH and SDE data staff to discuss unique child identifier issue.</p> <p>Q3: P-20 Council convenes meetings with DPH, DSS, SDE, Child Care 211 and Connecticut Charts-a-Course to discuss unique program and staff identifiers.</p> <p>Q4: Meet with SDE data staff members to discuss improving SASID portability.</p> <p>Year 2:</p> <p>Q1: Finalize plan for unique identifiers. SDE to begin implementation of SASID</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
			<p>improvements.</p> <p>Q2: Continuation of Q1 activities. Finalize MOU on unique identifiers among all participating agencies.</p> <p>Q3: Request work plan from each participating agency to determine the how and when of implementation.</p> <p>Year 3</p> <p>Q1: Implementation of unique identifiers.</p> <p>Q2: Selection of data interoperability project to accomplish P-20 established data needs.</p> <p>Q3: Begin implementation of data operability, seek additional funding if necessary.</p> <p>Q4: Full implementation if funding available, pilot project if funding not available.</p>
<p>Develop (or use an existing) data architecture project that will enable data across agencies while still observing privacy requirements.</p>	<p>Investigate existing projects such as CHIN and CONNCADE (both at UConn)</p>	<p>Selection (or development) of a data architecture program.</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>No activity until unique identifier issue is settled.</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
			<p>Year 2 Q1: Study potential of existing data interoperability projects in conjunction with the P-20 Council</p> <p>Q2: Work with SDE and DDS and others to clarify FERPA and HIPAA privacy issues</p> <p>Q3: Continuation of Q1 & Q2 activities</p> <p>Q4: Continuation of Q1 & Q2 activities</p> <p>Year 3 Q1: Selection of data interoperability project to accomplish P-20 established data needs</p> <p>Q2: Begin implementation of data operability, seek additional funding if necessary</p> <p>Q3: Full implementation if funding available, pilot project if funding not available</p> <p>Q4: Continue implementation or pilot.</p>
The Early Childhood Education Cabinet will facilitate a multiagency	Cabinet to work with Data Quality and Access Consortium (started by previous	MOU in place.	<p>Year 1 Q1: Meet up with P-20 Council,</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
<p>Memorandum of Understanding concerning the deliverables and standards of data accessibility.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Cabinet, continued by the Connecticut Economic Resource Center) to determine draft language for MOU.</p> <p>Cabinet (or Data Quality and Access Consortium) to convene meetings of participating agencies to finalize language for MOU and obtain signatures of Commissioners</p>	<p>Signatory agencies making data more usable and accessible to the public.</p>	<p>relevant state agencies, and local early childhood planning groups to define the types of data that is needed.</p> <p>Q2: Continuation of Q1</p> <p>Q3: Finalize MOU</p> <p>Q4: Work with participating agencies to ensure that MOU is implemented.</p> <p>Year 3</p> <p>Q1: Meet with P-20 Council and local early childhood planning groups to evaluate available data to determine whether modifications are needed.</p> <p>Q2: Work with P-20 Council and participating agencies to make any necessary modifications.</p>

Priority Area: Early Learning Standards

Goal: By September 2013, Connecticut will adopt comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards that reflect a progression of skills birth through age 5, aligned with kindergarten-Grade 12 standards.

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
<p>Conduct review of existing standards and research on early learning.</p>	<p>Develop rubrics for review of existing standards and research.</p> <p>Review of selected current national and international standards and research.</p> <p>Review of all current Connecticut learning standards and documents.</p>	<p>Set of research and standards to guide draft document.</p> <p>Crosswalk of existing standards documents</p>	<p>Providing a solid foundation for building early learning standards, including current research, national and international practices, and building upon current Connecticut standards.</p>	<p>Year 1 Q1: Convene core workgroup and subcommittees from state agencies and organizations that would adopt the standards. Develop rubric for review of standards and research.</p> <p>Q2: Complete crosswalk of current Connecticut standards and early learning documents.</p> <p>Q3: Complete review of selected national and international standards and research.</p> <p>Year 1 Q4, Year 2, and Year 3: N/A. This work is to be completed during the first three quarters of the first year of this plan.</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
<p>Involve and engage cross-sector stakeholders throughout the process.</p>	<p>Develop a process for inviting/identifying “stakeholders.”</p> <p>Announce the initiative. Use media to reach a diverse array of stakeholders across all demographics.</p> <p>Collect responses and evaluate for gaps in representation.</p> <p>Invite reps to fill gaps.</p> <p>Identify and reduce barriers to full stakeholder participation.</p> <p>Develop and monitor a process for ongoing communication with stakeholders.</p>	<p>Plan articulating cross-sector involvement in development and review of standards.</p> <p>Forum for ongoing communication with stakeholders.</p>	<p>Cross-sector support for the implementation of early learning standards, birth to age 5.</p>	<p>Year 1 Q1: Convene core workgroup and subcommittees from state agencies and organizations involved in the adoption and implementation of early learning standards.</p> <p>Q2. Completion of plan for cross-sector involvement in writing and review of standards.</p> <p>Q3. Recruitment of stakeholders and evaluation of gaps.</p> <p>Q4: Active recruitment from sectors not represented. Completion of plan for ongoing communication with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Year 2 Q1: Ongoing communication and monitoring of participation of key stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Q2: Ongoing communication and monitoring.</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
				<p>Q3: Ongoing communication and monitoring.</p> <p>Q4: Ongoing communication and monitoring.</p> <p>Year 3 Q1: Identify subgroup to include consumers and providers of professional development to develop plan for PD related to new early learning standards.</p> <p>Q2: Ongoing communication and monitoring.</p> <p>Q3: Ongoing communication and monitoring.</p> <p>Q4: Ongoing communication and monitoring.</p>
Engage leadership to ensure the promotion of the understanding and buy-in of the early learning standards and their relationship to kindergarten-Grade 12	Orient leadership (State Board of Education, superintendent) to the learning standards. SDE to develop a policy for implementation that involves	SDE policy for implementation linked to kindergarten-Grade 12 systems.	Respect and mutual understanding between 0-5 systems and kindergarten-Grade 12 systems.	Year 1 Q1: Representation of key stakeholders from kindergarten-Grade 12 system secured for participation in

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
education.	LEA leadership.			<p>development of standards.</p> <p>Q2: Ongoing participation of key stakeholders in development of standards.</p> <p>Q3: Ongoing participation of key stakeholders from K-12 system.</p> <p>Q4: Ongoing participation of key stakeholders from K-12 system.</p> <p>Year 2</p> <p>Q1: Ongoing participation of key stakeholders from K-12 system.</p> <p>Q2: Ongoing participation of key stakeholders from K-12 system.</p> <p>Q3: Ongoing participation of key stakeholders from K-12 system.</p> <p>Q4: Review of standards to include stakeholders from K-12 system and involve questions related to alignment of K-12 standards.</p> <p>Year 3</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
				<p>Q1: Plan for involving LEA leadership in the implementation of standards completed.</p> <p>Q2: Plan for assessment linked to standards (see strategy 3) to include consideration of sharing information between early childhood programs and LEAs.</p> <p>Q3: Plan reviewed by pertinent SDE personnel and revised as necessary.</p> <p>Q4: SDE adoption of a policy for implementation of standards that involves LEAs.</p>
<p>Develop a document outlining early learning standards for children ages birth to age 5 in all areas of development, designed for appropriate use with all children, including those with disabilities and dual language learners.</p>	<p>Develop draft document outlining standards.</p> <p>Vet document to various stakeholders.</p> <p>Revise document based on feedback.</p> <p>Link to current framework for assessment or develop a plan for a tool linked to standards.</p>	<p>Final document articulating learning standards birth through age 5.</p>	<p>Set of comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards with wide stakeholder buy-in.</p>	<p>Year 1 Q1, Q2, Q3: Work necessary prior to the development of standards is reflected in other strategies.</p> <p>Q4: Group to work on the writing of standards to be identified and convened for orientation meeting.</p> <p>Year 2</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
				<p>Q1: Continued work on the development and writing of standards.</p> <p>Q2: Continued work on the development and writing of standards.</p> <p>Q3: Draft for review completed.</p> <p>Q4: Review by stakeholders completed.</p> <p>Year 3 Q1: Revisions made based on stakeholder review.</p> <p>Q2: Plan for assessment linked to standards developed.</p> <p>Q3 and Q4: N/A. This work to be completed by Year 3, Q2.</p>
<p>Plan for implementation and professional development.</p>	<p>Cross-agency policy changes necessary for implementation (note: leadership from involved agencies included as “stakeholders” throughout the process).</p> <p>Create timetable for</p>			<p>Year 3 Q1: Subgroup identified to plan cross-sector professional development related to the implementation of the new early learning standards.</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
	<p>implementation of standards with consideration of possible pilot implementation.</p> <p>Plan for financing and rollout of professional development on the implementation.</p>			<p>Q2: Crosswalk of final standards with current documents/standards completed.</p> <p>Q3: Plan for multiple-level professional development opportunities completed.</p> <p>Q4: Plan and timetable for evaluation and revision of standards completed.</p>

Priority Area: Professional Development

Goal: To have a highly qualified and effective workforce for *all* children birth to 5 in *all* settings.

