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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 Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION North Carolina Governor's Office	DATE SUBMITTED July 21, 2010



U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

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(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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organizational Name

# **North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council Application**

**Submitted on behalf of Governor Bev Perdue**

**July 21, 2010**

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## **Project Summary (Abstract)**

The North Carolina Governor’s Office is proud to submit this application requesting \$3,053,061 to support the creation and initial efforts of the North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The Governor’s **vision** is that all of North Carolina’s young children are healthy and learning to their full potential—developing their readiness for success in school, citizenship, and life. The Governor has called upon the North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council (NC ECAC) to lead our state to create and sustain a shared vision for young children and a comprehensive, integrated system of high quality early care and education, family strengthening, and health services that support ready children, families, and communities. The NC ECAC has established **5 major goals** for its initial efforts.

1. **Develop an integrated, comprehensive 3-year strategic plan** for high-quality health, family strengthening, and early care and education services that support ready children, families, and communities.
2. **Strengthen awareness and commitment** among families, business, and policymakers to ensure that all young children in North Carolina are healthy, learning, and thriving.
3. **Strengthen the quality of programs** and expand opportunities for young children and their families to participate in high-quality programs.
4. **Strengthen coordination and collaboration** across service sectors to promote high-quality, efficient services for young children and their families.
5. **Support the implementation of an integrated data system** that meets the individual and collective needs and capacities of state-funded programs serving young children birth to age five.

## **North Carolina's ECAC Application**

*"When we invest wisely in children and families, the next generation will pay that back through a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship."* National Scientific Council on the Developing Child<sup>1</sup>

*"Recent scientific advances confirm that early life experiences are incorporated into our bodies and build a foundation not only for later achievement in school and eventual economic productivity, but also for lifelong physical and mental health,"* Jack P. Shonkoff, Founding Director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University<sup>2</sup>

The North Carolina Governor's Office is proud to submit this application for assistance in supporting the creation and initial efforts of the North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC; see Appendix A for the Governor's letter of support). Governor Bev Perdue is creating North Carolina's ECAC as an investment in our future. The Governor's vision is that all of North Carolina's young children are healthy and learning to their full potential—developing their readiness for success in school, citizenship, and life. In fact, Governor Perdue has stated that early childhood is the "Ready" of her *Career and College—Ready, Set, Go!* education agenda. The Governor has called upon the North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council (NC ECAC) to lead our state to create and sustain a shared vision for young children and a comprehensive, integrated system of high quality early care and education, family strengthening, and health services that support ready children, families, and communities. As evident in this application, North Carolina has long been a national leader in its commitment to young children and its innovative efforts to build a system of services that best meets the needs of young children. The federal funding available through the ECAC provides an opportunity to expand our success and accomplish even more for our state's young children.

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<sup>1</sup> National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2007). *The science of early childhood development: Closing the gap between what we know and what we do*. <http://www.developingchild.net>

<sup>2</sup> Shonkoff, JP, Boyce, WT, McEwen, BS. (2009). Neuroscience, molecular biology, and the childhood roots of health disparities: Building a new framework for health promotion and disease prevention. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 301, pp. 2252-2259. doi: 10.1001/jama.2009.754

This application includes the five components specified in the RFP: statewide strategic report (Appendix B), a description of how NC will use the ECAC funds effectively (see the Approach section of the proposal), a description of the early learning standards (see the North Carolina Early Learning Standards under the Objectives and Need for Assistance section of the proposal), the name of the office and individual designated to carry out the ECAC work (see the Organizational Profile section), and plans for sustaining the efforts beyond the period of federal funding (see the Sustainability section of the application).

## **North Carolina as a National Leader**

North Carolina has long been a national leader in its commitment to young children and its innovative efforts to build a system of services that best meets the needs of young children. Among these exemplary efforts are:

- *Smart Start*. Created in 1993, Smart Start is a pioneering public-private partnership designed to ensure that every child reaches his or her potential and is prepared for success in a global community. Every state in the nation has requested assistance and resources from the Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center, created in 2001. Smart Start has become a national model for how to support local community-based partnerships to work together to best meet the needs of young children and their families.
- *Star Rated License*. North Carolina was the first state to develop a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for child care, family child care, and school age programs—and is still one of only two states that have integrated a QRIS into its state child care licensing system.
- *The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project*. Twenty years ago, Child Care Services Association launched in NC the Teacher Education And Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Project to address the issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover within the early childhood workforce. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project gives scholarships to child care staff to complete coursework in early childhood education and to increase their compensation. The program is now implemented in 21 states.

- *More at Four.* In 2001, North Carolina established More at Four, a state-funded pre-kindergarten program designed to serve four-year-old children at risk of later school difficulties. More at Four is ranked as one of the top 10 pre-k programs in the country and for several years has been one of only two state programs that have met all of the quality standards benchmarks.<sup>3</sup>
- *ABCD Initiative.* Through the Assuring Better Child Development (ABCD) initiative, North Carolina is a national leader in the use of appropriate general developmental and behavioral screenings and surveillance in primary care settings. Most well-child visits for young children (under age 5) conducted by primary care practices include use of a formal validated developmental screening tool.

The federal funding from Administration for Children and Families to the ECAC provides an opportunity to build on North Carolina's success to enable us to better serve young children and their families. North Carolina's investments in young children have made a tremendous impact—and yet there is still work to be done. North Carolina must continue to invest in its youngest citizens by bringing together leaders across service sectors to develop a strong, comprehensive, integrated system of state services for young children and their families. The Early Childhood Advisory Council will serve an important leadership role in supporting the next steps in North Carolina's ongoing system-building efforts.

## **Objectives and Need for Assistance**

Much of North Carolina's system-building efforts have focused on developing strong programs and creating linkages between them. We want to continue our efforts to build a

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<sup>3</sup> Barnett, W. S., Epstein, D. J., Friedman, A. H., Sansanelli, R. A., & Husted, J. T. (2009). *The state of preschool 2009: State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

system that fully integrates the subsystems of health, family strengthening, and early care and education into a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

This section of the proposal first describes data regarding the needs of North Carolina's young children and their families. The rest of the section describes various aspects of the current NC early childhood system: quality and availability of early childhood education, early learning standards, professional development, data systems, family strengthening, health, and governance.

### **The Needs of North Carolina's Young Children and Their Families**

This needs assessment is organized into three sections. The first provides a snapshot of the demographics of the birth to five-year-old population in North Carolina. The second focuses on child and family needs that represent obstacles to good developmental outcomes, including school readiness, for children. The third summarizes findings from a recent series of public forums conducted by the North Carolina Partnership for Children about the needs of young children and their families in North Carolina.

North Carolina is the tenth most populous state in the nation with an estimated population of 8,869,861.<sup>4</sup> The American Community Survey's 3-year estimates for 2005-2007 suggest that approximately 618,626 (7.0%) of all children in North Carolina are under the age of 5. North Carolina has the 4<sup>th</sup> largest active duty military population in the U.S., with seven military bases across the state.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> North Carolina State Data Center and Office of State Budget Management (May, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> NC Department of Commerce. (2008). North Carolina's military footprint: Current economic impacts and projections for 2013. Retrieved from [www.nccommerce.com](http://www.nccommerce.com)

A recent analysis of expected population trends in North Carolina suggests that between April 2000 and April 2030, North Carolina's general population is expected to grow by 4.419 million people (54.9%). The birth-to-5 population, like the population in general, is growing rapidly. The potential kindergarten population (5 year olds) will increase by almost 53,000 (48.5%) between 2000 and 2030.

In addition to significant growth in general, North Carolina is becoming a more diverse community. A recent analysis of young child demographics in North Carolina highlights this shift in the state's youngest citizens. The report explains that while the number of young White children in the state has grown by less than 4% in the last five years, the number of young Black children has increased by more than 6%, and the number of Asian and Pacific Islander children has increased by 27%. The number of Latino children has grown substantially in recent years. In fact, while the non-Hispanic/Latino child population has increased by only 23 percent from 1990-2008, the estimated population of Hispanic/Latino children has increased over 1000% during this same time period. This increase may be related to an increase in babies born to Latina mothers; which grew from less than 2% of all births in 1990 (1.7%) to nearly 17% of all resident births in 2008 (16.5%), a ten-fold increase.<sup>6</sup> The growth in the Latino population is expected to continue over the next decade, but it is difficult to estimate growth reliably since projections generally exclude undocumented immigrants. The Census, for example, estimates that North Carolina's Latino population will increase from 121,000 in 2000 to 169,000 by 2015, but these figures do not include undocumented immigrants.

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<sup>6</sup> North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics (2008). Bridged Population files and live birth records. Retrieved from <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS>

## Key Challenges for Young Children and Their Families

As part of North Carolina's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant, NC early childhood leaders have developed a set of Shared Indicators for School Readiness. While the Shared Indicators do not encompass all challenges that families face, they were selected because they are relatively comprehensive and population-level data are available to help us track changes in the indicators over time. Based on these indicators, some of the most pressing challenges for young children and their families in North Carolina include:

**Poverty and family economic security:** Approximately 24% of young children in North Carolina live below the federal poverty line, and 46% are considered low income or living within 200% of federal poverty.<sup>7</sup> These percentages are expected to increase in the current economic environment. North Carolina's unemployment rate for May 2010 was 10.3%, the highest it has been in 25 years. The state faces a nearly \$1 billion budget shortfall, on top of last year's shortfall of \$2 billion. In these difficult times, it is critical for policies to promote family economic security, e.g., child care subsidies for low income working families, a state Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, and an Earned Income Tax Credit at 5% or higher.

**High school graduation rate:** In 2008, 63% of all students—and only 50% of Hispanic and 45% of African American students—graduated from high school with a regular diploma in four years.<sup>8</sup> Knowing that most jobs require a postsecondary degree and that a mother's education level is critical to the optimal development of her children, we must continue to raise high school graduation rates in North Carolina.

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<sup>7</sup> National Center for Children in Poverty (2008). *Demographics of young, poor children and demographics of young, low-income children*. North Carolina. [http://nccp.org/profiles/index\\_NC.html](http://nccp.org/profiles/index_NC.html)

<sup>8</sup> Alliance for Excellent Education (2009). *Understanding high school graduation rates in North Carolina*. <http://www.all4ed.org>

**Healthy birth weight:** In 2007, 9.2% of the babies born in NC weighed less than 2500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces), and there were significant differences by race. African American babies were almost twice as likely to be low weight as white babies (14.6% vs. 7.5%).<sup>9</sup> The contributing factors include differences in preconception health and health care as well as chronic stress. The Women's Health Branch of the NC Division of Public Health works closely with local health departments to ensure low income women have access to early and continuous prenatal care. Special outreach efforts, through Federal healthy start funding, occur in fifteen NC counties to provide additional education and encourage women to enter care early. Additional outreach efforts coordinated through new early childhood partners may be possible using grant resources.

**Health Insurance:** As of 2008, approximately 11% of children under age 5 in North Carolina did not have health insurance, and the current economic environment threatens to make that worse. Recent federal and state actions to expand coverage for children and pregnant women are designed to protect coverage that exists and expand coverage where possible. Within NC, Governor Perdue strongly endorsed the state's Children's Health Insurance Reauthorization (CHIPRA) grant proposal for the "Healthy and Ready to Learn Initiative." The proposal was approved, and partners are working to expand outreach and enrollment efforts to insure that all eligible and uninsured children entering public kindergarten in NC are protected with health insurance coverage. In Year 1, efforts will be targeted to areas where there are high rates of eligible but uninsured children, and approximately 3,075 children will be served. When

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<sup>9</sup> N.C. DHHS, State Center for Health Statistics. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/births/bd.cfm>

the project expands in Year 2, the number of children enrolled in a health insurance program will increase significantly (the exact number will depend on funding).

The federal Health Care Reform legislation is also designed to protect or expand health insurance for young children. It implements a new national Medicaid threshold of 133% of the federal poverty level for children; continues the CHIP program through fiscal year 2019; mandates that parents of children not eligible for Medicaid or CHIP purchase insurance for their families; requires plans (public and private) to offer coverage of evidence-informed preventive care and screenings; and prevents insurers that cover children from denying coverage based on a pre-existing condition. (The number of children in NC to be served under these reforms is unknown at this time.)

**Medicaid-enrolled children receiving preventive care:** Nearly 25% of young children enrolled in Medicaid did not receive a preventive health visit (which includes a developmental screening) in the past 12 months. In response, Title V and Medicaid increased outreach and education efforts. The shared indicators for school readiness have been a helpful tool to educate providers of wrap-around service about the need to increase efforts in this arena, a plan for increasing child care health consultants has been developed, and child care centers are increasing efforts to educate parents about the benefits of preventive services. There is similar work to be done to increase the percent of children enrolled in Medicaid who receive covered preventive dental services in primary care medical settings during the first 3 years of life.

**Teen birth rate and repeat teen births:** North Carolina ranks 14<sup>th</sup> in the nation for teen birth rate (35.9 per 1000 births in 2004), and nearly 30% of teen births are repeat teen births. Programs in the Women's Health Branch of Division of Public Health have been providing

community grants designed to prevent teen births for a number of years. This fiscal year, North Carolina added several Nurse-Family Partnership sites to serve low-income, first-time parents, including teens. Longitudinal studies of NFP trials suggest that the program will reduce subsequent pregnancies and increase intervals between births. In addition to these efforts, the NC Institute of Medicine recently convened an Adolescent Task Force, and their recommendations will include several strategies designed to reduce teen pregnancies.

**Medical home:** More than 30% of children ages birth to 5 in North Carolina do not have a medical home.<sup>10</sup> A number of strategies are underway to decrease that percentage. Some examples include: (1) a grant to the North Carolina Pediatric Society to develop a plan to increase the number of children in foster care who have a medical home; (2) shifting the claims payment system for children served through SCHIP to Medicaid to allow families to select a primary provider as their medical home; and (3) a medical home campaign lead by the Children and Youth Branch. These efforts have had some impressive results, but a significant shift in the percentage of children with a medical home in North Carolina will also require changes in third party reimbursement for the key components of a medical home.