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
<p>Scholarship money will be available for staff in <i>all</i> settings, which comes from a commitment by state agencies that fund programs serving young children 0-5.</p>	<p>Create a scholarship pool as part of the Early Childhood System that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • universal for all settings; • for all staff working with children 0-5; and • available to staff working on a credential/degree to meet state and federal requirements. 	<p>Create a Scholarship Advisory Committee that provides oversight and recommendations.</p> <p>Create a scholarship program with multiple funding streams from state agencies and other sources.</p> <p>Implementation timeline. Interagency MOAs for funding.</p> <p>Yearly data reports regarding scholarship outcomes.</p>	<p>Establish a Scholarship Advisory Committee (SAC) to identify sources and eligibility and to make policy recommendations.</p> <p>Begin to implement recommendations of SAC.</p> <p>Begin to offer scholarships statewide to staff in <i>all</i> types of programs to meet state and federal requirements.</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Q1: Identify members for the Scholarship Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Q2: Scholarship Advisory Committee begins determining policy recommendations.</p> <p>Q3: Scholarship Advisory Committee begins identifying funding sources</p> <p>Q4: Ongoing participation of Scholarship Advisory Committee to work on the policy issues and funding sources.</p> <p>Year 2</p> <p>Q1: Begin to implement the recommendations of the Scholarship Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Q2: Continued work on implementation of policy</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
				<p>recommendations. Quarterly meetings of the Scholarship Advisory Committee to ensure the effectiveness of the recommendations.</p> <p>Q3: Continued work on implementation of policy recommendations.</p> <p>Q4: Identify programs that will receive scholarships, determine number and need.</p> <p>Year 3 Q1: Begin to offer scholarship. Monitor needs of the early childhood education (ECE) programs regarding scholarships. Quarterly meetings of the Scholarship Advisory Committee to ensure the effectiveness of the scholarship program.</p> <p>Q2: Monitor scholarship program.</p> <p>Q3: Ongoing monitoring and offering of scholarships.</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
				Q4: Evaluation of the scholarship program and data gathering to report effectiveness of the program.
Propose changes to child care licensing requirements regarding the qualifications of newly hired teachers who work in licensed programs.	<p>Propose amending licensing to require that each classroom is staffed by at least one “teacher”* as defined by NAEYC Accreditation Standards.</p> <p>*(person who has primary responsibility for a group of children)</p>	<p>Create a Child Care Licensing Study Group with broad-based representation to discuss proposed change in licensing staff qualification regulation and to make recommendations.</p> <p>Hold statewide hearings with recommendations for changes and/or revisions on qualifications in licensing regulations to gather input for revisions.</p>	<p>Collect data on qualifications of nonpublic staff for study group to use as part of recommendations.</p> <p>Publish the recommendations of the study group and hold the hearings. Begin a public awareness and engagement process around proposed changes in regulation.</p> <p>Propose change to licensing regs through legislative process.</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Q1: Identify broad-based representation of ECE constituents to create a child care licensing study group.</p> <p>Q2: Study group begins looking into the current licensing regulations regarding staff qualifications to determine the pros and cons of making changes to licensing regulations.</p> <p>Q3: Study group begins collecting data on nonpublic ECE staff and research around best practices regarding qualifications of ECE teachers as well as fiscal impacts of proposed changes.</p> <p>Q4. Continue studying data collected on nonpublic ECE staff and the research</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
				<p>around best practices regarding qualifications of ECE teachers and the fiscal impacts on the field.</p> <p>Year 2: Q1: Data and research are compiled and used for recommendations. Q2: Study group works on drafting recommendations based on data collected. Q3: Begin public awareness campaign regarding proposed changes. Q4: Begin the process of holding statewide hearings regarding the proposed changes of nonpublic staff.</p> <p>Year 3 Q1: Continue public awareness and statewide hearings. Q2: Continue public awareness and statewide hearings. Q3: Begin drafting</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
				<p>proposed changes to legislation.</p> <p>Q4: Propose changes to licensing through legislative process.</p>
<p>Make higher education more accessible to a greater number of early childhood staff and address the capacity of higher education to deliver bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, associate of arts, and associate of science degrees. This includes supports for individuals and programs to ensure access and persistence of the incumbent as well as the future workforce.</p>	<p>Create a higher education consortium among the Connecticut State University system, UConn and private college system to increase capacity of non-certification bachelor's degrees in early childhood education and child development programs that lead to an Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC).</p> <p>Ensure seamless articulation between associate and bachelor's degree programs using work already done by Early Childhood Teacher Credential Standards Committee.</p> <p>Define necessary supports for access and establish programs that are flexible and accessible enough for incumbent workforce to persist.</p>	<p>Using Early Childhood Teacher Educators (ECTE)/ECTC Committee as a resource, create a consortium that uses some of the current resources of higher education to begin to deliver course work.</p> <p>Establish a source of funding for the consortium and the development of programs leading to ECTC, as well as supports for individuals and programs.</p>	<p>Evaluate capacity of higher education system and articulation agreements between two- and four-year institutions of higher education.</p> <p>To increase teacher quality, pilot Early Childhood Teacher Credential at two- and four-year colleges where programs already exist that can be approved by the State Department of Education and Department of Higher Education to deliver ECTC.</p> <p>Begin to award ECTC. Start process to develop new courses and programs of study leading to ECTC in the BA/BS programs. Evaluate pilot. Make revisions based on outcomes. Expand course offerings. Propose the inclusion of the ECTC for legislative language in</p>	<p>Year 1:</p> <p>Q1: Establish a higher education consortium to evaluate the current capacity of ECE courses in the system and to align the curriculum to the ECTC.</p> <p>Q2: Have consortium evaluate articulation agreements to ensure a seamless articulation from two-year to four-year colleges.</p> <p>Q3: Based on findings from first two quarters, consortium make recommendations to increase capacity and articulation.</p> <p>Q4: Draft recommendations and begin process of working on them.</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables	Accomplishments	Status
			relevant state statutes.	<p>Year 2 Q1: Identify colleges to pilot the ECTC. Continue work on aligning curriculum.</p> <p>Q2: Begin piloting the ECTC.</p> <p>Q3: Monitor progress.</p> <p>Q4: Continue monitoring progress of the pilot institutions.</p> <p>Year 3 Q1: Begin to award the ECTC.</p> <p>Q2: Develop courses and programs of study in BA/BS programs that will lead to the ECTC.</p> <p>Q3: Evaluate pilot and make revisions based on outcomes.</p> <p>Q4: Report findings and propose legislation.</p>

Priority Area: Families and Home Visitation

Goal: Fostering and partnership among families and communities in the early years.

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
<p>Educate professionals in the importance of parents as partners.</p> <p>“Professionals” are identified as being among the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early childhood field and kindergarten–first-grade teachers; • school leadership/board of education; • health care professionals (mental and physical), pediatricians, nurses, mental health; and • community leaders. 	<p>Research and gather information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct review of the current research on benefits of “Parents as Assets/Partners.” • Conduct scan of existing “parents as partners” training models and resources in Connecticut and nationally. 	<p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings provided for combinations of professionals: e.g., to early childhood/health care professionals and school leadership. • Trainings provided to each category of professionals. <p>Change the institutionalized culture to positive view of parents as partners and assets.</p>	<p>Year 1 Review research and existing training models</p>
	<p>Garner input from identified “professional” groups on the challenges they face in partnering with parents.</p>	<p>Fact sheets developed for professionals.</p>	<p>Year 1 Q2: Garner input from professional groups, convene individual groups and combination of groups.</p>
	<p>Convene representatives from all groups to discuss common goals for parents as partners</p>	<p>Common Messaging using the resources we have (“walk the talk”).</p>	<p>Year 1 Q3: Garner input from professional groups, convene individual groups and</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
			combination of groups.
	Develop and design training for each group/and for combination of groups.		Year 2 Q1, Q2, Q3,Q4: Based on research and findings, develop and deliver training and gather feedback. Year 3 Q2: Assessment of impact of training based on analysis of feedback
Provide a comprehensive system of parenting education.	Appoint a Steering Committee. Develop a matrix to identify approaches and models of education and training, including the following categories: who delivers the training, the manner of delivery, and the funding sources.	Matrix of models, programs and services. Identification of the gaps.	Year 1 Q1: Appoint Steering Committee. Q3: Develop matrix of models.
	Develop a communication campaign on the value of parenting education.	Increased awareness, access and parent participation in education.	Year 2 Q1: Communication campaign.
	Social media – develop a universal message that will be widely spread.	Increased awareness, access and parent participation in education.	Year 2 Q1: Social media campaign. Q2: Develop common listing of training.
Promote parent leadership	Research and gather information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan proven parent leadership initiatives in Connecticut. • Identify and convene groups 	Create a coherent integrated system of parent leadership. Parents in Connecticut have the civic skills to improve outcomes for children. Parents see	Year 1 Q1:Review research and existing training models.

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
	delivering parent leadership training such as PLTI, PEP, Aspira, Fatherhood Initiative, Lee Y Seras, Family Support Council, etc.	themselves as valuable assets.	
	Garner input from groups and discuss common goals for parent leadership training.	Fact sheets developed for effective parent leadership.	<p>Year 1 Q2: Garner input from parent groups , convene individual groups and combination of groups.</p> <p>Year 2 Implement training.</p> <p>Year 3 Q1: Assessment of impact of training based on analysis of feedback.</p>
	Leverage funding dollars for existing parent leadership training to bring to scale.	Develop a standard for parent engagement and leadership in early care and education.	<p>Year 2 Q2: Make recommendations on funding and standards for parent leadership.</p>
	Establish system of early contact with expectant and new parents with ongoing follow-up outreach efforts to connect with parents when they are available and interested.	Deliver a continuum of parent leadership training that is flexible based on parent availability and interest.	<p>Year 3 Implement recommendations.</p>
Create a system/continuum of home visitation services.	<p>Appoint a Steering Committee for this work.</p> <p>Develop a matrix of existing services, including the categories of age range, targeted groups, geographic distribution, demographics, models, goals, training required, and funding</p>	<p>Matrix that exhibits a continuum of Home Visitation programs and services for children ages prenatal to 5.</p> <p>Identified gaps in service.</p>	<p>Year 1 Q1: Appoint Steering Committee.</p> <p>Q2; Begin to develop matrix of services.</p> <p>Q3: Complete matrix of services.</p> <p>Q4: Complete identification of gaps in</p>

Strategies	Activities/Actions	Deliverables/Accomplishments	Status
	sources.		services.
	Literature review of best practices and research. Hire a consultant.	Best practices document.	Year 1 Q1: Define contract terms for consultant. Q2: Recruit and hire consultant. Year 2 Q1: Complete report of best practices and research.
	Define competencies and credentials for home visitors. Define quality standards for all home visitation programs/services. Ongoing training for home visitors.	Skilled workforce. Quality standards. Improved outcomes for children and families.	Year 2 Q1: Define competencies Q2: Define quality standards Year 3 Q1: Develop training program Q2: Deliver training
	Convene a Home Visitation Congress with national speakers, community input and parent voice.	Greater understanding. Increased access year. Increased number of families involved in child's education and understanding of developmentally appropriate practice.	Year 3 Q1: Convene Home Visitation Congress

Needs Assessment

A project director will be contracted to oversee the day-to-day work required to accomplish the council's four priority areas. The project director will research best practices regarding a comprehensive needs assessment to include a review of existing needs assessments and determine how the data can be effectively integrated. The needs assessment will include information on the quality and availability of programs and services for children from birth to school entry, and also gather information about the availability of high-quality prekindergarten services for low income children in the state. As a result, he or she will recommend to the State Advisory Council suggested approaches to complete the needs assessment.

The SAC will implement a schedule of periodic needs assessments based on best practices. In planning the needs assessment, the SAC will remain cognizant of current fiscal constraints and the lack of an integrated early childhood data system.

Opportunities and Barriers to Coordination and Collaboration

Connecticut has aimed to address many of the child and family challenges with policy innovations, program initiatives and structural reform. These advances have served our early childhood efforts to date and have yielded strong partnerships with state and local policy leaders that provide many opportunities for collaboration throughout the state.

This most recent fiscal year, the Connecticut legislature established a Children and Recession Task Force which identified family trends and issues resulting from the recession related to housing, employment, homelessness, child care and unemployment. Based on this impact of the recession, recommendations were made to state leadership on budgetary and policy actions to mitigate the effects of these downward trends. The task force recommended legislation that was

adopted as the first state legislation on children in this downturned economy. This statute establishes what must take place for children in our state with an unemployment rate of 8 percent or higher to include: a) streamlined customer-friendly services, b) establishment of a state leadership team from every key state agency so no child receives fragmented services; c) year-round food programs; d) child care services for families so they can look for work and job train and if homeless, receive childcare; e) that the trend towards low birth weight babies be rapidly reversed with research-based interventions; f) family access to services and information on eligibility be integrated and provided through a single point of entry.

Connecticut's Poverty and Prevention Council chaired by the Governor's Office of Policy and Management, works to reduce child poverty by 50 percent within a decade. The council looks at the costs of poverty, the proven interventions, and what should be done and bundled together for greatest impact. This goal is coupled with a goal of prevention, rather than crisis, for children.

The Governor reports every two years on the state's budget regarding prevention efforts for children. Each agency reports best outcome and strategies in prevention. Similarly, coordinated efforts across agency and branch of government are reported and silhouetted for replication. State contracts are linked to both prevention for children and child poverty reduction.

Connecticut has established a committee to apply for the Affordable Care Act Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, which will disburse \$1.5 billion in grants to states over the next five years. This committee is a partner with us on our fourth goal and strategy focused on home visitation and family engagement.

The Home Visitation Program will help Connecticut coordinate and deliver services in the five areas of health, development, early learning, child abuse and neglect prevention and family

support services. The state is currently assessing our models with evidence of success. One such model is our Child First. That project has recently received a significant grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for families most at-risk in four of our cities. Another model program is the Nurturing Families Network, available through all birthing hospitals in the state. There is an Advisory Committee that coordinates with our state early care and education efforts and which sits on our home visitation and parent engagement committee.

The Advisory Committee is documenting which home-visiting programs are already under way in various places across our state, and what level of quality they provide, as well as whether our state has the capacity to provide counseling and substance abuse treatment. The effort will be coordinated with other programs that require needs assessments, such as Head Start.

In the area of parent leadership, Connecticut offers communities a competitive grant opportunity to promote family civics. Communities can apply for grants to teach parent leadership if they select proven models, reflect diversity and show outcomes. This has led to over 2000 graduates of parent leadership training programs who have gone on to join advisory committees, state and local councils, as well as the development of new coalitions of parents concerned with children. Connecticut has accrued over 1.5 million volunteer hours from this effort.

Concerned with outcomes rather than numbers served, the legislature has shifted its state appropriations process towards results-based accountability. All three branches of government and agencies funded by government are trained in results-based accountability. No one presents before the Appropriations Committee without population trends, indicators and impact. This facilitates a common way of looking at what works, a shared vocabulary and a commitment to dollars following data, interventions and outcomes.

Connecticut is the only state in the nation to report to the public on its social state and quality of life. Annually, the public is objectively apprised through data analysis on how we are faring in key subject areas that cross age and region. From wages to health care to housing, we can observe the social state of Connecticut. Eleven indicators are offered separately, as well as integrated into a single digit number, so we can trace our overall direction and success as a state. We look only at indicators that have a trend line of three decades.

Many opportunities for collaboration were noted in the 2008 Connecticut Head Start Needs Assessment Survey:

Overall, programs across Connecticut reported positive relationships with the wide range of partners who support their work with young children and families and generally few barriers to engaging partners in these efforts. The vast majority of responses to items in nearly all of the priority areas reflect ongoing collaboration and coordination with state and local providers and organizations, and know difficulties achieving productive partnerships and working together, This is notable considering Head Start Performance Standards require Head Start grantees to provide a comprehensive array of services for the highest need families which necessitates making meaningful connections daily with a wide range of systems and service providers. Especially in the areas of connecting and

*aligning their work with other early childhood providers, collaboration is most evident.*⁵

Besides the opportunities noted in the 2008 Connecticut Head Start Needs Assessment, Connecticut faces challenges and barriers to coordination and collaboration largely due to the recession and the fiscal crisis. Reduced state resources and a reduction in the workforce at state agencies have diminished the amount of collaboration between state agencies. A lack of coherence in the state's ability to develop a governance structure that affords us the opportunity to work effectively and efficiently across the many agencies and organizations that impact children and families continues to be barrier to collaboration and coordination. Much work in the area of early care and education in Connecticut is siloed and we do not have the governance in place to take the work that has and will be done to the level of institutionalization and sustainability in a manner that is functional and transparent for all stakeholders. Public hearings on the work of the SAC will be held annually.

Factors that May Accelerate or Decelerate the Work

First and foremost, the vision of the next Governor and his administration toward early childhood education in general will either accelerate (by providing additional funding or at least maintaining current funding) or decelerate this work (by imposing large budget cuts across early childhood state-funded programs of all types). If the latter happens, then most efforts will have to go toward recouping or mitigating the effect of drastic budget cuts to preserve as many of the

⁵ Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office (2009). *2008 Head Start State Needs Assessment Survey: Final report.*

current services as possible. Keeping this in mind as this grant application was written, the SAC has, in all cases, sought low-cost or no-cost strategies to the areas of data, personnel development, family engagement and early learning standards. Expansion of home visiting services, however, will rely on additional federal or state funding. Additional unknowns that could either help or hinder the work of the SAC are possible early state employee retirements in July 2011 and the state budget for fiscal years 2012 and 2013.

Our state has a large and strong constituent base of community leaders and parents concerned about the early years. Numerous foundations contribute to local planning and service integration. Concurrently, a Parent Trust bolsters local family civics. So we know that a focus on strategies that bring in quality, access and families will be supported on the community level. Additionally, we know that community leaders will be messengers and contributors to this process.

The reason the SAC has taken the approach of using a subgrantee is to ensure that despite potential instability within state government, the work of the SAC will have a measure of stability, neutrality and flexibility that may not be possible within any one state agency. A request for proposal (RFP) will be disseminated throughout the state to ensure a fair and open process for procurement with regard to the subgrantee.

Cooperating Entities

See Appendix 1 Strategic Report pp. 11-12

Membership of the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet

NOTE: The Governor appoints the chairperson, Commissioners appoint their designees from the state agencies, and various majority and minority leadership of the Connecticut General Assembly appoint others. This is standard legislative procedure in Connecticut for entities including Task Forces and Commissions, Advisories.

<u>Head Start Act , 2007</u> State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care for children from birth to school entry	<u>Connecticut Statute</u> Early Childhood Education Cabinet	<u>Member</u>
Representative from a state agency responsible for childcare	Commissioner of Social Services /Designee	Claudette Beaulieu Deputy Commissioner, Department of Social Services
Representative of the State education agency	Commissioner of Ed/Designee	Harriet Feldlaufer Bureau Chief, State Department of Education, Bureau of Teaching and Learning
Representative of the local education agency	Representative from a public elementary school with a prekindergarten program	David Title Superintendent, Fairfield Public Schools
Representative of institutions of higher education in the State	Representative from an institution of higher education	Joan Paris Director, Early Childhood Education, Norwalk Community College
Representative of local providers of early childhood education and development services	A representative of a local provider of early childhood education	Eileen Ward Director, Children's Community Development Center
Representative from Head Start agencies located in the State, including migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs	Representative from a Head Start Program	Dona Ditrio Early Childhood Education Director, New Opportunities for Waterbury, Inc.
State Director of Head Start Collaboration	Project Director of the Connecticut Head Start Collaboration Office	Grace Whitney Head Start Collaboration Office
Representative of the State agency responsible	Representative from SDE who is responsible for	Anne Louise Thompson

<u>Head Start Act , 2007</u> State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care for children from birth to school entry	<u>Connecticut Statute</u> Early Childhood Education Cabinet	<u>Member</u>
for programs under 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Commissioner of Developmental Services/Designee the IDEA Part C lead agency	Bureau Chief, State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education Linda Goodman Director, Birth to Three System, Department of Developmental Services
Representative of the State agency responsible for health or mental health care	Commissioner of Public Health/Designee and Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction/Designee	Norma Gyle Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Health Patricia Rehmer Mental Health Consultant, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Representatives of other entities determined relevant by the Governor		
	Executive Director of the Commission on Children/Designee	Elaine Zimmerman Executive Director, Connecticut Commission on Children
	Member of the House of Representatives	Representative Beth Bye
	Parent of a child attending school in a priority school district	Marisol Estrada-Soto Parent
	Member of the Senate	Senator Thomas Gaffey
	Representative from the business or philanthropic community	John Rathgeber President, Connecticut Business and Industry Association
	Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management /Designee	Kathy Guay Director, Fiscal & Policy Section Office of Policy and Management

Plans to Sustain Activities Beyond the Grant Period

Connecticut, like most states, will be facing significant challenges as it puts together its biennial budget for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, beginning July 1, 2011. In planning its work, the SAC has identified cost-effective approaches for making measurable progress on four priorities that are essential to building a quality early care and education system in our state.

This work must be completed over the next three years if Connecticut going to move forward with the goals it established in its “Ready by 5 & Fine by 9” report. The SAC will work with the new administration and state legislature and build collaborative relationships with supportive groups to ensure that Connecticut maintains its commitment to our youngest citizens. As the state’s economy and fiscal position improves, we must be ready to strengthen our early care and education system.

Staff and Position Data

Description: SAC Coordinator

The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet is placed within the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE) for administrative purposes only. The Governor has designated Andrea Brinnel, education consultant with the SDE, as the staff member to coordinate the activities of the SAC. Andrea Brinnel brings over 20 years of experience in public and private education to this work. She has taught in both public and private schools at the preschool and secondary level. In addition, she also served as a central office administrator for a Connecticut public school district and as a member of the board of directors for a private special education school. Mrs. Brinnel was a validator under the previous accreditation system for the National Association for the Education of Young Children and has been trained as a local assessor under the new accreditation system.

She is the program manager for the state Head Start supplementary grant program and coordinator of accreditation for programs funded through the state's School Readiness grant program.

Mrs. Brinnel received her master's degree in education and certificate of advanced graduate studies from Westfield State College and is currently enrolled in a doctor of education program in educational leadership and supervision at American International College.