**Two year olds with required immunizations:** North Carolina's Immunization Law requires up-to-date immunizations at school entry. Consequently, the immunization rate for children entering kindergarten is impressive (nearly 98%). Rates are lower for two year olds; the percent of children with required immunizations hovers around 80%. Additional strategies focusing on children who are not in regulated child care (where up to date immunizations are already required) are needed.

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<sup>10</sup> Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. (2007). *National Survey of Children's Health*. Retrieved from [www.nschdata.org](http://www.nschdata.org)

**Adequate prenatal care:** In 2007, 4 out of 5 pregnant women (80.9%) sought prenatal care in the first trimester.<sup>11</sup> This percentage has actually dropped slightly since 1998 (84.1%). The differences between the races show that 83% of white women access early prenatal care, while for African Americans, the rate is 73.8% and for Hispanics, the rate drops to 66.1%. African Americans reported more barriers to prenatal care than whites in the 2006 PRAMS survey (29.0 to 18.4).<sup>12</sup> No money or insurance was the most often reported barrier to access to prenatal care from the 2006 PRAMS survey. New federal health care reform may help address the challenge of ensuring that all pregnant women receive appropriate care.

**Births to mothers with at least a high school education:** Nearly 25% of births in North Carolina are to a mother with less than a high school education.<sup>13</sup> Current dropout prevention strategies focus on children in middle and high school. Based on the science of child development, it makes sense to develop dropout prevention strategies that target infants and young children. These strategies will rely on collaboration among the public schools, early childhood community, and families.

**Maltreatment:** In 2007, nearly 50,000 children B-5 were subject to investigation/assessment by the NC Division of Social Services. Fortunately, the state's differential response system is increasing the number of families receiving a strengths-based assessment and links to community-based services. North Carolina is also shifting funding to evidence-based family strengthening programs that produce better results for children and families through the

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<sup>11</sup> Risk Factors and Characteristics for North Carolina Resident Live Births. All Mothers. NC State Center for Health Statistics. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/births/matched/2005/all.html>

<sup>12</sup> 2006 North Carolina Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System Survey Results. Pre-Natal Care Barriers. Experienced Barriers to Pre-Natal Care. NC State Center for Health Statistics. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/prams.cfm>

<sup>13</sup> NC State Center for Health Statistics. Risk factors and characteristics for North Carolina resident live births: All mothers. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/births/matched/2005/all.html>

Alliance for Evidence-Based Family Strengthening Programs (the Alliance). The Alliance is a unique, collaborative effort of public and private funders in North Carolina to jointly fund and implement select evidence-based programs for children and families. The Alliance is currently collaboratively supporting the Nurse-Family Partnership and Incredible Years with the goal of bringing these programs statewide. Additional funding for evidence-based family strengthening programs that produce better results for families is critical to efforts to prevent maltreatment and/or prevent its reoccurrence.

**Body Mass Index:** Close to a third of children ages 2 to 4 seen in North Carolina Public Health-sponsored WIC and Child Health clinics and some school based health centers have an abnormally high body mass index. The percentage of children ages 2 to 4 who are overweight or at risk for becoming overweight has increased from 22% in 1995 to slightly less than 31% in 2006.<sup>14</sup> Recent efforts to combat obesity in young children include emphasizing nutrition and physical activity in child care health consultation and funding programs like the Nutritional and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care, an intervention designed to improve the nutrition and physical activity practices of child care providers. These strategies are critical but are limited to children in regulated child care settings. Efforts to reduce obesity will have to expand to include all children at risk in North Carolina.

**Kindergarten children with untreated tooth decay:** Nearly a quarter of children in North Carolina enter kindergarten with untreated tooth decay.<sup>15</sup> A persistent shortage of dentists willing to treat young children and inadequate insurance coverage for services

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<sup>14</sup> North Carolina Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System (NC-NPASS; 2008) Data on Childhood Overweight. Retrieved from [www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/Data/ChildAndYouthData.html](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/Data/ChildAndYouthData.html).

<sup>15</sup> Special data request of the Oral Health Section, Division of Public Health, and the Division of Medical Assistance, NC DHHS, August 2006.

contribute to the problem. The Director of the Head Start Collaboration Office identified dental care as the number one need for children enrolled in that program. The Oral Health Program in Division of Public Health provides fluoride and dental varnish services for young children, but the need remains high for increased dental care. About half of the health departments or community health centers in the state have developed dental clinics that serve children covered by Medicaid or who are uninsured, and the Commission for Children with Special Needs has embraced this problem as a new priority for their work. This is a long standing unmet need in the state and, although improvements have been realized, the solution is one that will be slow in coming for NC.

**Young children read to every day:** Only 54.6 % of children birth to five in NC are read to every day by a parent or other family member.<sup>16</sup> The North Carolina Partnership for Children recently increased funding for evidence- based literacy programs, e.g., Raising a Reader, designed to promote children’s pre-reading skills. In an effort to ensure that children from lower income families participate in Raising a Reader, Smart Start offered the program to child care centers in which a minimum of 25% of the families receive child care subsidies to offset the cost of care. While this is an important program, it must be expanded—and additional strategies implemented—in order to move this population-level indicator in the right direction.

### **Smart Investing Public Forums**

The North Carolina Partnership for Children recently completed a series of eight community forums and three regional summits to hear from NC citizens about the needs of young children and their families. More than 800 North Carolinians representing every county

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<sup>16</sup> National Survey of Children’s Health (2007). Retrieved from [www.nschdata.org](http://www.nschdata.org)

in the state invested two days reviewing data, working together, and making tough decisions, to answer the question, *What can we as individuals, communities, and policymakers do to ensure North Carolina's children grow into successful adults?* They came from diverse political parties, demographic backgrounds, and life experiences. They were parents and business leaders, health care providers and elected officials, early childhood professionals and faith leaders, K-12 educators and workforce development experts. Participants concluded that all children needed to have: basic needs met, such as food, shelter, and health; access to high quality early care and education; and involved and engaged parents and families who are supported through training and education opportunities. Participants identified specific strategies to address each priority.

*Priority 1: Basic needs met, such as food, shelter, health care and a safe environment.*

More than 68% of delegates indicated basic needs as one of their top four priorities. The recommended strategies focused on: making affordable housing for families a priority, ensuring access to food, increasing access to and awareness about resources, increasing public funding, and expanding early health care services.

*Priority 2: Access to high quality early care and education.* More than 78% of delegates selected access to high quality early care and education as one of their top four priorities—80% in the East, 90% in the Piedmont, and 60% in the Mountains. The recommended strategies focused on: raising standards for quality, ensuring access, investing in teachers, and educating the public.

*Priority 3: Involved and engaged parents and families who are supported through training and education opportunities.* Delegates in the East and West shared an interest in

family as a top priority. Half of those in the East and nearly 60% of those in the West selected this as one of their top four priorities. At the same time, more than 60% of delegates in the Piedmont said parents and parent education was a top priority. The recommended strategies focused on: supporting new parents and parents of young children, beginning in the schools, and increasing knowledge about how children develop.

Collectively, the statewide data and Smart Investing forums provide important information to guide the work of the ECAC. As described in the approach section of this proposal, the ECAC will focus much of the first year on reviewing existing data, research, and policies to develop a shared sense of the needs of young children and their families as well as a shared understanding of the state-funded services for young children and their families. They will then use this information, their collective expertise, and input from other stakeholders to develop a three-year statewide strategic plan.

### **Quality and Availability of Early Childhood Education in North Carolina**

As described earlier in the proposal, North Carolina has a long commitment and impressive history as a national leader in developing early childhood programs to improve outcomes for young children birth to five. In 2008-09, state and federal expenditures in early care and education programs were over \$1 billion, split about evenly between state and federal funds. Additionally, the North Carolina Partnership for Children raised \$31 million in private funds in 2008-09 to support the early childhood system. We have made significant investments in the state's early care and education system, and it shows in the high quality programs we provide for young children.

This section provides some basic information about the quality and availability of early childhood education programs in NC. As mentioned in the data systems portion of the proposal, we currently do not have a data system that allows us to provide unduplicated counts of the number of young children (B-5) receiving early care and education.

The NC Division of Child Development oversees all licensed child care programs and supports several initiatives to improve quality and expand the availability of early care and education to young children in NC. Currently, 53% of centers and 30% of family child care homes have a 4- or 5-star rating. Table 1 highlights information about children served in licensed early care and education programs statewide. Almost all (>90%) of the children served in licensed facilities are in child care centers.

**Table 1. Statewide Enrollment of Young Children in Licensed Facilities**

Licensed Child Care Facilities <sup>17</sup>	% of B-2 Year Olds Enrolled	% of 3-5 Year Olds Enrolled
Licensed child care centers		
Temporary/Provisional/GS110 Exempt	11%	11%
1-star rating	4%	4%
2-star rating	5%	4%
3-star rating	24%	16%
4-star rating	33%	30%
5-star rating	22%	36%
Licensed family child care homes		
Temporary/Provisional/GS110- Exempt	<1%	<1%
1-star rating	25%	21%
2-star rating	21%	21%
3-star rating	21%	22%

<sup>17</sup> May 2010 data for centers and homes provided by the NC Division of Child Development. Breakdown of children served by age provided by DCD.

4-star rating	20%	22%
5-star rating	13%	14%

Other data point to gaps in services for some children. For example, 90% of 5-star centers enroll preschoolers whereas only 44% enroll infants and toddlers.<sup>18</sup> Overall, 50% of three- to five-year olds children receiving child care subsidies are enrolled in a 4- or 5-star program—but only 43% of infants and toddlers receiving subsidies are enrolled in a 4- or 5-star program.<sup>19</sup> These data suggest that NC has to work even harder to support high quality early care and education programs for infants and toddlers.

In 2001, North Carolina established More at Four, a state-funded pre-kindergarten program designed to serve four-year-old children at risk of later school difficulties. In the 2008-09 school year, the program served 33,798 four year olds in a mixed delivery system of high-quality classrooms (52% of children were served in public schools; 48% in community-based centers). More at Four operates under the authority of the State Board of Education as part of the Office of Early Learning (OEL) in the NC Department of Public Instruction. The OEL administers and coordinates all of North Carolina’s state and federally-funded pre-kindergarten programs, including More at Four, Preschool Exceptional Children (IDEA, Part B, Section 619), Title I Preschool, and Even Start Family Literacy. The OEL also houses the NC Head Start State Collaboration Office, which has worked successfully to expand coordination of Head Start programs with state-funded pre-kindergarten. Finally, in February 2010, OEL was charged with promoting the alignment of standards, curriculum, instructional practices and assessment

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<sup>18</sup> Child Care Services Association (2008). *Who’s Caring for Our Babies Now? Executive Summary*. <http://www.childcareservices.org>

<sup>19</sup> Same as above.

across the pre-k-grade 3 continuum and to support the readiness of elementary schools to meet the diverse needs of children. OEL will be a key ECAC partner to ensure that the state's efforts to support young children 0 to 5 are sustained as children move into the public school system.

Finally, Head Start provides a comprehensive early childhood program for three- and four-year-olds at risk of school failure. Early Head Start supports the development of children birth to three through home-visiting and center-based services. In NC, there are currently 17,967 Head Start slots and additional 2,973 Early Head Start slots.

*NC's Challenges in Providing High Quality Early Care and Education:* As evident in this application, North Carolina has accomplished a tremendous amount in improving the quality and accessibility of early care and education programs. Program leaders have worked hard through coordination and collaboration to build a strong early childhood education system. We know the challenges we still face. We need sufficient funds to ensure that all young children who need child care have access to high-quality programs that will positively influence their development and learning. We need to adequately compensate the early childhood workforce for their important work and strive to create compensation parity with teachers in the public schools. We need to help families in NC afford high-quality care for their children. We need to create stronger linkages to the other service sectors of health and family strengthening. The ECAC can provide the needed state-level leadership to meet these challenges.

## **North Carolina Early Learning Standards**

In 2004, North Carolina created *Foundations: Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success*. *Foundations* provides "widely

held expectations” for what three-, four-, and five-year-olds in pre-k should have the opportunity to learn. It also provides strategies for families and early childhood teachers to support growth and development. The standards and strategies are organized into the five developmental domains that were delineated in North Carolina’s school readiness definition: approaches to learning, emotional and social development, health and physical development, language development and communication, and cognitive development. *Foundations* was endorsed by the State Board of Education, the Division of Child Development, and the Governor’s Office. Alignment with *Foundations* is an essential criterion for approval of pre-kindergarten curriculum by the State Board of Education. In 2010-11, the OEL will lead a process to revise and update *Foundations*, as part of the State Board of Education’s revisions and adoption of Common Core/Essential Standards for K-12, with the goal to align the early learning standards with the K-3 standards.

In 2008, the North Carolina Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines Task Force, sponsored by the NC Division of Child Development, produced the *Infant-Toddler Foundations: Guidelines for Development and Learning in North Carolina’s Infants and Toddlers (B-3)*. This document describes guidelines for the development and learning of all infants and toddlers, organized by the same five domains, and strategies for supporting development both at home and in child care classrooms.

Together, the two documents provide standards and strategies to support the development and learning of North Carolina’s young children birth through age five. Both documents are used to support professional development efforts (pre-service and in-service) for early childhood teachers.

## Professional Development

Professional development of the early childhood workforce is key to sustaining a high quality system of services for all young children and their families in North Carolina. Many of the federal and state early childhood programs in NC have developed networks for providing training and technical assistance to the programs and consumers they serve. Some of the major organizations and their professional development efforts are briefly described below.

- *NC Division of Child Development (DCD)* is responsible for providing regulatory monitoring, training and technical assistance to licensed child care programs in North Carolina. Through contracts with other agencies, DCD supports additional professional development initiatives such as the NC Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) System. CCR&R consultants at the regional level include 25 specialists on healthy social behaviors, 25 specialists on infant-toddler quality, 18 specialists on school-age care, and a network of professional development staff from CCR&R agencies situated across the state.
- *Head Start* has a federally mandated system of providing training and technical assistance to programs within each state and region. There are two networks of trainers—state-level and regional-level—each with the same goal to ensure program quality, improvement, and compliance with federal regulations. State-level consultants are specialists in infant-toddlers, health, family involvement, education, and disabilities. Regional consultants assist programs with support around program compliance, monitoring, and training in content areas.