The following are the current responsibilities of the staff position to the SAC:

- Schedule meetings
- Prepare meeting agendas
- Disseminate SAC materials
- Oversee SAC Web site content
- Coordinate SAC Leadership Team
- Monitor federal and state legislative requirements
- Coordinate preparation and dissemination of state reports
- Maintain cabinet records

Description/Qualifications: SAC Project Director (to be contracted with)

Under the direction of the SAC Leadership Committee, a project director will be selected to oversee the day-to-day work required to accomplish the council's four priority areas. For each of the three years of funding, the project director will be responsible for the implementation of specific activities listed in the strategic report, including tracking expenditures and preparing progress reports. The project director will ensure that the goals and objectives as articulated in the SAC plan are coordinated and communicated to key

policy stakeholders at the state and local level.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Develop any consultant agreements necessary to further the work of the SAC
- Ensure that tasks are being completed as planned and in a timely manner
- Communicate regularly with SAC leadership team and members and SDE Coordinator
- Meet regularly with any groups or committees formed to carry out the four work plans
- Track funds and expenditures
- Develop progress reports
- Work with SDE Coordinator and the Head Start Collaboration Director to support the work of the SAC
- Coordinate data collection for statewide needs assessment
- Work with the legislature to represent the SAC priorities and initiatives
- Work with the P-20 Council on early childhood data system
- Work with Department of Higher Education (DHE), the State Education Resource Center (SERC) and Connecticut Charts-a-Course (CCAC) on pre-service and in-service professional development initiatives and activities
- Coordinate with SDE and DSS work on early learning standards development
- Serve as the SAC liaison to the Department of Public Health's work on (federal) home visiting grants
- Serve as the SAC liaison to the SERC Parent Trust Fund

Education

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a master's degree in education, early childhood education, or a related field or, in lieu thereof, a combination of degrees and years of experience.

Experience and Training

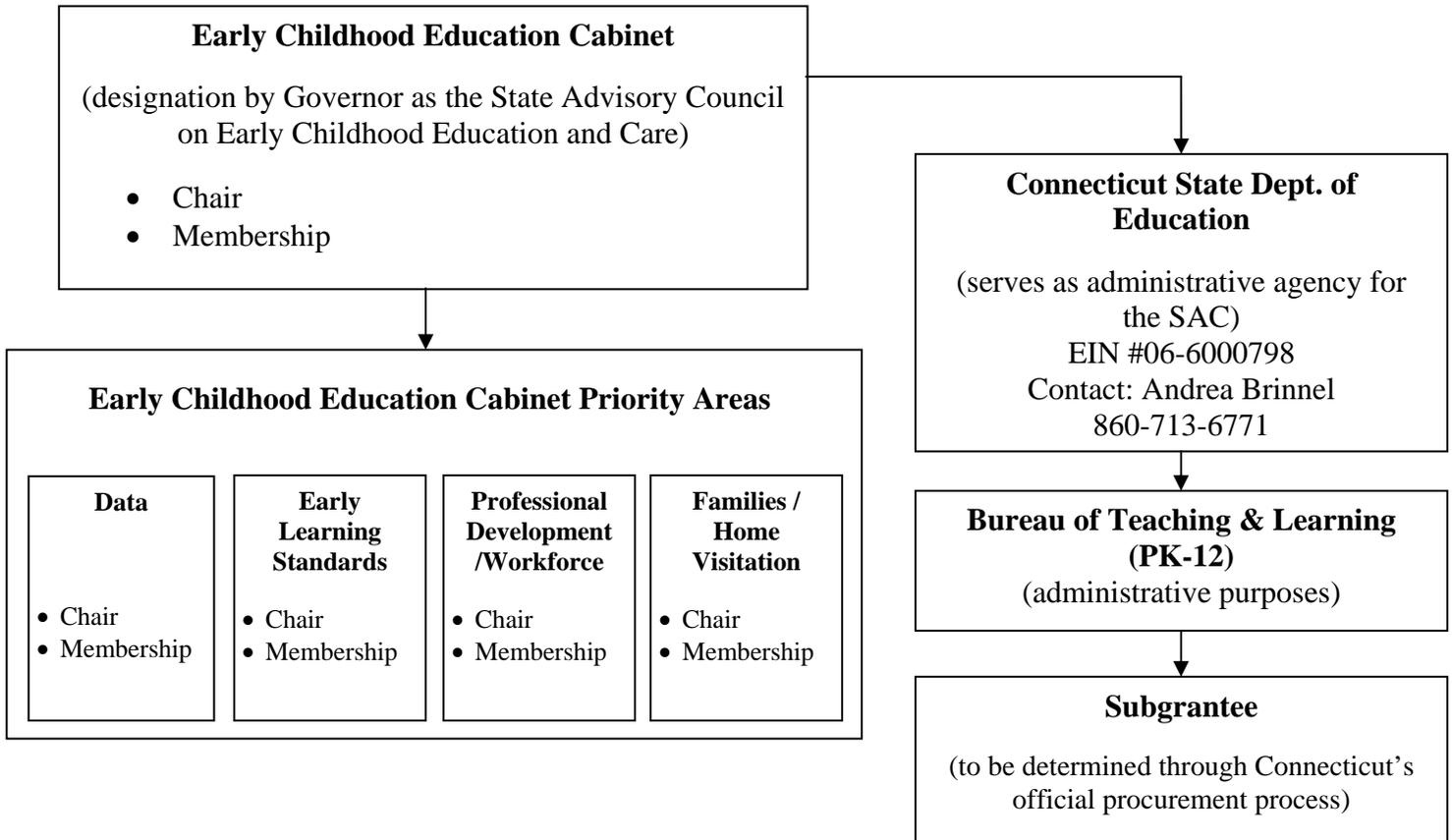
Experience in the role of supervisor or director in agencies that address the needs of infants, toddlers or preschool-age children and/or experience in early care and education programs in communities or schools. Experience in Early Head Start or Head Start preferred. Strong organizational skills, excellent verbal and written communication. Must be adept at working with budgets and experience with managing grants. Prospective candidates should be able to complete tasks independently as well as be able to work collaboratively and with transparency.

Organizational Profile

In February 2010, Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell designated the Early Childhood Education Cabinet as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. In addition, Governor Rell designated Andrea Brinnel, education consultant for the Connecticut State Department of Education, to coordinate the activities of the council. The designation letter from the Governor can be found in Appendix II.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 50 of Public Act 09-6, the Early Childhood Education Cabinet shall be within the SDE for administrative purposes only. Therefore, the SDE is responsible for the management of the State Advisory Council.

The graphic below depicts the organizational structure and relationship of the Cabinet, its work groups, and the SDE as the administrative agency.



Financial Statements/Audit Report Summary

The following link is to the State of Connecticut Single Audit Report for the year ended June 30, 2009: http://www.cga.ct.gov/apa/pdf2010/SWSA_2009.pdf

The fiscal sub-grantee for this work will be determined through the Connecticut State Department of Education's procurement process for personal service agreements. This open and competitive process will ensure all entities having an interest in this work will have an opportunity to make application. Proposals will be assessed in a fair and objective manner, and a sub-grantee will be chosen from the pool of qualified applicants.

The grant award will be used toward meeting the strategic work at hand to meet the four goals and action steps within the designated timelines. Additionally, funds will be used for SAC meeting expenses and for subcontracts in the areas of research, product design, Web site maintenance, the creation of necessary data instruments, and administrative expenses.

The majority of the funds will be used for a project director under the direction of the SAC's leadership team. The project director will develop and oversee the day-to-day work required to accomplish the council's priorities. For each of the three years, the project director will be responsible for implementation of the specific activities listed in the strategic report and will be responsible for tracking and submitting expenditure and progress reports.

A leadership team will be organized to oversee the project director and strategic direction of this work within the identified priority areas. A member of the leadership team will represent the subgrantee. Other members will include the chair of the cabinet, the chairs of each of the four groups (data, early learning standards, professional development, and families and home visitation), the Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the SAC Coordinator. Additional stakeholders will be included, as appropriate.

Third Party Agreements

No third party agreements are necessary as a subgrantee will be selected through the State Department of Education's official procurement process. See State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management Procurement Standards:

http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/finance/psa/psa_pos_procurementstandards_021709_update_082709.pdf

Budget and Budget Justification

Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet Budget

Category	Year 1 Federal	Year 1 Non-Federal	Year 2 Federal	Year 2 Non-Federal	Year 3 Federal	Year 3 Non-Federal	Total
a. Personnel	0	\$164,100	0	\$164,100	0	\$164,100	\$492,300
b. Fringe Benefits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
c. Travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
d. Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
e. Supplies	0	\$12,500	0	\$12,500	0	\$12,500	\$37,500
f. Contractual	\$165,000	\$757,500	\$208,987	\$757,500	\$208,987	\$757,500	\$2,272,500
g. Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
h. Other	0	\$19,000	0	\$19,000	0	\$19,000	\$57,000
i. Total Direct Charges	\$165,000	\$953,100	\$208,987	\$953,100	\$208,987	\$953,100	
j. Indirect Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
k. TOTALS	\$165,000	\$953,100	\$208,987	\$953,100	\$208,987	\$953,100	\$2,859,300

Additional Justification

Contractual dollars will be used to contract for a project director to perform the duties as detailed in the project director position (p. 45-46). The position will not be filled until funding is received and, therefore, the funds set aside for year one expenses reflect a shorter time period than the funding for years two and three.

It is expected that approximately \$80,000 a year (prorated the first year) will be for the project director contract, \$1,500 a year for Web site expenses, up to \$5,800 a year for administrative expenses, \$2,300 a year for the project director's and Cabinet expenses (e.g., meetings, travel, etc.) and approximately \$100,000 a year for other contracts to carry out the work as delineated by work plans.

Nonfederal Resources Description:

Connecticut will bring a total of \$953,100 (see SAC Matching Funds table below) each of the next three years, for a total of \$2,859,300 in nonfederal dollars and resources, as a match to its total three year request for \$582,974 in federal funds. This match is more than two times the 70 percent nonfederal share requirement. This match represents a firm commitment from several state agencies and organizations to support the work of the grant application. These funds are in sole support of early childhood education and care and are aligned to the four priorities of this grant: data systems, early learning standards, professional development, and families and home visitation/parent engagement.

Historically, Connecticut has shown a strong financial commitment to early childhood education and care and has developed partnerships with philanthropic and advocacy organizations to advance its agenda. For the past 20 years, Connecticut has funded state preschool programs and has one of the highest funding-per-child of all 38 states with state-funded preschool programs in the country (NIEER, 2009). State-funding for the IDEA Part C sponsored by the Department of Developmental Services has quadrupled over the past four years. Philanthropic foundations such as the Hartford Foundation for Giving and the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund have longstanding commitments to early funding for local communities. This includes grants for community planning, early literacy, low birth weight, home visitation and parent engagement.

For this grant application, the State Departments of Education, Developmental Disabilities, Public Health, and Higher Education and the Commission on Children, are providing matching funds and in-kind services to support activities consistent with the state's strategic plan and this application. In addition, funds and in-kind support are being brought to the table from

philanthropic organizations to facilitate the enhancement of high-quality early care and education systems in our state. See table below describing funding source, amount, description and grant priority.

Early childhood stakeholders in Connecticut have demonstrated their strong commitment to the provision of high-quality services and programs for young children through their in-kind and fiscal support of the SAC. This application demonstrates that Connecticut has provided significantly more matching funds than required for this grant proposal. If additional federal funds become available to support the priorities of this application, Connecticut is poised to strengthen the areas addressed through the cooperative efforts of our partnerships.

SAC Matching Funds

Requires a non-Federal share of 70 percent of the total approved cost: \$1,360,273 (total); \$453,424 (annually).

Can be met by cash or in-kind contributions

Agency/Organization	Contact Name	Annual Amount	Total	Description	Grant Priority
Department of Developmental Services	Linda Goodman	\$55,000	\$165,000	Birth to Three in-kind administrative salaries and fringes	Administrative support
Department of Education	Harriet Feldlaufer	\$100,000	\$300,000	10% of state funds awarded to communities for the administration of School Readiness programs as outlined in CGS 10-16 p(B) (g)	Early Learning Standards & Workforce Development
Department of Education	Harriet Feldlaufer	\$2,500	\$7,500	office supplies, postage, computers, telephones	Administrative support
Department of Education	Harriet Feldlaufer	\$150,000	\$450,000	State grant for improving early literacy	Early Learning Standards
Department of Education	Harriet Feldlaufer	\$427,500	\$1,282,500	State grant for community planning for early childhood (Birth through age 9)	Family Engagement & Data Systems
Department of Public Health	Kevin Sullivan	\$25,000	\$75,000	State funds for Children's Health Initiative Asthma Program	Family Engagement/Home Visitation
Connecticut Business and Industry Association	John Rathgeber	\$17,000	\$51,000	Office Space Telephone Computer network General office expenses	Administrative support
Commission on Children	Elaine Zimmerman	\$55,000	\$165,000	Foundation funding for low birth weight/home visitation/father engagement	Family Engagement

Commission on Children	Elaine Zimmerman	\$100,000	\$300,000	Administrative salary and fringes – Executive Director Staff salary and fringes	Administrative support
Commission on Children	Elaine Zimmerman	\$12,000	\$36,000	Telephone Postage General office expenses	Administrative support
Norwalk Community College	Joan Parris	\$9,100	\$27,300	Administrative salary and fringes – Program Director of Early Childhood Programs	Staff /Workforce Development
Total Non-Federal Share		\$953,100	\$2,859,300		



U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Administration for Children & Families

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CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Br Mahoney
 Signature
 CFO
 Title
 CT. State Dept of Education
 Organization

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

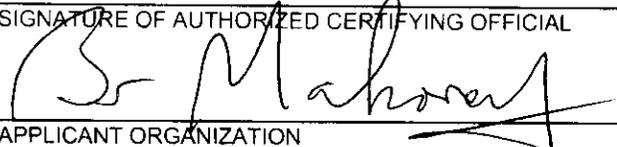
PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL 		TITLE CFO
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION CT. State Dept. of Education		DATE SUBMITTED June 29, 2010



M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

REVISED LETTER

June 28, 2010

Commissioner McQuillan
State Department of Education
State Office Building
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 305
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner McQuillan:

I hereby designate the Early Childhood Education Cabinet established in Section 50 of Public Act 09-06 of the September 2009 Special Session as the State Advisory Council on early childhood education and care, pursuant to Section 642 B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act of 2007.

In addition, I hereby designate Andrea Brinnel, Education Consultant, Bureau of Teaching and Learning, at the Connecticut State Department of Education, to coordinate the activities of the State Advisory Council on early childhood education and care.

Very truly yours,


M. Jodi Rell
Governor

State of Connecticut

STRATEGIC REPORT OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CABINET

INTRODUCTION

Children’s earliest years provide a core foundation for school achievement and eventual success in life. In these first few years, children’s development and learning are influenced by a wide array of factors in their homes and communities that can either enhance their abilities or put them at risk. Risk factors include poverty, inadequate health care, limited exposure to language and literacy, developmental disabilities and delays, and child abuse or neglect. Children that experience these and other problematic early life circumstances often lag in their development as preschoolers, and often enter kindergarten unprepared.

The 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results in reading and mathematics show that, overall, Connecticut’s students are some of the highest performing in the country. However, the Connecticut achievement gaps in reading and mathematics for all disadvantaged groups are among the largest in the nation. On the fourth grade reading and mathematics test, Connecticut continues to have some of the largest differences in academic achievement between poor and non-poor students. On the eighth grade reading and math test, the results are

Note: Roman numerals corresponding to the responsibilities of the state advisory council as detailed in the HS Act are noted in parentheses following the related narratives.

the same: Connecticut has one of the largest gaps between poor students and their wealthier peers. In a competitive global economy, the gaps measured by NAEP, Connecticut Mastery Tests, and other standardized tests translate into an unaffordable loss for the students and for their communities. The causes of poor school performance are complex. We know that early childhood care and education, including access to high quality early learning opportunities and services can have a positive impact on children's learning outcomes. Building a comprehensive, integrated early care and education system in Connecticut will give vulnerable populations the opportunity to build a strong foundation for future success.

Over the past twenty years, Connecticut has written model legislation in school readiness and early reading success, child poverty reduction, early care and education facilities expansion, IDEA Part C and Section 619, and results-based accountability. We have excellent policy but do not necessarily bring our best practices to scale. Concurrently, what we have in policy and intellect, we lack in coherent systems. Our early care and education programming is not adequately integrated or family friendly. Obstacles to change stem from siloed funding streams, entrenched agency culture, lack of attention towards the very young and a missing family constituency insisting on change. Our challenge is to create a viable governance structure that can accommodate the diverse programmatic and funding needs and requirements with coherence and continuity to enable systemic and sustainable change. **(II)**

Toward this end, proven policies and programs that focus on young children play a vital role. Governor Rell established the Early Childhood Cabinet to address the needs of these youngest residents of the state by designing and implementing creative strategies that lay the best possible foundation for academic and life success. She also created an Early Childhood Research and Policy Council led by 31 representatives from business and industry, education and government and non-profit community agencies and organizations, to reinforce the state's drive to become a national model for early childhood education. The executive order establishing the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council was repealed by the Governor in March 2009.

Enclosed you will find the four strategic goals and strategies prioritized by our Cabinet,

which the Governor designated to serve as our State Advisory Committee. We have focused on integrated, quality data systems, development and implementation of early learning standards, a highly qualified and effective workforce, and engaging families in meaningful partnerships.

This strategic report serves to: describe the current early education and care programs and services available to children and their families in Connecticut; and detail the priority areas designated by the Cabinet for action over the next three years.

EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Connecticut estimates the population of children from birth to three years old at approximately 120,000 and the population of students eligible for preschool at approximately 80,000; this number is based on approximately 40,000 students that register for public school kindergarten each year. This number underestimates the population given that some students attend private school.

Table 1 shows the state and federally funded early care and education programs and services and the number of children served. These programs and services include:

Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP): Connecticut's AFP supports early care and education programs' participation in the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation process. The accreditation process is a professional, voluntary, self-study and assessment system for early childhood programs. In 1997, the Connecticut Legislature passed a landmark School Readiness bill (PA97-258) that named the AFP as the model for a statewide effort of accreditation support to licensed child care centers and linked the AFP with Connecticut's professional registry (Connecticut Charters-a-Course). By early 1998, the AFP operated throughout the state. To date, the AFP has supported 450 public and private programs in Connecticut.

Connecticut Birth to Three System: Connecticut's Birth to Three System provides statewide services to families to meet the developmental and health-related needs of infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. Services are provided in natural environments by a network of 44 local programs throughout the state. The state cost of services is offset by parent fees, commercial health insurance, IDEA Part C and Part B, and Medicaid.

Child Care Assistance Program: Connecticut's Child Care Assistance Program, Care 4 Kids, is funded by state and federal Child Care Development Block Grant funds. Care 4 Kids helps low to moderate income families in Connecticut pay for child care costs. This program is sponsored by the State of Connecticut's Department of Social Services (DSS). Working families in Care 4 Kids are required to pay a family fee. This sliding fee scale is set by the program based upon

guidance from the Department of Social Services.

Child Care Facilities Loan Fund (CCFLF): The CCFLF was created through School Readiness legislation, to finance the construction and quality of child care facilities. The CCFLF has established three separate programs: Tax-Exempt Financing Program, Guaranteed Loan Program and Small Direct Loan Program, all of which recognize the need for the adequate long-term planning of workforce and facility development. In 2007, the Connecticut General Assembly appropriated funds for the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA), and the State Department of Education (SDE), to develop a School Readiness expansion plan for Connecticut, focused specifically on facilities.

Child Care Infoline: 2-1-1 Child Care is a confidential and free child care referral telephone service in Connecticut - just dial 2-1-1. Child care referral specialists assist parents and child care providers in locating appropriate resources and referrals. Each child care setting is surveyed every six weeks to determine available capacity.

Child FIRST: Child FIRST is a model program to decrease the incidence of serious emotional disturbance, developmental learning problems, and abuse and neglect among high-risk young children in Greater Bridgeport, Connecticut. When mental health and child development problems first arise, Child FIRST works with pediatricians, teachers, and other community providers to identify, assess, and intervene with vulnerable children and their families. This program will be extended to five additional low income communities.

Department of Social Services State-funded Child Care Centers (DSS): DSS contracts for approximately 4,200 child care slots at more than 90 locations in 36 municipalities throughout the state. These centers provide infant/toddler, preschool and school-age services. Activities funded by the child care centers are designed to provide safe, age-appropriate environments and full range of social, educational and recreational services to children and support services to their families. Enrollment is targeted towards families earning 75 percent of the state median income level. Section 8-210b has authorized funding to support state child care centers for over 30 years for children disadvantaged by reasons of economic, social or environmental conditions.