- The *Office of Early Learning*, Department of Public Instruction, has eight regional pre-kindergarten consultants and three state level consultants to support program quality and continuity across all the of NC's state and federally funded pre-kindergarten programs (e.g., Exceptional Children's Preschool for children ages 3 through 5 with special needs, Title 1, More at Four, Head Start and Even Start).
- The *Early Intervention Branch*, (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA), Division of Public Health serves infants and toddlers from birth to age three with special needs. The state office, including regional consultants and local Children's Developmental Services Agencies staff, works with other inter-agency partners to direct and deliver professional development initiatives, particularly those associated with including infants and toddlers with disabilities in programs and services to meet their needs and those of their families.
- As an outgrowth of earlier DCD-sponsored efforts, the *NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development* was created in 1993 (and incorporated as a separate not-for-profit in 2009) to foster the development of a comprehensive professional development system that provides supportive, accessible, and individually appropriate education linked to compensation to ensure high quality care, education and services for young children and families (NC CDP, 2010).

**Degree Programs through Community Colleges and Universities.** The 58 community colleges, 17 public universities, and 36 private, non-profit universities in North Carolina provide degree programs for various types of jobs in early childhood. A lack of widespread articulation agreements between community colleges and 4-year universities, limited availability of online

courses, and other barriers make it difficult for early childhood professionals across the state to continue their education toward a Bachelor's degree. The NC Birth-Kindergarten Higher Education Consortium has a long history of collaborative efforts for integrated, comprehensive standards for those professionals who will work with all young children birth to age 5, including those with and without disabilities, in a variety of settings. The Consortium includes public and private universities as well as representatives from community colleges and state programs serving young children.

**Licensure and Certification.** As with general professional development efforts, multiple NC organizations offer licensure and certification for the early childhood workforce.

- The NC Department of Public Instruction has a Bachelor's level *Birth-Kindergarten License* that combines early childhood education and early childhood special education. Fewer early childhood teachers in nonpublic school settings have the B-K license compared to their peers who teach pre-kindergarten in public schools. In 2007, the Teacher Licensure Unit was established as part of the NC Office of Early Learning within the Department of Public Instruction to support More at Four teachers in nonpublic school settings meet the state pre-k program standard of a Birth-Kindergarten License. These teachers are supported with mentoring and evaluation services provided by the OEL, thus ensuring access to the same support for licensure as their peers who work in public schools. Through this unique teacher licensure function, the OEL is expanding the pool of B-K licensed teachers.
- The *NC Early Intervention Infant-Toddler Personnel Certification* is provided by the Early Intervention Branch, Women's and Children's Health Section, Division of Public Health and is required for specified service providers under the Part C of IDEA program, including the

Early Intervention Branch's Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) personnel and public and private providers of special instruction services.

- Recently, an *Early Educator Certification* has been created for teachers, administrators, family child care providers, and others working in early care and education programs. The NC Institute for Child Development Professionals oversees the Early Education Certification.
- Finally, the NC Boards of Examiners for Speech and Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Clinical Social Workers, and Psychologists offer licensure for professionals who work with young children and their families.

**Other Statewide Professional Development Efforts.** Twenty years ago, Child Care Services Association launched the Teacher Education And Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Project to address the issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover within the early childhood workforce. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project gives scholarships to child care staff to complete course work in early childhood education and to increase their compensation.

The Child Care WAGES® Project, also created by Child Care Services Association, provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers, directors and family child care providers working with children between the ages of birth-5. The project is designed to provide young children more stable relationships with better educated teachers by rewarding teacher education and continuity of care. The Child Care WAGES® Project is offered throughout North Carolina as a funding collaboration between local Smart Start Partnerships and the Division of Child Development.

**Support for Implementing Evidence-Based Programs.** North Carolina provides some professional development opportunities focused specifically on supporting technical assistance consultants and direct service providers implement evidence-based practices (e.g., Incredible Years, Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning). The need for this type of professional development cuts across the early care and education, family strengthening, and health service sectors. For instance, issues about how to implement with fidelity and how to scale-up a promising practice statewide are universal. Right now, the support for implementing evidence-based programs in NC is generally specific to the program.

**In summary,** North Carolina has many exemplary professional development initiatives, some of which are cross-agency collaborations. Many years of collaborative efforts have resulted in increased professional development available to a range of individuals who provide services to very young children. The long-term goal for North Carolina is to develop a strong, comprehensive early childhood professional development system. In the short-term, it is important to strengthen the professional development linkages across service sectors, develop mechanisms for regular communication about current initiatives and/or needs in professional development, and seek opportunities to jointly support the infrastructure needed to implement evidence-based practices.

With support from a federal grant through the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, a group of NC individuals across various sectors have begun talking about how best to move forward toward the long-term goal of having a comprehensive early childhood professional development system. This group includes representatives with expertise in early care and education, early childhood special education, health, and family support. It also

includes representatives from two-year and four-year colleges and universities. Collectively, efforts like these and others described in this proposal provide a firm foundation on which to build NC's professional development efforts.

## **Data Systems**

North Carolina has developed robust and descriptive data systems within individual public service sectors: regulated child care, child welfare, health, and public education. Within each individual program and across some programs within a service sector, NC has adequate capacity for compliance reporting, program improvement, and other agency reporting purposes. However, we do not possess the capacity to use data across these sectors to gain a complete picture of children's early childhood and school readiness experiences. We do not yet have the capacity or infrastructure to systematically (and with necessary protections) generate linked or matched data in an integrated and comprehensive approach across all programs and sectors. We cannot, at this time, produce an unduplicated count of the number of young children who receive state-funded services. We also do not have the capacity to use these individual data systems to link children's early experiences with longitudinal outcomes, such as academic achievement. Thus, we are limited in our ability to answer important questions such as access and utilization to services or the relationship of program quality to child and family outcomes. To date, North Carolina has not had a coordinated structure for state leaders to articulate key questions related to early childhood programs, services, and outcomes. Nor has there been a commitment of resources to develop an integrated approach to answer key questions.

North Carolina's interest and work on integrated data systems have grown over the last few years. As part of a federal grant, a cross-agency Early Childhood Data System Work Group of key early care and education programs worked together to document the types and procedures for collecting data in each program and develop recommendations including a list of priority questions to address and a small set of suggested common data fields to use across programs.

A collaborative group representing the K-12 education system, higher education, state employment commission, and early childhood have begun working together to link their data systems to answer questions such as the effectiveness of K-12 public education in preparing students for higher education and employment. A group of these leaders developed an application for federal funding to link these separate data systems by adopting a common unique identifier. (The proposal to the U.S. Department of Education was not funded in the initial round.) Although this effort to coordinate data systems in the education and employment arenas is a major milestone for NC, it is not as comprehensive as is needed for understanding the impact of state-funded services for young children and their families (i.e., it would not include much, if any, data from health and family services).

Within the social services sector, the NC Fast project in the NC Department of Health and Human Services is implementing new tools for county departments of social services to use to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their delivery of services to families in NC. An important part of their vision for improved services is a comprehensive data system for evaluating outcomes and ensuring accountability across programs.

As evident in this section, NC has begun addressing issues related to building an early childhood data system and planning for eventual linkage to the K-12 public education system, higher education, and workforce. We are proud of what we have accomplished but realize there is much still to do. The NC ECAC offers the leadership, organizational structure, and inclusive public forum to move us forward on this important issue. Building on our collaborative history, previous work, and existing plans, NC is well positioned to work toward a truly integrated data system for state-funded services, effectively unifying early childhood data for tracking results and driving continuous improvement.

### **Family Strengthening**

North Carolina has long recognized the impact that families have on developmental outcomes for children. Based on that understanding, stakeholders across many public and private agencies and organizations have supported family strengthening programs. Until recently, data on the effectiveness of those interventions have been sparse, and it has been difficult to target resources to highly effective interventions. Fortunately, the science on the effectiveness of family strengthening programs is growing rapidly. In the past few years, funders in North Carolina have begun to shift resources to evidence-based family strengthening programs, and they are acknowledging the need to provide implementation support to assure that programs are implemented with fidelity. These efforts are fairly new, and there is a considerable amount of work to be done to ensure wider adoption and support of highly effective programs and the activities necessary to assure fidelity.

North Carolina also has made strides to involve families meaningfully in policy, planning, evaluation, and educational activities directed toward children birth to 21 years of age. For

example, the Division of Public Health has a Family Council that works closely with its staff who serve children and families. Reaching the goal of family professional partnership takes collaboration, communication and ongoing efforts to negotiate for success. Developing family-professional partnerships requires additional resources in personnel, time, and dollars and is often not considered when designing organizational policies, procedures, or practices. The ECAC will provide important leadership in NC's continuing efforts to strengthen the families caring for our youngest citizens.

## Health

Early childhood partners in North Carolina recognize that children learn best when they are healthy physically, socially, and emotionally – that health status affects developmental outcomes for young children. The state has made progress in improving many of the risk factors, such as low birth weight and teen pregnancy, that threaten children's health, and the majority of parents in the state are reporting that children age birth to 17 have overall good health.<sup>20</sup> Despite progress in this area, children in North Carolina continue to experience risk factors and a substantial number of children have one or more chronic health conditions rated moderate to severe by their parents.<sup>21</sup> Obesity is a major concern. The surveillance system that measures obesity in children in North Carolina is limited to data on children receiving child health and nutrition services in local health departments. In 2009, however, 33.9% of children age 2 to 18 in that system were either overweight or obese as compared to 32.8% in 2004.

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<sup>20</sup> Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. (2007). *National Survey of Children's Health*. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent health website. Retrieved from <http://www.nschdata.org>

<sup>21</sup> Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. (2007). *National Survey of Children's Health*. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent health website. Retrieved from <http://www.nschdata.org>

It is also important to note that racial disparities for key risk factors and general health status persist in the state. In North Carolina, black infants are nearly two times more likely than their white counterparts to be born with low birth weight, and American Indian infants are 1.5 times more likely. While teen pregnancies have been declining, there were nearly 5,000 babies born in 2008 to girls ages 10-17 in the state for a rate of 13.8 per 1,000 girls. The rate increases to 25.9 for girls ages 15 to 17. African American girls are twice as likely to have a teen birth as whites, and Hispanic girls are more than five times as likely. Infants of teen mothers are more likely to have low birth weight, be premature, have developmental disabilities, and have poorer developmental outcomes than the infants of older mothers. These ongoing challenges continue to put children at risk for poor outcomes, including school success. The ECAC will bring people together across sectors to address the important issues regarding children's health.

## **Governance and Need for Coordination and Collaboration**

Leaders in North Carolina have long recognized the importance of building a coordinated, effective early childhood *system* to serve young children and their families. This section provides a summary of the current status and challenges in creating a coordinated, comprehensive early childhood system in North Carolina.

Smart Start's efforts in North Carolina have strengthened collaborations among state government, private organizations, and local community leaders—and become a national early childhood model. NC has a strong network of local Smart Start Partnerships that support a comprehensive approach to services for young children at a local county or regional level. These partnerships provide oversight and support for local service delivery systems, often testing new ideas and expanding the implementation of evidence-based programs. The ECAC

will rely on state- and local-Smart Start representatives and other early childhood leaders to inform the work of the ECAC and assist in implementing aspects of the statewide strategic plan.

The work accomplished through North Carolina's Early Childhood Comprehensive System grant helped NC add other critical components to existing system-building efforts (e.g., developing a set of shared indicators and working to improve access to health insurance and medical homes). Our state's early childhood programs for children with special needs under IDEA (Part C Early Intervention for infants and toddlers B-3 and Part B (619) Exceptional Children's Program for preschoolers 3-5), although administered by different lead agencies, have long collaborated in a B-5 systems approach through the NC Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), which is the federally required advisory board for the Part C Early Intervention program, and other groups.

North Carolina's systems-building successes have been particularly noteworthy within the early care and education component of the system. Strong local and state level partnerships have been responsible for successfully implementing North Carolina's rated license system, creating innovative professional development strategies to increase the qualifications of early childhood teachers, coordinating a child care subsidy program for low-income families that links subsidy payments to program quality, leveraging funds to increase the number of high quality child care slots for vulnerable children, and coordinating all state and federal pre-k funding to increase the availability and continuity of high-quality pre-k services statewide.

North Carolina embraces a comprehensive approach to its system-building efforts so that stakeholders across the subsystems (e.g., early care and education, health, and family

strengthening) can operate as a more unified whole to serve young children. The North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council will provide collaborative leadership to support efforts to develop further a well-functioning state level system that includes all critical component areas and focuses on the key elements of building a comprehensive, integrated system.

### **Legislative Interest in Coordination and Efficiency**

In last year's legislative session, General Assembly members raised the issue of consolidating More at Four and Smart Start. In response to this interest, a legislative committee was created to examine the issue of consolidation. The Joint Taskforce on the Consolidation of Early Childhood Education and Care met in late 2009 and early 2010. The committee recommended actions to improve efficiency and coordination among the existing early care and education programs and requested that an annual consolidated report of early care and education be submitted to the General Assembly. In their final report, the legislative committee noted the importance of the emerging work of the Early Childhood Advisory Council because of the shared interest in coordination.

### **Opportunities and Barriers to Coordination and Collaboration**

As mentioned throughout the proposal, NC agencies serving young children have worked together to improve coordination and collaboration. The current legislative interest in governance has provided an opportunity to think more critically about how best to coordinate and collaborate in order to provide high quality services in the most efficient manner possible. The Governor's interest in establishing an ECAC has provided another important opportunity to focus broadly on the state service system for young children and their families. At the local level, Smart Start provides a structure and incentive for local collaboration. NC also faces

barriers to coordination and collaboration. One barrier has been the concern regarding possible consolidation of early childhood programs into one umbrella organization (which has been discussed in the legislature). The poor economy presents another barrier: it is often challenging to collaborate when resources are very limited.

**In summary,** governance and coordination are important topics among early childhood leaders, administrators, policymakers, and politicians in North Carolina. The intent of the ECAC is to provide state leadership in moving toward an inclusive and comprehensive system of services that addresses the needs of young children and their families.

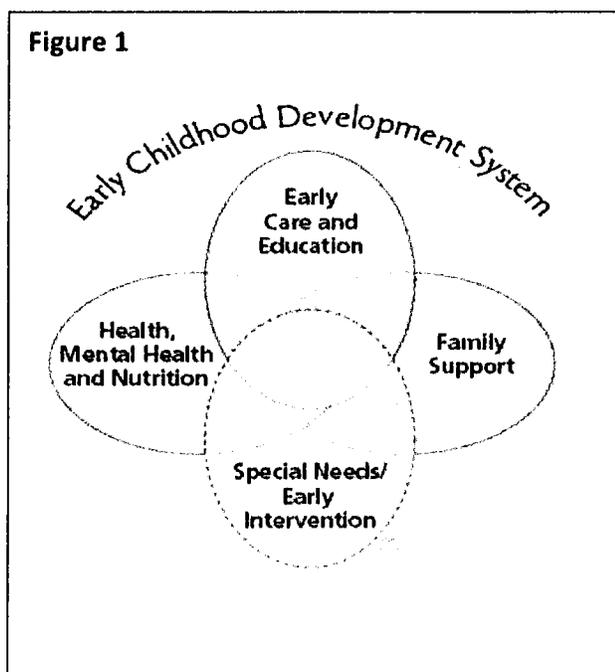
## **Approach**

The North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council (NC ECAC) will lead our state to create and sustain a shared vision for young children and a comprehensive, integrated system of high quality health, family strengthening, and early care and education services that support ready children, families, and communities. The Governor has charged the ECAC with moving toward an effective, coordinated, and efficient system of services for young children and their families from the current multiple systems for early care and education, family strengthening, and health.

North Carolina's approach is grounded in developmental science. Research has demonstrated several factors that are critical to building a strong early childhood system of services that provides the supports needed for each child to reach her full potential and become a productive member of society: (a) children's development and learning are influenced by *both* nature and nurture; (b) brains develop over time, although much brain growth occurs in the first few years of life; (c) cognitive, emotional, and social competence are

inextricably intertwined; (d) toxic stress caused by physical factors as well as environmental factors experienced over time can damage children’s developing brain; (e) children’s early experiences at home, in early care and education, and in other settings are linked to their later health and success; and (f) the developmental trajectories of children can be altered with effective early intervention and supports over time to help sustain the changes.<sup>22</sup> The NC ECAC will use these and other lessons from developmental science to guide its work.

Two additional frameworks guide the work of the ECAC. The first is the Early Childhood Development System diagram from the Build Initiative.<sup>23</sup> This framework demonstrates the cross-sector breadth of the system to be built by the ECAC. The second framework (Table 2) delineates five focal areas for systems initiatives.<sup>24</sup> The proposed ECAC activities cut across the sectors and systems-building initiatives. Because many of NC’s efforts to date have focused primarily on the components of a



<sup>22</sup> National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2007). *The science of early childhood development: Closing the gap between what we know and what we do*. <http://www.developingchild.net> National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2007). *The timing and quality of early experiences combine to shape brain architecture*. <http://www.developingchild.net>

<sup>23</sup> Coffman, J., Stover Wright, M., & Bruner, C. (2006). *Beyond parallel play: Emerging state and community planning roles in building early learning systems*, Available at [www.buildinitiative.org](http://www.buildinitiative.org).

<sup>24</sup> Coffman, J. (2007). *A framework for evaluating systems initiatives*. Available at [www.buildinitiative.org](http://www.buildinitiative.org). Coffman, J. & Parker, (2010). *Issue brief: Early childhood systems building from a community perspective*. Denver, CO: The Colorado Trust.

system, the ECAC may focus more of its efforts on context, connections, infrastructure, and scale.

**Table 2. Focus Areas for Systems Building Efforts**

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Context	Changing the public and political environment that indirectly and directly influences services for young children and their families
Components	Establishing high quality programs and services for young children and their families
Connections	Creating strong, effective links across various parts of the system
Infrastructure	Developing the supports, including the policies, needed for the system to work well
Scale	Ensuring the system is comprehensive and works well for all young children and their families

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*From Coffman & Parker (2010), p. 2.*

## **Members and Structure of the NC Early Childhood Advisory Council**

Governor Bev Perdue is establishing the Early Childhood Advisory Council through an Executive Order. This section of the proposal describes the membership, responsibilities, and initial structure for the ECAC. Over the coming year, other members are expected to be added, and the structure may evolve.

### **Membership**

The NC ECAC is comprised of gubernatorial appointees who serve on a voluntary, unpaid basis. The Governor has invited some individuals to join the ECAC and will invite in the fall additional individuals to join the ECAC. The ECAC held its first meeting on July 14, 2010 and will meet again in the fall. The ECAC membership will meet the federal membership requirements and will include additional members representing a broad range of constituencies including early childhood care and education (including Head Start, pre-k, and early childhood special

education), higher education, state government agencies, private nonprofit organizations, health care providers, business, parents, local community leaders, and private philanthropic organizations. The ECAC is chaired by Mr. Robin Britt, former director of the NC Department of Health and Human Services and current Executive Director of Guilford Child Development.

Proposed members of the ECAC are listed below.

<b>Proposed Membership of the NC ECAC</b>	
Robin Britt (Chair)	Executive Director, Guilford Child Development
Anne Bryan	Governor's Senior Policy Advisor on Early Childhood
Lanier Cansler	Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
Deb Cassidy	Director, Division of Child Development
Marian Earls	Medical Director, Guilford Child Health
Stephanie Fanjul	President, North Carolina Partnership for Children
Khari Garvin	Director, Head Start State Collaboration Office
Bill Harrison	Chair, State Board of Education
Rhett Mabry	Vice President, The Duke Endowment
John Pruette	Director, Office of Early Learning
Scott Ralls	President, NC Community Colleges
Sue Russell	President, Child Care Services Association
Kevin Ryan	Chief, Women and Children's Health, DHHS
Herald Sellars	Executive Vice President, Mechanics & Farmers Bank
Henrietta Zalkind	Executive Director, Down East Partnership for Children
To Be Determined (TBD)	Representative, The University of North Carolina System
TBD	Representative, Local Education Agency

TBD	Representatives, Business and Community Leadership
TBD	Representatives, Parent
TBD	Representatives, Philanthropy

### **Responsibilities**

The following ECAC responsibilities have been delineated by the Governor:

- Strengthen state-level coordination and collaboration among the various sectors and settings of early childhood programs in the State, including health, family support, and early care and education.
- Create and sustain a shared vision for young children in North Carolina and adopt system-wide outcomes for young children.
- Develop a statewide strategic plan that delineates major goals and actions for reaching the desired system-wide outcomes for young children.
- Identify key infrastructure needs or enhancements and recommend policies to promote and sustain a comprehensive, integrated system of high-quality, health, family support, and early care and education services that supports ready children, families, and communities.
- Identify funding priorities and recommend to the Governor a budget for a high-quality, comprehensive, integrated system of state services to young children and their families.
- Conduct periodic statewide needs assessments on the quality and availability of programs and services for children from birth to school entry.
- Recommend enhancements in state early learning standards and undertake efforts to maintain high-quality comprehensive early learning standards, as needed.

- Recommend strategies to improve the quality of health, family support, and early care and education services for young children and their families and to increase overall participation of children in existing state and federal programs.
- Identify opportunities for and barriers to coordination and collaboration among existing federal- and state-funded programs for young children.
- Recommend strategies to create an effective, comprehensive, integrated professional development system and career advancement plans for the workforce serving young children and their families.
- Assess the capacity and effectiveness of two- and four-year public and private institutions of higher education in the state toward supporting the development of early childhood educators and other staff serving young children and their families.
- Support the development and implementation of a statewide, unified, longitudinal data collection system for young children.
- Develop and implement plans to increase awareness and commitment among parents, professionals, business, policymakers, and the public at large to ensuring that all young children in North Carolina are healthy, learning, and thriving.
- Submit to the Governor a statewide strategic report addressing the activities of the Advisory Council, and provide a copy of the strategic report to the State Director of Head Start Collaboration. After submission of the strategic report, the Advisory Council shall meet periodically to review any implementation of the recommendations in such report and any changes in state and local needs.
- Monitor progress toward goals and present an annual written report of progress to date.

- Coordinate and oversee relevant federal grants and grant programs to maximize the effectiveness of resources in working toward the state's goals for the early childhood system and outcomes for young children.
- Seek, identify and advocate for resources, including submitting grant proposals, for funding to implement the state's early childhood initiatives. To the extent funds are available, the Advisory Council is specifically authorized to make grants to other entities, to contract with other entities and to utilize funds for the operation of the Advisory Council.

### **Structure**

The ECAC is scheduled to meet a minimum of twice a year. The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee is the first committee to be created and includes representatives of major state agencies responsible for serving young children and their families. This committee will identify possible strategies for strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of services for young children and their families. Additional committees will be established, as needed, and may include individuals who are not part of the ECAC. The ECAC will also work with existing workgroups or committees to support the development of a comprehensive system of services for young children and their families. The structure of the ECAC will be further delineated in the coming year.

### **Plans for Public Hearings and Public Comment**

The ECAC Strategic Report (see Appendix B) was posted on the Governor's web site for public comment from July 1, 2010 through July 14, 2010. Additionally, the ECAC held a public hearing on the strategic report from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 14, 2010 in the McKimmon Center in Raleigh NC.

In the future, the ECAC will provide annual opportunities for public hearings and public comment on its goals, plans and activities. These opportunities for public input will be advertised on the Governor's website as well as existing networks (e.g., Smart Start and NCAEYC listserves).

## **Goals, Objectives, and Activities**

North Carolina's Early Childhood Advisory Council has established **5 major goals** for its initial efforts.

1. **Develop an integrated, comprehensive 3-year strategic plan** for high-quality health, family strengthening, and early care and education services that support ready children, families, and communities. The plan will address the three major early childhood sectors and will identify activities in the five systems- building areas.
2. **Strengthen awareness and commitment** among families, business, and policymakers to ensure that all young children in North Carolina are healthy, learning, and thriving. (This goal falls within the context area of systems building.)
3. **Strengthen the quality of programs** and expand opportunities for young children and their families to participate in high-quality programs. (This goal falls within the components and scale areas of systems building.)
4. **Strengthen coordination and collaboration** across service sectors to promote high-quality, efficient services for young children and their families. (This goal falls within the connections area of systems building.)

5. **Support the implementation of an integrated data system** that meets the individual and collective needs and capacities of state-funded programs serving young children birth to age five. (This goal falls within the connections and infrastructure areas of systems building.)

Funding is requested to support activities within each of these 5 goals. Much of the ECAC's first year of work will focus on the first goal to develop a comprehensive, statewide 3-year strategic plan. Years 2 and 3 will focus on activities related to Goals 2-5 and respond to priorities identified through the strategic planning process. Proposed activities for each goal are described below. **It is important to note that Year 2 and 3 activities could change based on the Year 1 strategic planning process.** (The Strategic Report in Appendix B summarizes these activities across all years by goal.) Accomplishments/outcomes for each major activity are also provided.

### **Goal 1. Develop a Strategic Plan**

The primary goal for the ECAC's first year of work will be to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for an early childhood system. To accomplish this objective, three major activities are needed: formalizing the newly created ECAC's structure and operation, conducting a needs assessment, and developing a strategic plan.

1. Formalize the Structure and Operation of the ECAC and its relationship with the other existing organizations, councils, and committees related to young children and their families.

Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Develop a formal structure for meetings and committee work, coordinate with existing groups,	X	X	X	X

and develop shared knowledge among ECAC members.				
2. Identify all relevant organizations, councils, and committees and meet (in person or via conference call) to discuss coordination.	X	X		
3. Develop an ECAC handbook that delineates the structure and operation of the ECAC and its relationship to existing groups.				X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The ECAC will operate effectively and efficiently, building on previous and current related efforts.				

2. Conduct a Needs Assessment to better understand the current status and needs for North Carolina’s integrated, early childhood system. The needs assessment will focus on three areas: what do we know about NC’s young children and their families; what do we know about the systems that must be woven together into a single early childhood system; and what do we know about the state policies related to young children and their families. The ECAC plans to conduct a needs assessment every three years.

*Children and Families.* The North Carolina Partnership for Children recently completed a series of public forums in which over 800 people contributed ideas about what young children in NC need to thrive. The valuable information from these forums will be summarized and shared with the ECAC so that it can address the priorities identified in these forums. Existing data about population-level indicators of family strength and children’s health and well-being will also be summarized for the ECAC.

*Systems.* Information about the current health, early care and education, and family strengthening services will be summarized, highlighting the gaps and likely challenges in building a system that weaves together all three sectors. Information will also be summarized

regarding the capacity and effectiveness of NC's institutes of higher education in supporting early childhood professionals.

*Policies.* Policy scans (e.g., CLASP Tool to Examine state Child Care Subsidy Policies and Promote Stable, Quality Care for Low-Income Babies and Toddlers; Zero to Three's Self-Assessment for States; Lynn Kagan's Policy Matters) will be completed to better understand the strengths and weaknesses in state policy related to young children and their families. Once the policy scans have been completed, the ECAC will convene a policy forum of various NC child, family, and education policy experts to review information from the needs assessment and policy scans and make recommendations to the ECAC regarding short- and long-term actions to ensure that policies reflect developmental science and support systems building.

Year 1 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Summarize information from existing, recent data about statewide needs of children and families.	X	X		
2. Summarize information from existing, recent data about the coordination and integration of early care and education, health, and family strengthening systems.	X	X		
3. Complete various policy scans (e.g., CLASP Tool to Examine state Child Care Subsidy Policies and Promote Stable, Quality Care for Low-Income Babies and Toddlers; Zero to Three's Self-Assessment for states)	X	X	X	
4. Convene a policy forum				X
5. Publish a report that summarizes findings from the multiple needs assessment activities.				X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The ECAC members will understand the current status of the NC early childhood system and will identify priority needs to address in the strategic plan.				
Year 3 Activities	Year 3 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Develop a plan for conducting a statewide early				X

childhood needs assessment.				
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The ECAC will define the objectives for another statewide needs assessment and identify an organization to conduct the work.				