Early Head Start: Early Head Start (EHS) is a federally funded program for low-income infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families. EHS programs enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assist pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward economic self-sufficiency. Programs are center-based or home-visiting or both.

Early Childhood Community Plans: The William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, in partnership with the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, the Connecticut Health and Development Institute, and the SDE, was established to build community capacity and support the development of comprehensive community plans for children, birth through 8, that address the areas of early care and education, social, emotional, behavioral and physical health, and family supports. Local plans offering the integration of health, safety and learning, have been created.

Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP): The ECCP is a mental health consultation program designed to meet the social and emotional needs of children birth to age 5 by offering support and consultation in the area of early care and education. The prevention and early intervention strategies provided by this program are aimed at promoting optimal outcomes for young children and their families.

Early Childhood Special Education: Early childhood special education as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA Part B) serves children ages three through five who require special education. Special education and related services are available to eligible children by age 3 and are provided by local and regional school districts.

Early Reading First: Early Reading First supports the development of early childhood centers of excellence that focus on all areas of development, especially on early language, cognitive, and pre-reading skills that prepare children for continued school success. Services are directed primarily to children from low-income families.

Even Start Family Literacy: This two-generation program offers support to integrate early childhood education, adult literacy, parenting education and interactive parent and child literacy activities. The targeted population are low-income families with parents who are eligible for services

under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and their children from birth through age 7.

Family Resource Centers: Family Resource Centers (FRCs) provide access, within a community, to a broad continuum of early childhood and family support services which foster the optimal development of children and families. They offer parent education and training; family support; preschool and school-age child care; teen pregnancy prevention (positive youth development services); and family day-care provider training. There are 61 FRCs in Connecticut.

Head Start: Head Start is a federally funded, national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families. In addition, supplemental state funds are available to federal Head Start grantees to increase the number of children being served, extend the program day for children being served, and enhance program quality as specified by legislation (CGS §10-16n).

Nurturing Families Network: The Nurturing Families Network is a no-cost, voluntary program that provides information, guidance and assistance to first-time parents whose children are at risk for abuse or neglect. Available through some 41 community agencies and birthing hospitals throughout Connecticut, the network offers three distinct, yet interwoven services: Home visiting, parenting groups and connecting parents with other services in the community.

Parents as Teachers (PAT): ConnPAT provides the Parents as Teachers National Center certification both for prenatal to Three Institutes and Three to Kindergarten. In addition, PAT provides technical assistance to over 120 PAT programs. In Connecticut these include Family Resource Centers, the Nurturing Families Network, and Early Head Start programs. These PAT-certified staff members provide technical assistance in a variety of ways, including individual home visits, group meetings, health and developmental screening and resource/referral services to over 4,000 children.

Parent Trust Fund: The Parent Trust Fund helps communities improve the health, safety and learning of their children by providing competitive grants to communities that give parents, grandparents and adult caregivers civic leadership skills they need to take the lead in their community for children. Parent engagement programs supported by the Parent Trust Fund include the

nationally recognized Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI), the UConn-sponsored People Empowering People (PEP), and the Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (PSEE), among others. The Fund serves an average of more than 1,100 parents annually across Connecticut.

School Readiness: In 1998 the School Readiness grant program was funded through legislation, Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) §160-§16u, to provide spaces in community childcare programs and public school classrooms for 3- and 4-year old children in over 300 programs. Communities receiving this grant are eligible by virtue of being a priority school district, a municipality with a priority school, or ranked as one of the lowest 50 towns in wealth. School Readiness Councils consisting of co-leadership from the chief elected official and the superintendent of schools are charged with coordinating a School Readiness program network. This initiative is jointly administered by the State Departments of Education and Social Services..

Table 1 – Early Education and Care programs and services (I)

	State or Federal Program									
	Birth to Three	Care4Kids	Child Care Infoline	DSS Centers	Early Head Start	Family Resource Centers	Head Start	Nurturing Families Network	Parents as Teachers	SDE/DSS School Readiness
Infants/Toddlers	4,700	7,000	14,900	1,200	700	3,200	n/a	4,700	3,700	n/a
Preschool	n/a	7,400	34,300	2,800	n/a	3,800	6,100	n/a	n/a	10,100
Total	4,700	14,400	49,200	4,000	700	7,000	6,100	4,700	3,700	10,100

There is a high degree of overlap in the counts represented as many children are funded through multiple sources. Most of this data is point-in-time, although some figures are yearly and/or monthly aggregates.

CONNECTICUT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CABINET

The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet, established by law in 2005, worked to identify a set of agenda items designed to promote the development of all of the state's youngest children. Based on a decade of the state's efforts to meet the needs of all of Connecticut's young children, the 2006 publication, *Ready by 5 & Fine by 9*, proposed three goals to address the needs of all children. These goals are:

- reach appropriate developmental milestones from birth to age 5;
- begin kindergarten with the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed for success in school; and
- have K-3 education experiences that extend children's birth-to-5 learning and ensure consistent progress in achieving reading mastery.

Funding for the Cabinet was eliminated in 2008, due to a severe fiscal deficit as a result of the recession. In a special legislative session in September 2009, the Early Childhood Education Cabinet was re-established, and in February 2010, The Early Childhood Education Cabinet, hereafter referred to as The State Advisory Council (SAC), was designated by Governor M. Jodi Rell as the State Advisory Council (SAC) on early childhood education and care. The SAC consists of 17 members, including representation from the Head Start Collaboration office. In addition to meeting the membership requirements set forth in the Head Start Act of 2007, the SAC also requires representation from The Connecticut Commission on Children, the Office of Policy and Management, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, state legislators from both the House and the Senate, a parent of a child from a priority school district and a representative from business or philanthropy.

Table 2 compares the membership requirements of the SAC to the federal Head Start Act with Connecticut's public act.

Table 2 – Federal and state membership requirements for State Advisory Council

Section 642B(b)(I)(A) of the Head Start Act of 2007	Connecticut Public Act 09-6
Representative from the State agency responsible for childcare	Commissioner of Social Services/Designee
Representative of the State educational agency	Commissioner of State Department of Education (SDE)/Designee
Representative of local education agencies	Representative from a public elementary school with a prekindergarten program
Representative of institutions of higher education in the State	Representative from an institution of higher education
Representative of local providers of early childhood education and development services	Representative of a local provider of early childhood education
Representative from Head Start agencies located in the State, including migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs	Representative from a Head Start Program
State Director of Head Start Collaboration	Project Director of the CT Head Start Collaboration Office
Representative of the State agency responsible for programs under Section 619 or Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	Representative from SDE responsible for programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act & Developmental Services–Part C
Representative of the State agency responsible for health or mental health care	Commissioner of Public Health/Designee
Representatives of other entities determined to be relevant by the Governor of the State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director of the Commission on Children/Designee • Member of the State House of Representatives • Parent of a child attending school in a priority school district • Member of the State Senate • Representative from the business or philanthropic community • Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management/Designee • Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services/Designee

The SAC maintains a website at <http://ctearlychildhood.org>. The website provides information to the public about upcoming meetings and events, items of public interest regarding early

childhood initiatives and documents, both current and historical, that the Cabinet has produced or are pertinent to the Cabinet’s work.

Upon being designated as the SAC, the new Cabinet formulated four priorities based on the work of the previous Cabinet. These priorities were translated into four goals for Connecticut’s vision for early care and education. The strategies for each goal describe what can realistically be accomplished over the next three years to promote an aligned and coordinated early education delivery system in Connecticut. The SAC’s four goals are:

- Adopt comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards that reflect a progression of skills birth through age 5 aligned with the K-12 standards. (VII)
- Increase integration, quality, and accessibility of Connecticut early childhood data for the benefit of all stakeholders. (IV)
- Develop a highly qualified and effective workforce for all children birth to age 5 in all settings. (V & VI)
- Foster a partnership among families and communities in the early years. (II)

Work groups for each priority were formed by publicly posting a request to all interested stakeholders. Four work groups met for two, half-day sessions to develop strategies, activities/ actions, timelines, and deliverables in order to carry out the work to meet these goals over the next three years.

Table 3 shows members of the work groups represented the following agencies, individuals and organizations:

Table 3 – Members of work groups

CT State Department of Education	Charter Oak State College
Greater Hartford YMCA	Birth to Three (early intervention)
CT Voices for Children	Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis
Family Resource Center Alliance	School Readiness Councils
Hope Child Development Center	Commission on Children
Head Start	ConnPAT (Parents as Teachers)
United Way/211 Child Care	CT Family Resource Centers
CT Department of Social Services	CT Department of Public Health

Table 3 – Members of work groups

Child Health and Development Institute	CT Department of Higher Education
CT Parent Power	Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Center
The Charter Oak Group	Independent Consultants
CT Charts-A-Course	Providers of early childhood education programs
Local School Districts	Regional Educational Service Centers
Eastern CT Health Network	CT P-20 Council
CT Association for Human Services	CT Association for the Education of Young Children
Eastern CT State University	UConn Health Center
Accreditation Facilitation Project	William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund
Norwalk Community College	

PRIORITY AREAS

Goal: Early Learning Standards

Adopt comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards that reflect a progression of skills birth through age 5 aligned with the K-12 standards. **(VII)**

Strategies:

- Conduct a review of existing standards and research on early learning.
- Involve and engage cross-sector stakeholders throughout the process.
- Engage leadership to ensure the promotion of the understanding and buy-in of the early learning standards and their relationship to K-12.
- Develop a document outlining early learning standards for children ages birth to five, in all areas of development designed for appropriate use with all children, including those with disabilities and dual-language learners.
- Plan for implementation and professional development.

Background:

Early learning standards define the desired outcomes and content of young children's education. There are many benefits to early learning standards. Standards reinforce the fact that there

is an incredible potential for learning and growth in the infant, toddler, and preschool years, they help establish expectations for children at different ages, they create a commonality for communication about children's accomplishments and capabilities, and they provide a framework for accountability. (NAECS/SDE 2009)

Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework, originally developed in 1999 by a group of higher education and early childhood state experts, was last reissued in 2006. The Preschool Curriculum Framework is organized into four domains of development: personal and social, physical, cognitive creative, and expression/aesthetic.

The Curriculum Framework is guided by the following principles:

- early learning and development are multidimensional;
- developmental domains are highly interrelated;
- development and learning are influenced by multiple social and cultural contexts;
- young children are capable and competent;
- there are individual differences in rates of development among children;
- children will exhibit a range of skills and competencies in any domain of development; knowledge of child growth and development, and consistent expectations are essential to maximizing educational experiences for children and to developing and implementing programs;
- families are the primary caregivers and educators of their young children; and
- young children learn through active exploration of their environment through child-initiated and teacher-selected activities.