3. Develop a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for young children in North Carolina that is intended to be transformative and addresses priority areas within the three major early childhood sectors (families, health, and early care and education) as well as focus areas for systems building (context, components, connections, infrastructure, and scale).

As a first step, the ECAC will create a priority set of shared outcomes for young children and families that will enable the ECAC (and general public) to measure the effectiveness of the system, as a whole, in meeting the needs of young children and their families. The ECAC’s work will be informed by the set of shared indicators developed collaboratively through the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant and the aligned child outcomes developed through the NC Collaborative Outcomes Project. Based on the information gathered from the needs assessment, a draft set of goals and activities will be developed. Public feedback on the plan will be gathered through public forums as well as web-based surveys. The web-based surveys will be disseminated widely, using the Smart Start network of local partnerships. By the end of Year 1, North Carolina will have a 3-year strategic plan for supporting the success of all young children. The plan will provide an important guide for the ECAC and other state and local organizations in achieving a set of shared goals.

Year 1 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Develop a process for creating the strategic plan.	X			
2. Review existing indicators and outcomes.	X			
3. Determine a small set of systems-level child and		X		

family outcomes.				
4. Develop a draft 3-year strategic plan.			X	
5. Obtain public feedback on the strategic plan through public forums and web-based surveys.				X
6. Finalize the strategic plan.				X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The state of NC will have a 3-year strategic plan that delineates shared outcomes, goals, and activities to meet those goals and outcomes.				
<b>Year 3 Activities</b>	<b>Year 3 Timeline</b>			
	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
1. Review and update the strategic plan.			X	X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The state of NC will have an updated strategic plan that delineates shared outcomes, goals, and activities to address by 2016.				

## Goal 2. Strengthen Awareness and Commitment

The second goal of the ECAC is focused on the context of the early childhood system in NC. The ECAC will work to develop and help implement a communications campaign to influence public attitudes and policy preferences regarding young children and their families. In the first year, the ECAC will work with the North Carolina Partnership for Children to identify partners in developing and implementing a communications plan and, together, to develop a statewide communications plan. Although Year 2 and 3 activities will not be finalized until the communications plan has been developed, we anticipate a multi-pronged strategy to focus the state’s attention—from parents to policymakers—on the importance of the early years and to build commitment to addressing those needs. One such strategy could include a statewide meeting that brings together professionals from multiple service sectors, policymakers, and business and civic leaders.

1. Develop a Communications Plan. The ECAC will work with NCPC and others to develop a Communications Plan to identify goals, target audiences, messages, and priority activities. This

plan will seek to offer a clear, coherent, and powerful framework for the discussion of early childhood issues and provide general guidance for state-level communication about issues related to young children and specific guidance about critical communications activities for the ECAC.

Year 1 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Identify strategic communications partners.	X			
2. Develop a process for creating a communications plan.	X			
3. Draft a 2-year ECAC communications plan.		X	X	
4. Obtain feedback on the communications plan.			X	
5. Finalize the communications plan and identify priority activities.				X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The state of NC will have a communications plan that delineates key audiences, goals, messages, and priority strategies and raises the level of understanding and commitment to the important investment in young children.				

2. Convene a Statewide Meeting. The ECAC will bring together policymakers, state leaders, parents, researchers, and practitioners across all of the major sectors (early care and education, health, and family strengthening) to discuss the NC strategic plan and action steps for accomplishing the shared goals.

Year 1 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Convene a committee to plan the meeting.		X	X	X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The planning committee will identify key topics, format, date, and location for the meeting.				
Year 2 Activities	Year 2 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Planning committee will continue to prepare for the meeting.	X	X	X	X
2. Keynote speakers confirmed if needed.			X	

3. Presenters confirmed.			X	
4. Invitations sent.			X	
<i>Accomplishments:</i> NC will hold a meeting to discuss shared goals and strategies for working together to support the needs of young children and their families.				
<b>Year 3 Activities</b>	<b>Year 3 Timeline</b>			
	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
1. Meeting held.	X			
2. Planning committee and ECAC will review feedback about the meeting and decide whether to hold future meetings	X	X		
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The ECAC will evaluate the usefulness of a statewide meeting and decide whether to continue to support it.				

3. Other Possible Objectives and Activities. The strategic planning process may suggest additional objectives and activities related to this goal to be addressed by the ECAC.

**Goal 3. Strengthen the Quality of Programs and Expand Opportunities**

The third goal of the ECAC is to continue to strengthen the quality of programs for young children and their families and to expand opportunities for young children and their families to participate in high-quality programs. Although the strategic planning process may alter the proposal, the ECAC is expected to provide policy and budget recommendations related to the strengthening the quality and availability of programs. The ECAC also plans to support efforts to strengthen the screening and referral process to identify children who need services. Other possible types of ECAC activities within this goal are also described in this section of the proposal.

1. Make Policy and Budget Recommendations to the Governor and Policymakers. The ECAC will provide an important forum for developing overarching policy and budget

recommendations to strengthen the quality of programs and expand opportunities for children (B-5) to receive high-quality services.

Year 1-3 Activities	Year 1-3 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Make policy and budget recommendations to the Governor and policymakers.	X	X	X	X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> State policies and budgets will reflect the priorities and strategies in the statewide strategic plan designed to strengthen the quality and availability of services for young children.				

2. Identify and Pilot Developmental Screening & Referral Systems. Early identification of developmental concerns or conditions is critical to the health and well-being of children and their families. Developmental screening by primary care physicians is a key strategy to ensure children’s healthy development and support school readiness, academic success, and overall well-being.

Due to the Assuring Better Child Development (ABCD) initiative, there have been significant advancements in the use of appropriate general developmental and behavioral screenings and surveillance in primary care settings in North Carolina. Most well-child visits in young children (under age 5) conducted by primary care practices now include use of a formal validated developmental screening tool. However, communities are not yet in the position to take full advantage of using the results of screening to help children get evaluations and to link families to effective interventions at the earliest possible juncture. Recent policy changes and effective practice guidance in More at Four, the state pre-kindergarten program, are helping to strengthen the ties between health care professionals and early learning programs; yet more work is needed on both the screening side and the connection side of the challenge. On the

screening side, primary care physicians (through ABCD) are only just beginning to implement other recommended screening, such as screening for autism, specific screening for social-emotional problems, and screening for parental risk factors like maternal depression.

Although subject to change based on the Year 1 strategic planning process, the Early Childhood Advisory Council currently expects to pilot a number of strategies that can be incorporated into several existing efforts around the state (i.e. Community Care of North Carolina’s pregnancy medical home initiative; the NC LAUNCH project; Smart Start’s work with practices as part of the NC ABCD Project; Area Health Education Centers’ quality improvement related to medical homes, More at Four, etc.) to address these challenges and create a sustainable advanced practice model for North Carolina. These efforts will support physicians’ use of a range of screening tools as well as improve connections and referrals to other community services for young children and their families.

Year 1 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Review current screening and referral practices, identifying barriers and opportunities.	X	X		
2. Select strategies to support screening and referral.			X	
3. Issue an RFP to solicit applications from organizations interested in implementing these strategies.			X	
4. Select organization and establish contract to conduct the work.				X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The ECAC will identify strategies to support appropriate screening and referral and will identify a NC organization to lead these efforts.				
Year 2 Activities	Year 2 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Screening and referral strategies will be implemented in pilot counties.	X	X	X	X
2. Appropriate next steps will be identified.				X

<i>Accomplishments: Strategies to support appropriate screening and referral will be implemented in various communities across NC.</i>				
<b>Year 3 Activities</b>	<b>Year 3 Timeline</b>			
	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
1. Screening and referral strategies will continue to be implemented.	X	X	X	X
2. Next steps identified in Year 2 will be implemented.	X	X	X	X
<i>Accomplishments: Strategies to support appropriate screening and referral will be implemented in additional communities across NC.</i>				

3. Other Possible Activities. Other possible ECAC activities to support Goal 3 are described in this section. Definitive plans will be developed during the strategic planning process in the first year.

*Infant/Toddler Quality.* With research documenting the importance of early experiences on brain development and the existence of an achievement gap in the very first few years (if not months) of life, the quality of experiences for North Carolina’s infants and toddlers is likely to be a special priority for the work of the Early Childhood Advisory Council. In the short-term, the ECAC may support quality improvement efforts by offering small grants to support high quality practices in infant/toddler classrooms and creating model demonstration sites in each of the 14 Child Care Resource and Referral regions created by the NC Division of Child Development. Specific activities will be developed through the Year 1 strategic planning process. The ECAC will also discuss long-term strategies to ensure that programs for NC’s infants and toddlers are of the highest quality possible and are affordable to families.

*Family Strengthening Programs.* A collaborative network of public and private funders is supporting the replication of specific evidence-based programs for children and families across NC. The group is committed to funding programs that have strong track records of producing

results for children, families, and communities, and to funding the needed infrastructure for quality implementation of those programs. While the members of the group individually fund a range of diverse programs and services across NC, the funders are collaboratively supporting three evidence-based programs (EBP) with the goal of bringing these programs statewide. These programs are: a) *Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)* which provides home-visiting to vulnerable first-time mothers; b) the *Incredible Years (IY)* series which promotes children's emotional and social competence through interventions with parents, teachers, and children ages birth to 12 years old; and c) *Strengthening Families Programs (SFP)*, which provides training to support parenting, children's life skills, and family skills

Another type of family strengthening program is the *Triple P-Positive Parenting Program*. Through separate funding, a Triple P pilot is currently planned for one NC County. Depending on the results of the pilot and the outcomes and strategies delineated in the strategic plan, the ECAC may support additional Triple P efforts. The Triple P program is a multi-level system of parenting and family support aimed at preventing severe behavioral, emotional, and developmental problems in children by enhancing the knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents. Through specific professional development, Triple P is implemented using the existing professional workforce (e.g., primary care physicians, child care providers, DSS family specialists, public health nurses) to promote competent parenting. A recent study evaluating the effectiveness of *Triple P* reported substantial drops in out-of-home placement of children into foster care and in medical injuries for child maltreatment requiring hospital treatment<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Prinz, R. J., Sanders, M. R., Shapiro, C. J., Whitaker, D. J., & Lutzker, J. R. (2009). Population-based prevention of child maltreatment: The U.S. Triple P system population trial. *Prevention Science, 10*, pp. 1-12

**Goal 4. Strengthen Coordination and Collaboration**

The fourth goal of the ECAC focuses on the coordination among various components of the early childhood system in NC. The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee of the ECAC will help develop recommendations for how to enhance coordination and collaboration among state agencies working on early childhood issues and identify ways to be more efficient in providing high-quality services for young children. During the first year, specific activities related to this goal will be identified through the strategic planning process. Currently, the ECAC expects to initially address the important issue of coordination between 2-year community colleges and 4-year colleges and universities, which is necessary to provide increased access and a smooth transition for students who want to work toward a Bachelor’s degree. The ECAC will make policy and budget recommendations to support coordination and collaboration among the various partners in the early childhood system. The ECAC also expects to issue an annual report regarding coordination and collaboration among early childhood agencies.

1. Strengthen Coordination and Improve the Efficiency of State-Funded Services. The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee will work to identify strategies for improving the coordination and efficiency of state-funded services for young children (B-5) and their families.

Year 1-3 Activities	Year 1-3 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee will identify possible ways for state agencies to serve children and families more efficiently.	X	X	X	X
2. The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee will identify key issues for the ECAC regarding system coordination and collaboration.	X	X	X	X
3. The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee will help implement ECAC recommendations regarding coordination, collaboration, and efficiency.	X	X	X	X

**Accomplishments:** Specific strategies will be identified and implemented to improve the coordination and efficiency of state-funded services for young children and their families.

2. Strengthen Coordination Between Two-Year and Four-Year Colleges and Universities. A lack of articulation agreements between 4-year colleges and universities and the 58 community colleges in North Carolina often makes it very difficult for students in the community college system to continue their education to earn a Bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field. More articulation agreements between 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities would dramatically improve the coordination between the two higher education systems that support early childhood teachers and related professionals.

To date, North Carolina has made some strides in supporting articulation by creating a template that can be used to develop an articulation agreement between 4-year colleges and universities and community colleges and by offering incentives for universities to develop articulation agreements. Although there are some universities that have articulation agreements in place with community colleges, many 4-year colleges and university administrators have expressed reluctance to issue an agreement with all of the 58 community colleges because there is no consistency in the coursework for early childhood programs at the community college level.

With the implementation of the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation, North Carolina can now use the NAEYC national accreditation as the standard for consistency and quality assurance. Four-year colleges and universities may be more likely to develop articulation

agreements with the nationally accredited community college programs. Currently, 12 of the 58 community colleges are nationally accredited, with 10 more in the process of becoming accredited. The ECAC would like to support national accreditation of more community colleges as an important first step in building a more coordinated partnership between community colleges and 4-year colleges and universities. Once more community colleges are accredited, the articulation agreements with 4-year colleges and universities will help ensure that students from across NC can continue their education in early childhood related majors.

The ECAC would like to provide a \$6,000 per-college incentive to support 20 community colleges to earn their NAEYC national accreditation. Because the broad topic of articulation has been identified as a long-term challenge and because community colleges likely will require about 2 years to become NAEYC accredited, the ECAC will fund this activity in Year 1, even before the strategic plan is completed.

Year 1 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2. Develop a recruitment strategy to identify and select 20 community colleges to become nationally accredited.	X	X		
3. Select the 20 participating community colleges			X	
4. Award grants to the participating community colleges.			X	X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> Twenty community colleges will begin the process of becoming nationally accredited by NAEYC. By the end of Year 3, at least 80% of these community colleges will have received national accreditation.				

Possible future ECAC activities related to articulation could including hiring a statewide coordinator to support administrators at both community colleges and 4-year colleges and universities to reduce barriers for early childhood professionals across North Carolina to

continue their education and offering incentives to 4-year colleges and universities that develop articulation agreements. It is important to note, though, that future activities cannot be determined until the ECAC has completed its strategic plan in Year 1.

1. Policy and Budget Recommendations to the Governor and Policymakers. The ECAC will provide an important forum for developing overarching policy and budget recommendations to strengthen the coordination and collaboration among state-funded services for children (B-5).

Year 1-3 Activities	Year 1-3 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2. Make policy and budget recommendations to the Governor and policymakers.	X	X	X	X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> State policies and budgets will reflect the priorities and strategies in the statewide strategic plan designed to strengthen the coordination and collaboration among organizations that provide state-funded services for young children.				

2. Other Objectives and Activities to be Determined. The strategic planning process may suggest additional objectives and activities related to this goal. Some future activities may be drawn from lessons learned in Project LAUNCH. Project LAUNCH is a federally funded project designed to ensure that children reach physical, social, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive milestones. Working in a designated pilot community, Project LAUNCH is convening early childhood partners to integrate and coordinate programs, policies, data, and funding. They will join with families and public and private partners to scan communities and pinpoint unmet needs. Then, they will create strategic plans that guide their use of five prevention and promotion strategies drawn from current research (e.g., integrating behavioral health into primary care settings).

**Goal 5. Support the Implementation of an Integrated Data System**

The final goal of the ECAC is focused on supporting the implementation of an integrated data system that allows the ECAC and others to answer a range of important questions such as how many young children (B-5) receive state-funded services (i.e., an unduplicated count) and what is the impact of quality early learning experiences on later school achievement. This goal is critical to creating effective linkage across programs and building the necessary infrastructure to support the system. The activities to accomplish this goal are delineated below.

1. Identify and Coordinate Existing Data Integration Efforts. The ECAC will work to identify all existing groups across all three service sectors (early care and education, health, and family strengthening) that are addressing data systems issues and develop a plan to coordinate these related efforts. Thus, the ECAC will develop an in-depth component of its strategic plan focused on supporting a unified data system. This type of systems approach promotes the ongoing development of the data system in the overall “big picture” context of the comprehensive early childhood system and its interconnected components.

Year 1-3 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Identify and contact individuals, organizations, and groups addressing data integration for state-funded services for children B-5 and their families across all service sectors.	X	X	X	X
2. Develop and implement a plan to coordinate existing efforts	X	X	X	X
3. Other activities to be determined.				
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The ECAC will know about all data integration efforts for state-funded services for young children and their families and will support the coordination and collaboration among these efforts.				

2. Develop the Data Systems Portion of the Strategic Plan. A group of individuals with knowledge and experience related to developing data systems and addressing systems-level data integration issues will assume responsibility for developing the data systems portion of the strategic plan to be reviewed and approved by the ECAC. This portion of the plan will be developed to support the broader ECAC goals and priorities.

Year 1 Activities	Year 1 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Articulate data needs related to the goals and outcomes delineated by the ECAC.	X	X	X	X
2. Develop a set of objectives, activities, and responsibilities related to data systems as part of the larger strategic plan.	X	X	X	X
<i>Accomplishments:</i> The state will have a detailed strategic plan for data integration activities that address the broader state goals and priorities delineated by the ECAC.				

3. Recommendations to the Governor and Policymakers. The ECAC will provide an important forum for developing recommendations to support the comprehensive early childhood system and infrastructure. Rather than each entity working separately to develop, submit, and justify recommendations that meet its respective internal data system needs, the ECAC can serve as the overarching body to represent the collective voice of all the players, presenting a more cohesive and understandable systems-level picture. The ECAC can provide the Governor, policymakers in the General Assembly and agency leaders collaborative recommendations for the policies and funding needs to build and sustain the joint data system over time.

Year 1-3 Activities	Year 1-3 Timeline			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3. Make policy and budget recommendations to the Governor and policymakers.	X	X	X	X

**Accomplishments:** The ECAC will serve as a champion in leading the state's efforts toward a sustainable integrated data system infrastructure across state agencies serving young children and their families.

4. Other Objectives and Activities to be Determined. The strategic planning process may suggest additional objectives and activities related to this goal to be addressed by the ECAC.

## **Needs Assessment**

The ECAC will conduct a periodic needs assessment on which to guide the state's efforts to support the health and development of young children birth to five and their families. In the coming year, the ECAC will thoroughly review data about children, families, and services as part of developing a strategic plan. ECAC members will also review past needs assessments and formulate plans for coordinating and/or expanding needs assessments related to services for young children and their families. The last statewide needs and resources assessment was completed in 2003 and focused on children's demographics, early childhood programs, and the early childhood workforce.

The needs of young children and their families described in this proposal and the strategic report were developed using various sources of existing data about young children, families, and programs in North Carolina. Data about current services were obtained from the Division of Child Development, North Carolina Partnership for Children, Division of Public Health, and Office of Early Learning. Additionally, summary information from a series of public forums conducted by the North Carolina Partnership for Children was utilized. These public forums brought together over 800 individuals across the state to identify priority needs for

young children and their families. Finally, reports such as *Who's Caring for our Babies Now?*<sup>26</sup> also provided valuable data. Collectively, these various sources of data and the expertise of ECAC members guided the development of the ECAC's proposal.

## **Rationale for NC's Approach and Possible Influencing Factors**

As mentioned previously, NC has made great strides in providing high-quality services for young children—and our next step is to weave the various service sectors into a comprehensive, integrated service system for young children. As described in the Approach introduction, we want to ground our efforts in developmental science and the systems change literature to ensure that our efforts are as evidence-based as possible. The ECAC will work during the first year to develop a shared understanding of the various system components, developmental science, and systems change theory in preparation for developing a strategic plan that will meaningfully improve NC's service system and ensure that each child in NC starts school healthy and ready to succeed.

There are many factors that could influence the work of the ECAC. As mentioned in the governance section of the proposal, the NC General Assembly has a special interest in efficiency and possible consolidation among the early childhood programs. Their work could influence the content and timeline of the ECAC activities. The needs of NC's youngest children could also affect the ECAC's approach, particularly if the economy presents more fiscal challenges to families and services for young children. The ECAC leadership plans to seek additional funding

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<sup>26</sup> Child Care Services Association (2008). *Who's Caring for Our Babies Now? Executive Summary*. <http://www.childcareservices.org>

to support its work (e.g., re-apply for the state longitudinal data systems grant) which could accelerate some of the proposed work.

## **Sustainability**

Sustaining the ECAC's efforts beyond these first three years is a "must" for the state's long-term success in supporting its youngest citizens. Governor Bev Perdue has stated that early childhood is a critical component of the "Ready" in her *Career and College—Ready, Set, Go!* education agenda. Thus, she has a long-term commitment to supporting early childhood issues and has pledged her continued support of the ECAC beyond the three-year federal funding period. As a first step in sustainability, the ECAC will establish procedures and structures for working together as a Council and for coordinating the Council's work with other related efforts across the state. It is important for the ECAC to function effectively and to have all the members grounded in a common understanding of the science of child development, the needs of NC's young children, the existing state-funded services for young children and their families, and a shared set of goals toward which to work. The first year's ECAC activities will provide the important foundation for sustaining the long-term effectiveness of the Council.

The ECAC's work itself during the grant period will also support sustainability. As evident in the description of ECAC activities, the ECAC has proposed to use this federal funding for system-level efforts that will last beyond the life of the grant. For instance, increasing the number of nationally accredited community colleges will not only strengthen the quality of pre-service teacher preparation but also facilitate articulation agreements between community colleges and 4-year universities which will address issues of access to education among early

childhood workers for many years to come. The ECAC will focus its efforts on “value added” activities to help support long-term systems building.

Finally, the strategic plan developed by the ECAC in the first year will provide an important roadmap for priority activities and funding needs. This plan will be reviewed and revised periodically so that the strategic plan will be updated at the end of the funding period and serve as a guide for future efforts.

### **Staff and Position Data**

The Governor’s Office will provide general oversight and support for the ECAC. The ECAC Chair, Mr. Robin Britt, and the Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood, Ms. Anne Bryan, will provide important leadership and direction for the ECAC. Additional coordination of the ECAC will be provided by the To Be Hired (TBH) ECAC Assistant. Some of the work of the ECAC will be conducted by ECAC members and other individuals (volunteers and paid consultants). (See Appendix C for job descriptions for the Senior Policy Advisor and TBH ECAC Assistant.)

Robin Britt, Chair of the ECAC, has had a varied career as a naval officer, partner in a large NC law firm, US Congressman, and Secretary of what is now the NC Department of Health and Human Services. He founded and was Executive Director of Project Uplift, a nonprofit corporation serving young children and their families, which was chosen as one of the President’s 1000 Points of Light. He is currently serving as Executive Director of Guilford Child Development whose 300 employees operate 12 child development centers and provide an array of other services to young children and their families in Guilford County. He was a Morehead Scholar at the University of North Carolina where he also received his law degree, later receiving a graduate law degree from New York University. He also is a retired Captain in

the Naval Reserve and served as President of the Ole North State Chapter of the Naval Reserve Association.

Anne Bryan has served throughout her career in a variety of policy, program development, and leadership roles focused on enhancing opportunities for children. She began her career as juvenile justice chief with the Governor's Crime Commission where she later served as planning director and deputy director. At the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, she developed the state's first statewide dropout prevention program and chaired the state's Parents as Teachers Council in her work as chief of dropout prevention, children at risk, and child abuse prevention services. Later, she co-founded and was president of Exploris (now called Marbles), a children's museum in Raleigh. She currently serves as Gov. Bev Perdue's senior policy advisor on early childhood. She is a graduate of Meredith College and received a master's degree at Duke University. Among her other activities, she is co-founder of The Raleigh School and Exploris Middle School and serves as a trustee of Meredith College.

## **Organizational Profile**

Governor Perdue's office, specifically the Governor's Policy Office, is the lead agency responsible for the Early Childhood Advisory Council, with primary responsibility assigned to Ms. Anne Bryan, Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood. The Policy Office advises the Governor and other members of her Administration on policy issues and works to coordinate and implement the Governor's policy agenda with local, state, and federal partners. Other roles and functions of the Policy Office include monitoring emerging developments in various issue areas, conducting issue-related research to identify model policies and best practices, and providing content expertise for briefs and strategic communications efforts.

### Third Party Agreements

Following the rules delineated by the State of North Carolina’s Office of Economic Recovery and Investment, all contracts for services using Recovery Act funds will undergo a competitive bidding process or receive approval for an exemption. Thus, there are no third party agreements at this time for the ECAC’s work.

### Budget and Budget Justification

This section of the application presents the budget and justification for the ECAC. The budget may change over the course of the project due to changing needs and activities.

#### Year 1 Budget

Category	Federal Budget	Non-Federal Budget	Total Budget
Personnel	\$100,000		\$100,000
Fringe Benefits	\$22,000		\$22,000
Travel	\$10,681		\$10,681
Equipment	--		--
Supplies	\$1,800		\$1,800
Contractual	\$470,000		
Other	\$25,200		
<i>Total Direct</i>	<i>\$629,681</i>		
<i>Indirect (.029%)</i>	<i>\$18,261</i>		
<i>Total Direct &amp; Indirect</i>	<i>\$647,942</i>		

**Additional Year 1 Budget Details**

<b>Personnel</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Total</b>
Early Childhood Policy Advisor	.50			
TBH Assistant	1.0			
<b>Other</b>				
Communications				\$4,800
Computer support & Internet				\$2,400
Printing				\$1,500
Meetings				\$16,500
<b>Contractual</b>				
Meeting Facilitation				\$10,000
Strategic Planning, Needs Assessment, & Policy Forum				\$200,000
Community College Incentives				\$120,000
Public Awareness				\$125,000
Data Systems				\$15,000

**Year 2 Budget**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Federal Budget</b>	<b>Non-Federal Budget</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>
Personnel	\$100,000		\$100,000
Fringe Benefits	\$22,000		\$22,000
Travel	\$10,681		\$10,681
Equipment	--		--
Supplies	\$1,800		\$1,800
Contractual	\$1,025,000		
Other	\$18,700		
<i>Total Direct</i>	<i>\$1,178,181</i>		
<i>Indirect (.029%)</i>	<i>\$34,167</i>		
<i>Total Direct and Indirect</i>	<i>\$1,212,348</i>		

**Additional Year 2 Budget Details**

<b>Personnel</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Total</b>
Early Childhood Policy Advisor	.50			
TBH Assistant	1.0			
<b>Other</b>				
Communications				\$4,800
Computer support & Internet				\$2,400
Printing				\$1,500
Meetings				\$10,000
<b>Contractual</b>				
Meeting Facilitation				\$10,000
Early Care and Education				\$250,000
Health				\$250,000
Family Strengthening				\$250,000
Public Awareness				\$250,000
Data Systems				\$15,000

**Year 3 Budget**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Federal Budget</b>	<b>Non-Federal Budget</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>
Personnel	\$100,000		\$100,000
Fringe Benefits	\$22,000		\$22,000
Travel	\$10,681		\$10,681
Equipment	--		--
Supplies	\$1,800		\$1,800
Contractual	\$1,005,975		
Other	\$18,700		
<i>Total Direct</i>	<i>\$1,159,156</i>		
<i>Indirect (.029%)</i>	<i>\$33,616</i>		
<i>Total Direct and Indirect</i>	<i>\$1,192,772</i>		

**Additional Year 3 Budget Details**

<b>Personnel</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Total</b>
Early Childhood Policy Advisor	.50			
TBH Assistant	1.0			
<b>Other</b>				
Communications				\$4,800
Computer support & Internet				\$2,400
Printing				\$1,500
Meetings				\$10,000
<b>Contractual</b>				
Meeting Facilitation				\$10,000
Early Care and Education				\$250,000
Health				\$250,000
Family Strengthening				\$250,000
Public Awareness				\$180,975
Data Systems				\$15,000
State Meeting				\$50,000

**Budget Justification**

**Personnel.** Funds are requested to pay for .50 FTE of the Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood, who will work closely with the Chair to lead the work of the ECAC. Funds are requested for 1.00 FTE of the ECAC Assistant, who will coordinate and support the daily work of the ECAC. Staff salaries are established by the State of North Carolina.