The *Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework* (PAF) was developed to complement the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework and is a curriculum-embedded tool for assessing 3- and 4-year old children in their preschool classrooms. This framework was field-tested at a number of program sites and reviewed by experts in early childhood education and child development, and articulates comprehensive performance standards or learning outcomes. The primary purposes of the PAF are to:

- observe and monitor each child’s progress related to curricular goals and performance standards;
- support curriculum development and planning that promote children’s learning and development by teachers and families;
- organize and mutually share information between families and program staff members; and
- share information with receiving teachers and to support effective transitions.

Together, the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework and the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework provide a system for using standards in both planning curriculum to address specific learning standards and to observe and assess children’s progress in achieving those standards.

In 2009, Connecticut published *Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning*. This publication is intended as a guide or instruction manual for infant and toddler caregivers. Its objective is to inform and support infant and toddler primary caregivers, including parents and childcare providers. This work was sponsored by the Department of Social Services with the assistances of a broad range of constituents, representing Head Start, family childcare, child development experts, higher education and teacher training, special education, public schools and health care. These guidelines are based on the latest findings in brain development, current research and based practices. Consistent with the guiding principles of the Preschool Curriculum Framework, Connecticut’s Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning articulate early learning strategies that are flexible and malleable to support the development and learning processes of children from birth to three years of age. The Cabinet intends to use these guidelines and the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework as a foundation for adopting early learning strategies birth to age 5.

In addition, the Connecticut State Board of Education will be adopting the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics developed by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Chief Council of State School Officers (CCSSO). Connecticut’s new

early learning standards will be aligned with these K-12 standards and with current and future standards in other content areas

Although there has been some success, we are still working toward developing a truly integrated system.

Goal: Quality Data Systems

Increase integration, quality, and accessibility of Connecticut early childhood data for the benefit of all stakeholders. **(IV)**

Strategies:

- Assign unique identifiers to all young children, early childhood programs, and early childhood staff.
- Develop (or use an existing) data architecture project that will enable data to be matched in an unduplicated manner across agencies, while still respecting all privacy requirements.
- Facilitate a multi-agency Memorandum of Understanding concerning the deliverables and standards of data accessibility.

Background:

The capacity to effectively collect, monitor, and report on the progress of students, programs and services from early childhood through post-secondary education, and into the workforce, is essential for making policy and fiscal decisions based on desired outcomes for the children being served in Connecticut.

Connecticut has engaged in various efforts to forge an early childhood data system. In 2002, under Connecticut General Statutes 10-10a, the SDE implemented the Public School Information System (PSIS), developed to collect enrollment data, demographic information, and program information for students enrolled in prekindergarten through Grade 12 in the state's public schools. All public school students were assigned a unique identifier. In addition, in 2007, the statute was expanded to include all preschool students who were in nonpublic school programs receiving state and/or federal funds.

This unique identifier is included in every state data file collected at the individual student

level (assessment, discipline, special education, etc.). In addition, in 2007, the statute expanded to include all preschool students who were in nonpublic school programs who received state and/or federal funds. The CSDE developed and implemented the prekindergarten information system (PKIS), which is used to collect information about 3- and 4-year-old children enrolled in non-public preschool programs, such as the Department of Social Services early childhood programs, Head Start and Even Start.

Also, while the CSDE does assign a unique educator identification number to every teacher in CT's public school system, the CSDE does not yet have the ability to link teachers to students in the public preschool system. However, as required by the Federal State Fiscal Stabilization Fund application, Connecticut has a plan in place to do so by August, 2011.

In 2004, The Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut launched an effort called Early Childhood DataCONNECTIONS with funding from Health and Human Services, the Children's fund of Connecticut and the Connecticut Dept. of Social Services. The result, in addition to a mapping of which state agencies were collecting which information, was a toolkit called "Putting Administrative Data to Work" issued in April, 2005. It was the vision of the team that developed the toolkit "that all state agencies serving children and families will be able to creatively and cooperatively develop a culture and infrastructure that values and supports research and ultimately, evidence-based decision making on public policy issues."

In 2006, with funding from DSS, the Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the Office of Workforce Competitiveness, Connecticut Charts-a-Course developed the state's early childhood Professional Registry. This web-enabled database is now mandatory for all staff who work in publicly funded programs (DSS, SDE and Head Start), and captures information about staff qualifications, as well as the programs in which they work. In 2007, the Registry received additional support from the Early Childhood Education Cabinet to expand the Registry and create reporting tools for state agencies that fund early childhood programs. There are currently 7,000 early childhood staff enrolled. The Registry can be used by program administrators to assist staff in the development of educational plans to meet staff credentialing requirements.

In July 2008, The Public Consulting Group, under contract with the former Early Childhood Investment Initiative, reviewed data collection efforts from seven state agencies to identify opportunities for improved data development, management and use. Recommendations were made to develop a data sharing agreement among agencies, improved efficiency of collections, storage, management and sharing data.

In 2010, the newly formed Cabinet (State Advisory Council) chose “early childhood data” as one of its four priorities. A committee composed of 17 members from six state agencies and four private agencies came together to consider the need for unduplicated and longitudinal early childhood data across agencies. The data workgroup identified key needs for early childhood data at both the state and local level:

- Inform public policy
- Allocate funds
- Improve programs
- Provide data to researchers
- Identify children at risk
- Coordinate services across agencies
- Enhance parents ability to make informed choices
- Support collaboration within and across systems and programs
- Improve public access
- Improve state and federal accountability

Figure 1 – Timeline of data efforts in Early Care and Education in Connecticut

2002	SDE implements Public School Information System (PSIS)
2004	Child Health and Development Institute of CT launched Early Childhood DataCONN- ections Funded by Health and Human Services, The Children’s Fund of CT and CT Dept. of Social Services.
2005	Putting Administrative Data to Work Tool Kit issued by DataCONN- ections.
2006	Development Plan for Early Care and Education Data research Systems issued by DataCONN- ections. Charts-a-Course developed and began the state’s early childhood Professional Registry.
2007	SDE expands PSIS to include all preschool students who were in nonpublic school programs receiving state and/or federal funds (PKIS). Charts-a-Course begins to enroll early childhood workforce.
2008	CT Early Childhood Investment Initiative contracts to review early childhood data collections by key state agencies.
2009	Office of Early Childhood Planning Coordination and Outreach created by the CT legislature. Responsi- bilities include coordinating the enhancement and implementation of an Early Childhood Information System.
2009	Governor Rell’s deficit mitigation plan eliminates funding for the Early Childhood Cabinet and all Cabinet-related activities.
2010	Governor Rell designates the Early Childhood Education Cabinet as the State Advisory Council detailed in the Head Start Act of 2007.

Goal: Work Force/Professional Development

Develop a highly qualified and effective workforce for all children birth to age 5 in all settings. (V & VI)

Strategies:

- Develop a scholarship system available to staff in all settings from multiple public and private funders.
- Propose revisions to the Department of Public Health (DPH) licensing requirements regarding the qualifications of newly hired teachers who work in programs licensed by DPH.
- Improve access to higher education for a greater number of early childhood staff by increasing the capacity of higher education to deliver bachelor and associate degrees in early childhood education and child development.

Background:

Early childhood education demands highly qualified and well-prepared staff who understands the unique characteristics of young children. This understanding, combined with specialized knowledge and teaching pedagogy is essential to positively influence the growth and development of all children and support their achievement.

Significant efforts have been made to strengthen Connecticut's early childhood workforce. In the fall of 2007, a workforce subcommittee was convened by the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council whose charge was to develop a plan to raise the educational qualifications of early childhood teachers to meet requirements of Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-16p (b) which requires all teachers in preschool programs receiving public funds to have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child development or a related field, or holding state teacher certification in early childhood or special education by 2015. This workforce was co-chaired

by the Commissioner of the Department of Higher Education and the Director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness. The Office of Workforce Competitiveness is focused on preparing Connecticut's workforce for the rapidly changing and competitive economy of the 21st century. The subcommittee membership included 43 representatives from state agencies, higher education, business, job training from programs, philanthropic and advocacy organizations.

In 2009, the Connecticut Department of Higher Education (DHE) surveyed early childhood education graduates and found that about 70 percent of these students were already working in early childhood community-based programs prior to graduation. The survey found that students who obtained bachelor's degrees and state teacher certification often leave these community-based programs for public schools teaching positions. The results indicated that out of 500 early childhood graduates each year, only 143 new individuals are added to the early childhood workforce. Of these graduates, 89 became employed in community programs and 54 became teachers in public schools. The implications of these findings are that for many early childhood students, further education is a pathway from current teaching positions in community programs to positions in public schools. **(VI)**

The workforce subcommittee analyzed data from Connecticut's Professional Registry administered by Connecticut Charts-a-Course (CCAC). This registry offers program administrators a way of tracking the qualifications of their staff and can be used to create staff development plans to assist in meeting staff credentialing requirements. The data from the Registry showed the qualifications of the current workforce. Based on this data, it was determined that the goal of bachelor's degree for all teachers was not feasible. This data indicated that 378 or 31% of the teachers in publicly funded programs have (at a minimum) a bachelor's degree and 12 credits in early childhood education. The majority (69%) of the current teachers (857 individuals) are well below this degree requirement. (See Table 4 below for a summary of this data.)

Based on this data, the subcommittee developed a multi-year plan to increase both the size and qualifications of the workforce in publicly funded school- and center-based early childhood education programs. This plan targets public preschools, Head Start, School Readiness pro-

grams, and Department of Social Service child care centers. In addition, recommendations were made to increase the minimum requirements for the staff in publicly-funded early childhood education programs. This plan is designed to be aligned with the National Association for the Education for Young Child (NAEYC) State Policy Blueprint, NAEYC Public Report. (LeMoine, 2008).

**Table 4 – Registry Data for Staff Qualifications (2007-08)
(Includes DSS, School Readiness, and some Head Start programs)**

Percent of staff with	Teachers		Assistant Teachers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
BA or > + 12 ECE credits	378	31%	79	6%
AS + 12 ECE credits	307	25%	89	7%
CDA + 12 ECE credits	212	17%	149	12%
Less than a CDA + 12	338	27%	935	75%
Totals	1,235	100%	1,252	100%

An additional outcome of this work is the development of a Connecticut Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC). This is a competency-based credential that would be awarded to students who graduate from approved associate and baccalaureate degree early childhood programs of study. The ECTC will allow for more flexible and efficient approach to education for this financially challenged workforce, while also ensuring that those individuals who work with young children have both the knowledge and competencies to be effective. The ECTC is also part of an alternative legislative proposal, which calls for 50 percent of the teachers to have a bachelor's degree and the remaining to have an associate's degree by 2015.