**Fringe Benefits.** Fringe benefits are calculated at 22% of salaries (covering retirement, social security, FICA, and health insurance).

**Travel.** Each year of the grant, \$10,681 is requested to cover project-related travel for staff and mileage reimbursement for members of the ECAC. Staff travel includes one 4-day (3 night) trip to an ACF meeting in Washington, DC and one 4-day (3 night) trip to another national meeting. Travel funds are also requested for staff to make two overnight trips within the state of NC. Detailed estimates for these trips are included in the table below. Mileage will be reimbursed at the North Carolina state rate (which is currently .50 per mile). State rates for per diem will also apply (\$35.15 per day for in-state meals and \$37.50 for out-of-state meals).

	ACF Meeting in DC <i>4 days, 3 nights</i>	National Meeting <i>4 days, 3 nights</i>	NC Overnight Trips <i>two 1-night trips</i>
Airfare	\$325	\$500	--
Airport parking	\$40 (\$10/day)	\$40 (\$10/day)	--
Hotel	\$600 (\$200/night)	\$600 (\$200/night)	\$100
Per Diem	\$150 (37.50x4)	\$150 (37.50x4)	\$70.30
Mileage	\$25 (50 miles round trip to airport x .50)	\$25 (50 miles x .50)	\$150 (mileage reimbursement)
Ground transportation	\$70	\$70	--
Misc. (tips, etc.)	\$10	\$10	--
<i>total</i>	<i>\$1,220</i>	<i>\$1,395</i>	<i>\$641 (\$320 x2)</i>

A total of \$1800 is requested each year to cover mileage reimbursement for staff to attend 12 NC project-related meetings a year (12 trips x 300 miles roundtrip x .50=1800). Finally, \$5,625 is requested to provide mileage reimbursement for 25 members of the ECAC to attend three ECAC-related meetings a year (3 trips x 150 miles round trip x .50=\$225 per member.  $225 \times 25 = \$5,625$ ).

**Equipment.** No funds are requested for equipment.

**Supplies.** Each year of the grant, \$1,800 (\$150 per month) is requested to cover project-related materials, supplies and in-house copying costs.

**Contractual.** As noted previously, there are no contracts currently in place. We will follow the state guidelines specified by the NC Office of Economic Recovery and Investment.

In Year 1, a total of \$470,000 is requested for contractual services. The contractual funds in Year 1 will be needed to support 5 activities. We request \$10,000 to support a consultant to help design and facilitate ECAC meetings. We request \$200,000 to support the strategic planning process, policy forum, and needs assessment work of the ECAC. We request \$120,000 to provide \$6,000 incentives to support each of 20 community colleges with early childhood programs to become accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. We request \$125,000 to support the ECAC's public commitment and awareness activities. Finally, we request \$15,000 to continue planning and preparing for an integrated early childhood data system that utilizes a shared common unique identifier.

In Year 2, a total of \$1,025,000 is requested for contractual services. The contractual funds in Year 2 will be needed to support 6 activities. We request \$10,000 to support a consultant to help design and facilitate ECAC meetings. We request \$250,000 to support the

ECAC's public commitment and awareness activities. We request \$250,000 to support early care and education activities; the particular activities will be determined in the Year 1 strategic planning process. We request \$250,000 to support health activities; the particular activities will be determined in the Year 1 strategic planning process. We request \$250,000 to support family strengthening activities; the particular activities will be determined in the Year 1 strategic planning process. We request \$15,000 to continue working on an integrated early childhood data system that utilizes a shared common unique identifier.

In Year 3, a total of \$1,005,975 is requested for contractual services. The contractual funds in Year 3 will be needed to support 7 activities. We request \$10,000 to support a consultant to help design and facilitate ECAC meetings. We request \$180,975 to support the ECAC's public commitment and awareness activities. We request \$250,000 to support early care and education activities; the particular activities will be determined in the Year 1 strategic planning process. We request \$250,000 to support health activities; the particular activities will be determined in the Year 1 strategic planning process. We request \$250,000 to support family strengthening activities; the particular activities will be determined in the Year 1 strategic planning process. We request \$15,000 to continue working on an integrated early childhood data system that utilizes a shared common unique identifier. We request \$50,000 to support a statewide meeting.

**Other.** In Year 1, a total of \$25,200 is requested for other expenses. This includes \$4,800 (\$400 per month) for ECAC mailings and staff communications costs such as land line and cell phone fees and maintenance as well as long distance charges. It also includes \$2,400 (\$200 per month) for computer support and internet service for ECAC staff. Large printing jobs are

estimated to cost \$1,500 (\$125 per month). Finally, \$16,500 is requested for meeting costs for ECAC meetings, strategic planning, public hearings, and other ECAC-related meetings. Meeting costs may include room rental, food, audiovisual equipment, and other necessary costs.

For each of the next two years of the grant (Year 2 and 3), \$18,700 is requested for other expenses. This includes \$4,800 (\$400 per month) for ECAC mailings and staff communications costs such as land line and cell phone fees and maintenance as well as long distance charges. It also includes \$2,400 (\$200 per month) for computer support and internet service for ECAC staff. Large printing jobs are estimated to cost \$1,500 (\$125 per month). Finally, \$10,000 is requested for meeting costs for ECAC meetings, strategic planning, public hearings, and other ECAC-related meetings. Meeting costs may include room rental, food, audiovisual equipment, and other necessary costs.

**Indirect Costs.** As specified by the North Carolina Office of Economic Recovery and Investment, the indirect cost for this project is .029% of direct costs annually.

**Non-Federal Resources.** The required non-federal match for this application is provided through the State of North Carolina's allocation to the WAGE\$ program, which provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers, directors and family child care providers working with children between the ages of birth-5. Across the 3 years of the project, the WAGE\$ match is \$7,123,809 distributed in proportion to the requested federal funds. In Year 1, the state WAGE\$ match is \$1,511,864. In Year 2, the state WAGE\$ match is \$2,828,812. In Year 3, the state WAGE\$ match is \$2,783,133.

## **Appendix A: Governor Bev Perdue's Letter of Support**



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
20301 MAIL SERVICE CENTER • RALEIGH, NC 27699-0301

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE  
GOVERNOR

July 21, 2010

Mr. David Kadan, ACF Grants Management Officer  
Administration for Children and Families  
Division of Discretionary Grants  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW  
Aerospace 16<sup>th</sup> Floor East  
Washington, D. C. 20447

Dear Mr. Kadan:

I am pleased to submit the attached application for funding to support the North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council and our state's next steps in building a comprehensive, integrated system of services for young children as well. I have always had a deep personal commitment to helping assure the best possible outcomes for our youngest citizens, and, as governor, one of my top priorities is making sure all children are healthy and ready to start school.

I have designated the Governor's Policy Office as the agency responsible for management of the Early Childhood Advisory Council. Anne Bryan, my senior policy advisor on early childhood, has the responsibility of coordinating its activities.

As our application indicates, North Carolina has been a leader in our early childhood programs for many years now, and we look forward to continuing to take bold and effective action on behalf of our young children. Thank you for the support that this grant offers toward that goal.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Governor.

Bev Perdue

## Appendix B: NC Early Childhood Advisory Council Strategic Report

*“When we invest wisely in children and families, the next generation will pay that back through a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship.”* National Scientific Council on the Developing Child<sup>27</sup>

Governor Bev Perdue is creating North Carolina’s Early Childhood Advisory Council as an investment in our future. Research has demonstrated that the early years are critical to ensuring success in both school and life. Many aspects of brain architecture are established before age 6 when children enter school, and we know that this brain architecture is shaped by children’s early experiences.<sup>28</sup> Further, “scientific consensus is emerging that the origins of adult disease are often found among developmental and biological disruptions occurring during the early years of life.”<sup>29</sup> What happens in the first five years of life matters for decades to come.

The Governor’s vision is that all of North Carolina’s young children birth to 5 are healthy and learning to their full potential—developing their readiness for success in school, citizenship, and life. In fact, Governor Perdue has stated that early childhood is the “Ready” of her *Career and College—Ready, Set, Go!* education agenda. The Governor has called upon the North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) to lead our state to create and sustain a shared vision for young children and a comprehensive, integrated system of high quality early care and education, family strengthening, and health services that support ready children, families, and communities. North Carolina is a national leader in early childhood. The federal funding available through the ECAC provides an opportunity to expand our success and accomplish even more for our state’s young children.

North Carolina’s Early Childhood Advisory Council will begin its work addressing **5 major goals.**

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<sup>27</sup> National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2007). *The science of early childhood development: Closing the gap between what we know and what we do.* <http://www.developingchild.net>

<sup>28</sup> National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2007). *The timing and quality of early experiences combine to shape brain architecture: Working paper #5.* <http://www.developingchild.net>

<sup>29</sup> Shonkoff, J. P., Boyce, W. T., & McEwen, B. S. (2009). Neuroscience, molecular biology, and the childhood roots of health disparities: Building a new framework for health promotion and disease prevention, *Journal of American Medical Association*, 301, pp. 2252-2259. doi: 10.1001/jama.2009.754

1. **Develop an integrated, comprehensive 3-year strategic plan** for high-quality health, family strengthening, and early care and education services that support ready children, families, and communities.
2. **Strengthen the quality of programs** and expand opportunities for young children and their families to participate in high-quality programs.
3. **Strengthen awareness and commitment** among families, business, and policy makers to ensure that all young children in North Carolina are healthy, learning, and thriving.
4. **Strengthen coordination and collaboration** across service sectors to promote high-quality, efficient services for young children and their families.
5. **Support the implementation of an integrated data system** that meets the individual and collective needs and capacities of state-funded programs serving young children birth to age five.

### **North Carolina as a National Leader**

North Carolina has long been a national leader in its commitment to young children and its innovative efforts to build a system of services that best meets the needs of young children.

Among these exemplary efforts are:

- *Smart Start*. Created in 1993, Smart Start is a pioneering public-private partnership designed to ensure that every child reaches his or her potential and is prepared for success in a global community. Every state in the nation has requested assistance and resources from the Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center, created in 2001. Smart Start has become a national model for how to support local community-based partnerships to work together to best meet the needs of young children and their families.
- *Star Rated License*. North Carolina was the first state to develop a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for child care programs—and is still one of only two states that have integrated a QRIS into its state child care licensing system.
- *The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> Project*. Twenty years ago, Child Care Services Association launched in NC the Teacher Education And Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> Project to address the issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover within the early childhood workforce. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> Project gives scholarships to child care staff to complete coursework in early childhood education and to increase their compensation. The program is now implemented in 21 states.
- *More at Four*. In 2001, North Carolina established More at Four, a state-funded pre-kindergarten program designed to serve four-year-old children at risk of later school difficulties. More at Four is ranked as one of the top 10 pre-k programs in the country and

for several years has been one of only two state programs that have met all of the quality standards benchmarks.<sup>30</sup>

- *ABCD Initiative.* Through the Assuring Better Child Development (ABCD) initiative, North Carolina is a national leader in the use of appropriate general developmental and behavioral screenings and surveillance in primary care settings. Most well-child visits for young children (under age 5) conducted by primary care practices include use of a formal validated developmental screening tool.

The federal funding through the ECAC provides an opportunity to build on North Carolina's success to enable us to better serve young children and their families. North Carolina's investments in young children have made a tremendous impact—and yet there is still work to be done. For instance, nearly 15% of African American babies born in NC in 2008 weighed less than 2500 grams.<sup>31</sup> A little more than 30% of children birth to 5 in NC do not have a medical home.<sup>32</sup> In 2008, only 46% of infants and toddlers served in licensed programs across the state were enrolled in high quality 4- or 5-star licensed child care centers or homes—with great variation across the state (regional percentages ranged from 13% to 66%).<sup>33</sup>

North Carolina must continue to invest in its youngest citizens by bringing together leaders across service sectors to develop a strong, comprehensive, integrated system of state services for young children and their families. The Early Childhood Advisory Council will serve an important leadership role in supporting the next steps in North Carolina's ongoing system-building efforts.

## **ECAC Membership, Responsibilities, and Structure**

North Carolina is establishing its Early Childhood Advisory Council. This report describes the current membership, responsibilities, and initial structure for the ECAC. Over the coming year, other members are expected to be added, and the structure may evolve.

**Membership.** The NC ECAC will be comprised of gubernatorial appointees who serve on a voluntary, unpaid basis. ECAC members will represent a broad range of constituencies including

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<sup>30</sup> Barnett, W. S., Epstein, D. J., Friedman, A. H., Sansanelli, R. A., & Hustedt, J. T. (2009). *The state of preschool 2009: State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

<sup>31</sup> State Center for Health Statistics NC Department of Health and Human Services. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/births/matched/2008/all.html>

<sup>32</sup> Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. (2007). *National Survey of Children's Health*. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent health website. <http://www.nschdata.org>

<sup>33</sup> Child Care Services Association. (2008). *Who's caring for our babies now? Executive summary*. <http://www.childcareservices.org>

early childhood care and education, early intervention, higher education, state government agencies, private nonprofit organizations, health care providers, business, parents, local community leaders, and private philanthropic organizations.

**Responsibilities.** The following ECAC responsibilities have been delineated by the Governor:

- a. Strengthen coordination and collaboration among the various sectors and settings of early childhood programs in the State, including health, family support, and early care and education.
- b. Create and sustain a shared vision for young children in North Carolina and adopt system-wide outcomes for young children.
- c. Develop a statewide strategic plan that delineates major goals and actions for reaching the desired system-wide outcomes for young children.
- d. Identify key infrastructure needs or enhancements and recommend policies to promote and sustain a comprehensive, integrated system of high-quality, health, family support, and early care and education services that supports ready children, families, and communities.
- e. Identify funding priorities and recommend to the Governor a budget for a high-quality, comprehensive, integrated system of state services to young children and their families.
- f. Conduct periodic statewide needs assessments on the quality and availability of programs and services for children from birth to school entry.
- g. Recommend enhancements in state early learning standards and undertake efforts to maintain high-quality comprehensive early learning standards, as needed.
- h. Recommend strategies to improve the quality of health, family support, and early care and education services for young children and their families and to increase overall participation of children in existing state and federal programs.
- i. Identify opportunities for and barriers to coordination and collaboration among existing programs for young children.
- j. Recommend strategies to create an effective, comprehensive, integrated professional development system and career advancement plans for the workforce serving young children and their families.
- k. Assess the capacity and effectiveness of two- and four-year public and private institutions of higher education in the state toward supporting the development of early childhood educators and other staff serving young children and their families.
- l. Support the development and implementation of a statewide, unified, longitudinal data collection system for young children.
- m. Develop and implement plans to increase awareness and commitment among parents, professionals, business, policy makers, and the public at large to ensuring that all young children in North Carolina are healthy, learning, and thriving.

- n. Submit to the Governor a statewide strategic report addressing the activities of the Advisory Council, and provide a copy of the strategic report to the State Director of Head Start Collaboration. After submission of the strategic report, the Advisory Council shall meet periodically to review any implementation of the recommendations in such report and any changes in state and local needs.
- o. Monitor progress toward goals and present an annual written report of progress to date.
- p. Coordinate and oversee relevant federal grants and grant programs to maximize the effectiveness of resources in working toward the state's goals for the early childhood system and outcomes for young children.
- q. Seek, identify and advocate for resources, including submitting grant proposals, for funding to implement the state's early childhood initiatives. To the extent funds are available, the Advisory Council is specifically authorized to make grants to other entities, to contract with other entities and to utilize funds for the operation of the Advisory Council.

**Structure.** The ECAC is scheduled to meet at least twice a year. The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee is the first committee to be created and includes representatives of major state agencies responsible for serving young children and their families. This committee will identify possible strategies for strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of services for young children and their families. Additional committees will be established, as needed, and may include individuals who are not part of the ECAC. The ECAC may also work with existing workgroups or committees to support the development of a comprehensive system of services for young children and their families. The structure of the ECAC will be further delineated in the coming year.

### **Needs Assessment**

Federal guidelines require the ECAC to conduct a periodic needs assessment on which to guide the state's efforts to support the health and development of young children birth to five and their families. In the coming year, the ECAC will thoroughly review data about children, families, and services as part of developing a strategic plan. ECAC members will also review past needs assessments and formulate plans for coordinating and/or expanding needs assessments related to services for young children and their families. For instance, Smart Start legislation requires a needs and resources assessment every three years to help guide local partnership program planning and statewide resource allocation decisions. The last needs and resources assessment was completed in 2003 and focused on children's demographics, early childhood programs, and the early childhood workforce. In developing NC's ECAC application, various reports and

sources of existing data were utilized. Additionally, summary information from a series of public forums conducted by the North Carolina Partnership for Children was used.

### Approach

The ECAC will focus its first year of work on the first goal—to develop a comprehensive 3-year strategic plan. Years 2 and 3 will focus on activities related to Goals 2-5 and respond to priorities identified through the strategic planning process. Proposed activities for each goal are described below. **It is important to note that activities may change based on the strategic planning process.**

<b>Goal 1. Develop an integrated, comprehensive 3-year strategic plan.</b>												
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Projected Timeline</b>											
	<b>Year 1</b>				<b>Year 2</b>				<b>Year 3</b>			
	<b>Q 1</b>	<b>Q 2</b>	<b>Q 3</b>	<b>Q 4</b>	<b>Q 1</b>	<b>Q 2</b>	<b>Q 3</b>	<b>Q 4</b>	<b>Q 1</b>	<b>Q 2</b>	<b>Q 3</b>	<b>Q 4</b>
<b>Formalize the structure and operation of the ECAC.</b>												
Develop a formal structure for meetings and committee work, coordinate with existing groups, and develop shared knowledge among ECAC members.	X	X	X	X								
Identify all relevant organizations, councils, and committees and meet (in person or via conference call) to discuss coordination.	X	X										
Develop an ECAC handbook that delineates the structure and operation of the ECAC and its relationship to existing groups.				X								
<b>Conduct a needs assessment.</b>												
Summarize information from existing, recent data about statewide needs of children and families.	X	X										
Summarize information from existing, recent data about the coordination and integration of early care and education, health, and family strengthening systems.	X	X										

Complete various policy scans (e.g., CLASP Tool to Examine state Child Care Subsidy Policies and Promote Stable, Quality Care for Low-Income Babies and Toddlers; Zero to Three's Self-Assessment for states).	X	X	X										
Convene a policy forum.				X									
Write a report that summarizes findings from the multiple needs assessment activities.				X	X								
Develop a plan for conducting a statewide early childhood needs assessment.													X
<b>Develop a comprehensive strategic plan.</b>													
Develop a process for creating a statewide strategic planning.	X												
Review existing indicators and outcomes.	X												
Determine a small set of systems-level child and family outcomes.		X											
Develop a draft 3-year strategic plan.			X										
Obtain public feedback on the strategic plan through public forums and web-based surveys.			X	X									
Finalize the strategic plan.				X									
<b>Goal 2. Strengthen the quality of programs and expand opportunities.</b>													
	<b>Projected Timeline</b>												
	<b>Year 1</b>				<b>Year 2</b>				<b>Year 3</b>				
<b>Activities</b>	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	
	<b>Q 1</b>	<b>Q 2</b>	<b>Q 3</b>	<b>Q 4</b>	<b>Q 1</b>	<b>Q 2</b>	<b>Q 3</b>	<b>Q 4</b>	<b>Q 1</b>	<b>Q 2</b>	<b>Q 3</b>	<b>Q 4</b>	
<b>Identify and pilot developmental screening &amp; referral systems.</b>													
Review current screening and referral practices, identifying barriers and opportunities.	X	X											
Select strategies to support screening and referral.			X										

Issue an RFP to solicit applications from organizations interested in implementing these strategies.			X									
Select organization and establish contract to conduct the work.				X								
Screening and referral strategies will be implemented in pilot counties.					X	X	X	X				
Appropriate next steps will be identified.								X				
Screening and referral strategies will continue to be implemented.									X	X	X	X
Next steps identified in Year 2 will be implemented.									X	X	X	X
<b>Make policy and budget recommendations to the Governor and policymakers.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Other objectives and activities to be determined.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Goal 3. Strengthen Awareness and Commitment.</b>												
	<b>Projected Timeline</b>											
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Year 1</b>				<b>Year 2</b>				<b>Year 3</b>			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
<b>Develop a communications plan.</b>												
Identify strategic communications partners.	X	X										
Hire a consultant to provide assistance in developing a communications plan.		X										
Draft a 2-year ECAC communications plan.		X	X									
Obtain feedback on the communications plan.			X									
Finalize the communications plan and identify priority activities.				X								
<b>Other objectives and activities to be determined.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

<b>Goal 4. Strengthen coordination and collaboration.</b>												
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Projected Timeline</b>											
	<b>Year 1</b>				<b>Year 2</b>				<b>Year 3</b>			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
<b>Provide incentives for community colleges to become nationally accredited.</b>												
Develop a recruitment strategy to identify and select 20 community colleges to become nationally accredited.	X	X										
Select the 20 participating community colleges			X	X	X	X						
Award grants to the participating community colleges.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Strengthen coordination and improve the efficiency of services for young children and their families.</b>												
The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee will identify possible ways for state agencies to serve children and families more efficiently.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee will identify key issues for the ECAC regarding system coordination and collaboration.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
The Early Childhood Systems Resource Committee will help implement ECAC recommendations regarding coordination and collaboration.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Make policy and budget recommendations to the Governor and policymakers.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Other objectives and activities to be determined.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

<b>Goal 5. Support the creation and implementation of an integrated data system.</b>												
<b>Objectives (in bold) &amp; Activities</b>	<b>Projected Timeline</b>											
	<b>Year 1</b>				<b>Year 2</b>				<b>Year 3</b>			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
<b>Identify and coordinate existing data integration efforts.</b>												
Identify and contact individuals, organizations, and groups addressing data integration for state-funded services for children B-5 and their families across all service sectors.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop and implement a plan to coordinate existing efforts.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Develop the data systems portion of the strategic plan that supports the larger early childhood goals and priorities.</b>												
Articulate data needs related to the goals and outcomes delineated by the ECAC.			X	X	X							
Develop a set of objectives, activities, and responsibilities related to data systems as part of the larger strategic plan.			X	X	X	X						
<b>Make policy and budget recommendations to the Governor and policymakers.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Other objectives and activities to be determined.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

In closing, Governor Bev Perdue intends for the North Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council to add value to our existing early childhood efforts by bringing together a diverse group of people both within and outside of state government to move us into the next frontier of state-level systems building. There is still much to do to ensure that each young child in NC is healthy and learning to his or her full potential. The ECAC must work to continue to strengthen public commitment and maximize all resources to ensure the best possible outcomes for North Carolina’s youngest citizens.

## Appendix C: Job Descriptions

### Governor's Senior Policy Advisor on Early Childhood

**Purpose of the position:** The Governor's Senior Policy Advisor will provide leadership to the NC Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) to ensure that Council is able to carry out its duties as established by executive order. The Senior Advisor will advise the Governor on relevant policy issues and will work to coordinate and implement the Governor's policy agenda with local, state, and federal partners. The Senior Advisor will build effective partnerships across policy makers, appropriate governmental agencies, private sector organizations, and the public to create a shared vision for young children and a comprehensive, integrated system of high quality health, family strengthening and early care and education services to improve developmental outcomes for children birth to 5 years. The Executive Director reports to the Governor.

The Senior Advisor will have a comprehensive understanding of the issues related to early childhood development and will use that understanding to identify and analyze policy challenges and opportunities and to guide the Council as it develops policy and program level strategies to support the well being of young children and their families in North Carolina.

#### **Major Responsibilities and Key Tasks:**

- Define scope and develop and implement goals and expected outcomes of the Early Childhood Advisory Council
- With input from key stakeholders, set the agenda for the Early Childhood Advisory Council and its committees
- Coordinate the development of relevant policies and budget recommendations through the ECAC
- Provide direction and support to ECAC membership, committees, and staff
- Serve as the liaison between the ECAC and all other early childhood system building initiatives in North Carolina
- Establish partnerships and effective working relationships with a variety of stakeholders to promote improvements in early childhood programs and services and shared responsibility and accountability for positive outcomes for young children
- Oversee the development of the state's strategic plan for early childhood
- Coordinate the development of briefing papers and reports that synthesize and structure issues for the ECAC and its committees in order to assure that proposed strategies are well grounded in the science of child development and likely to improve outcomes for children and families
- Monitor progress toward the goals of the Governor and the ECAC and oversee federal grant reporting

- Identify federal, state and local resources that could be leveraged to sustain the work of the Council beyond the grant period
- Provide leadership and strategic direction in recommending efforts to enhance outcomes for young children
- Advise the Governor and staff on issues related to improving outcomes for young children
- Work with other local, state, and federal partners to develop, implement, and coordinate the Governor's policy goal and agenda as they relate to young children
- Represent the Governor, as requested
- Supervise the work of the Early Childhood Assistant
- Carry out other responsibilities, as assigned

**Educational Requirements:** Masters degree and 10 years work experience in relevant fields

**Required Work Experience, Skills and Abilities:** Demonstrated experience managing large-scale projects involving a variety of high-level stakeholders. Strong writing, oral, and interpersonal skills. Collaborative skills and a team approach to accomplishing work. Able to organize and prioritize tasks and meet deadlines. Prefer knowledge of North Carolina's health, education, and human services systems; contract and fiscal management experience; and an understanding of early childhood policy issues.

### **Early Childhood Assistant**

**Purpose of the position:** The Early Childhood Assistant will coordinate the day-to-day activities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) to ensure that the Council is able to carry out the duties outlined in the executive order that establishes it. The Early Childhood Assistant will work under the direction of the Governor's Senior Policy Advisor on Early Childhood and will provide day-to-day project management for the Council. This position will also respond to requests from the Chair and members of the ECAC. The Assistant will have frequent written and oral communications with a wide variety of people, including executive and management staff, co-workers, program and administrative staff, representatives of businesses and organizations, elected and appointed officials and their staff, and the general public. The Early Childhood Assistant will have a comprehensive understanding of issues related to early childhood development and the science of child development and will use that understanding in working with the Council as it develops policy and program level strategies to support the well being of young children and their families in North Carolina.

#### **Major Responsibilities and Key Tasks:**

- Manage ongoing ECAC activities and daily operations
- Maintain effective working relationships with a wide variety of early childhood stakeholders
- Identify opportunities and challenges and bring to the attention of the Senior Policy Advisor, as appropriate
- Identify federal, state, and local resources that could be leveraged to support the work of the Council
- Develop and manage the project communication plan
- Manage project staff and resources
- Track deliverables and monitor and report on progress of the project to all stakeholders
- Schedule meetings, maintain calendar, arrange conferences, assemble and coordinate background materials. Attend such meetings and conferences and prepare summaries of minutes of the meeting's conclusions or agreed upon courses of action.
- Carry out other responsibilities, as assigned

**Educational Requirements:** Bachelor's degree and at least two years work experience in relevant fields.

**Required Work Experience, Skills and Abilities:** Experience in program development and coordination preferred. Strong writing, oral, and interpersonal skills.

**Appendix D: Letter of Support for Required Non-Federal Match**



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**

2001 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2001

Tel 919-733-4534 • Fax 919-715-4645

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor

Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

**June 14, 2010**

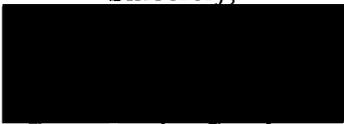
**Ms. Anne Bryan  
Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood  
Office of the Governor  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301**

**Dear Anne:**

**I am pleased to support the application for federal funding to support the work of North Carolina's Early Childhood Advisory Council. The State of North Carolina will provide the required \$7,123,809 matching funds through our state allocation for the Child Care WAGES Project, which provides education-based salary supplements to early childhood directors, teachers, and family child care providers. Each year of the 3-year start-up period, \$2,374,603 will be available from WAGES as North Carolina's match for the federal funds. These funds are not committed as matching funds for any other project.**

**Please let me know if I can be of further assistance in this important and exciting next stage in North Carolina's development of a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood system.**

**Sincerely,**



**Lanier Cansler**