Other recommendations to support the attainment of the credential include:

- Associate Degree Programs: a process to ensure that all associate degree programs accredited by NAEYC by July 2014.
- Worksite practicum: A process for those in the workforce earning bachelor's and associate degrees to do their Student Teaching Practicum at their work sites.
- Seamless articulation: An articulation plan to ensure that students completing an approved associate degree can continue at a four-year institution without losing credit or

- repeating work.
- Alternative pathways: An Expedited Pathway to ensure that teachers currently in the workforce with associate or bachelor's degrees in the appropriate discipline and three-years of experience will be awarded the Early Childhood Teacher Credential.

Goal: Family Involvement/Home Visitation (III)

Foster a partnership among families and communities in the early years

Strategies:

- Create a continuum of home visitation services.
- Provide a comprehensive system of parent education.
- Educate professionals in the importance of parents as partners.
- Promote parent leadership.
- Ensure all partnerships occur in multiple social and cultural contexts

Background:

Home visitation is an effective, research-based and cost-efficient way to bridge the gap between vulnerable families and the resources that will ensure that children grow up healthy and ready to learn. 75 percent of children who died from abuse or neglect in 2007 were younger than four years old.

Various models of evidence-based home visiting programs now exist. Some of these programs include Nurturing Family Network, Parents as Teachers, Child First and Nurturing Families. These programs have improved health outcomes for children, improved educational success, increased school readiness, and reduced incidence of child maltreatment.

All families want their children to succeed and rely on their schools, communities and civic leaders to provide safe, healthy, quality environments for their children. In turn, schools and the community rely on families for involvement and support, as well as active participation. When parents expect quality experiences for their children, programs and services for children improve, and schools and communities thrive.

Connecticut leads many states in its strong commitment to parents as partners in learning.

Proven models include the People Empowering People, The Parent Leadership Training Institute and Parents Supporting Educational Excellence. These model leadership initiatives teach parents how to lead for the next generation in program and policy.

A Parent Trust was established by the state legislature to create a competitive grant program in family civics so parents could learn to lead for their young throughout the state. This Trust has been matched in funds by philanthropy including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund.

Connecticut's model home visitation programs include Birth to Three/IDEA Part C, Child First, Nurturing Families, Parents as Teachers and Healthy Families. These programs are all research-based and evaluated for effectiveness. These home visiting programs are based on the concept of "family centered practice." This practice is designed to engage families as partners. Using a home visitation model, parents gain the knowledge to be caring and successful parents in strong families. Skilled home visitors work with parents – often beginning in pregnancy – to enhance their strengths, provide education, and create community connections. The home visitor and the family work together to create an action plan that meets the needs and priorities of the family, drawing on the family's strengths, community resources and the skills of the home visitor.

Areas of focus generally include health behaviors during pregnancy, enhancing qualities of family care giving of infants and toddlers, and linking families with needed health and human services. For many families, receiving information and assistance regarding parenting and child development can help anchor family development.

Home visitation provides safety and information to eager and often vulnerable families. For example, the Hartford Young Parent Program provides home visitation for teen parents. The program assists teen parents in adjusting to parenthood while completing the requirements for their high school diploma. Among teen parents in the program:

- 88 percent of teens chose to initiate breast feeding for their babies;
- 92 percent of the babies born weighed 2500 grams or more at birth;
- None of the teen parents smoked during the pregnancy or after delivering their babies.

New federal interest in home visitation will be incorporated into the work of the Cabinet. Connecticut is applying for federal Maternal, Infant and Childhood Home Visitation Program dollars to create a comprehensive system of home visitation for our families that addresses the diverse and salient needs of new parents.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Each State Advisory Council is required to conduct a periodic needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry, including an assessment of the availability of high-quality prekindergarten services for low income children in the State.

Currently, Connecticut does not have a comprehensive statewide needs assessment for early childhood. However, there are numerous reports and initiatives that assess many aspects of Connecticut's early childhood landscape. These include::

Annual National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) State of Preschool Yearbook: In the recently released State of Preschool 2009, Connecticut met six out of the 10 quality standards including early learning standards, teacher specialized training, minimum class size, staff/child ratio, screening/referral and support services, and monitoring. Connecticut's School Readiness program has one of the highest cost-per-child of all the 38 states with state-funded preschool programs in the country (Connecticut is ranked #3 in state funds per child enrolled in prekindergarten, and ranked #2 in all reported funding per child enrolled in prekindergarten).

Condition of Education in Connecticut: The Condition of Education in Connecticut is the State Department of Education's yearly status report on public education in the state. This report serves as an annual touchstone for the state's residents on the progress and setbacks experienced by Connecticut's public school students and focuses on achievement from a different perspective. Special attention is placed on the three priorities identified by the State Board of Education 5-Year Comprehensive Plan, which includes making high-quality preschool education available for all students.

Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement: This voluntary and privately funded commission, composed primarily of business leaders and other professionals, was established by Governor Rell through Executive Order. This group will research why Connecticut has one

of the largest achievement gaps between low-income students and their more affluent peers, and make recommendations to the Governor, lawmakers, relevant state and local institutions and the public on how to close the gap.

Early Childhood Workforce Subcommittee of the Research and Policy Council: This subcommittee collected and analyzed data on the qualifications of the current workforce and capacity of the higher education system and determined that the goal of bachelor's degrees for all teachers by 2015 was not feasible. This issue has been considered twice but has yet to be written into legislation. An alternative proposal has been developed and will be under consideration in an upcoming legislative session.

Ensuring Health and Safety Connecticut's Early Care and Education Program Report: This analysis describes the results of 1,422 routine, unannounced, random inspections conducted by the Department of Public Health licensing specialists and represents the first comprehensive analysis of health and safety compliance ever undertaken in Connecticut.

Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) Needs Assessment: The Head Start Act of 2007 requires the Head Start State Collaboration Office to conduct a needs assessment of Head Start grantees in their state (including Early Head Start grantees) in the areas of coordination, collaboration and alignment of services and alignment of curricula and assessments used in Head Start programs. The results of the needs assessment is used to develop a strategic plan outlining how Head Start grantees will be assisted to meet the requirements of the Head Start Act. The HSSCO must also annually update the needs assessment and strategic plan and make the results available to the general public.

Head Start State Collaboration Office – Report of Progress: In January 2010, the Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office issued a progress report on goals, objectives, activities, timelines, and resources. Priorities areas included in this report are: healthcare, welfare/child welfare, child care, education partnerships, community services, family literacy, services children with disabilities and homeless, professional development and Head Start involvement in state and local planning and policy making. This summary of needs assessment will inform the

ongoing work of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet and is congruent with its four goals.

Maternal, Infant, and Childhood Home Visitation Federal Grant Application: As part of this federal grant application, a comprehensive needs assessment is being completed across state agencies and programs. Upon completion, the information gathered from this needs assessment will be used to inform the work regarding home visitation for infants and toddlers.

Preschool Program Quality Improvement Initiative (ECERS): Charter Oak State College and the Connecticut State Department of Education, on behalf of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, entered into agreement on November 2007 to administer and coordinate the ECERS-R Project – an interim quality process that will establish a common baseline of quality in Connecticut and support the approval and dissemination of quality improvement grants for early childhood classrooms. The activities of the ECERS-R Project include coordination of the ECERS-R Assessments, review of Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) and Quality Enhancement Applications (QEA), dissemination of funds, and collection of data related to the Assessments. The project has two paid staff – a full-time coordinator and a half-time administrative assistant. In addition, the project is overseen by the collaborative management team (CMT) comprised by the project coordinator, the Provost from Charter Oak, a representative from SDE, and a representative from the Early Childhood Education Cabinet.

Results-based Accountability (RBA): In 2006, the Connecticut General Assembly Appropriations Committee implemented RBA as a framework for making policy and fiscal decisions based on desired outcomes for the children and families of Connecticut being served by state funds. Two years later, the RBA methodology was expanded to include nine state agencies, covering 26 programs, birth through age 9. Report cards on child and adult nutrition programs, Early Reading Success (ERS), Adult Education, Family Resource Centers, School Readiness, Special Education, Birth to Three, Care4Kids, CT Charts-a-Course, Department of Social Services child care centers, the Child Care Facilities Loan Fund, Nurturing Families and Head Start provide information on a range of programs and services and inform the work of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet.

Ready by 5 & Fine by 9: This publication prepared by the Governor's Early Childhood Research & Policy Council in February 2007, identified the need for additional state-funded, School Readiness program spaces for three- and four-year olds within the state of Connecticut. This information has been updated annually in the School Readiness Unmet Need and Expansion Report.

School Readiness Unmet Need and Expansion Report: This annual report to the Connecticut General Assembly provides an estimate of the number of three- and four-year-old children who are not being served in a preschool program in priority districts; the percentage of children whose parents would not seek preschool programs; the number who will need preschool programs; and the estimate of operating and capital costs that will be required to serve such children. The intent of this report is to identify packets of unmet need in an attempt to close the state's achievement gap.

State Board of Education's 5-Year Comprehensive Plan 2006-2011: Connecticut General Statutes requires the Connecticut State Board of Education to develop a comprehensive plan every five years. Priority I of the current plan is to "provide high-quality preschool education for all students." This priority was selected due to the large disparity of access and quality to preschool which contributes significantly to the uneven preparation of young children and the resulting achievement gap.

The SAC will incorporate the data from these various sources into a comprehensive needs assessment during 2011 and 2012. Additional areas of data will be identified that will achieve the goals of the four priority areas that have been selected by the SAC.



We need your input... on early care and education for infants, toddlers and preschool children!

The State of Connecticut is seeking a three-year grant from the federal government to make our programs and policies for infants, toddlers, and preschool children of the highest quality. For this funding, we will submit a strategic report to the federal government, describing our goals and objectives for early childhood over the next three years.

The state's Early Childhood Education Cabinet will hold two public hearings to obtain feedback on the draft version of the strategic report, available for review at www.ctearlychildhood.org.

The input of families, providers, and community leaders is vital to ensure Connecticut meets the needs of our youngest children and families. Parents, providers, educators and policymakers, please make your voice heard at:

**6-8 p.m.
Monday,
June 14**

**Norwalk Community College
188 Richards Avenue, Norwalk (East Campus, The Forum)**

**10 a.m.-Noon
Wednesday,
June 16**

**Legislative Office Building, Room 2-D
300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford**

For more information, call 860.713-6771.