

***New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council***

**August 1, 2010**

*Submitted by:*

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services,  
Division for Children, Youth and Families

In partnership with:

The New Hampshire Department of Education, Early Learning NH,  
The New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council Steering Committee and  
The Office of the Governor

*Submitted to:*

The U.S. Office of Health and Human Services,  
Administration for Children and Families  
Division of Discretionary Grants

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## Project Description

“ THE GREATER DANGER FOR MOST OF US IS NOT THAT OUR AIM IS TOO HIGH  
AND WE MISS IT, BUT THAT IT IS TOO LOW AND WE REACH IT. ”  
*Michelangelo*

With this application, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) requests \$500,000 from the funding available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5) as designated to establish a state early childhood advisory council. The one-time start up allocation is a unique opportunity for New Hampshire to firmly establish an early childhood advisory council with the authority, the attention and the capacity to provide strategic direction for strengthening statewide coordination and collaboration among the wide array of early childhood services and programs across the State.

The newly-forming New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council (the Council) began formally as a Steering Committee in January 2010 with the approval of the Office of the Governor. The charge of the committee is to determine the final structure of the Council by the end of the year and begin to address the Council responsibilities as specified in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (Head Start Act). The Council's **vision** is “All New Hampshire children and their families are healthy, learning, and thriving now and in the future,” and its focus is on expectant families and children from birth through grade 3 and their families. The **mission** of the Council is to “provide leadership that promotes a comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable early childhood system that achieves positive outcomes for young children and families, investing in a solid future for the Granite State.”

As we look for ways to keep New Hampshire prosperous, we need to consider the connection between child development and economic development. Child development is the

foundation for community and economic development because capable children are the bedrock of a prosperous and sustainable Granite State. The early years of life matter because early experiences affect the architecture of the maturing brain. Children begin learning as soon as they are born, and their brains are built from the bottom up. Scientists now know that the interactive influences of genes and experience shape the developing brain. (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000) Children's hearts and minds are molded by the relationships and environments they experience. The active ingredient is the "serve and return" relationships with their parents and other caregivers in their family or community. When we give our youngest citizens a stimulating environment with plenty of opportunities to explore and discover and interact positively with others, we lay a strong foundation for their future. In partnership with parents, high quality early childhood programs and services can provide this strong foundation and give children the tools they need to succeed in school and in life. We all benefit when we give children the right start. The mission of the Council supports that strong start for all children.

New Hampshire requests one-time funding specifically to achieve four major goals that are a) based on recommendations from previous early childhood systems building efforts and the Council's June 2010 needs assessment, and b) directly related to the requirements for state councils as specified in The Head Start Act.

**Goal 1: Strengthen New Hampshire's early childhood infrastructure** by assuring the newly-forming Council has the authority and the mandate to provide strategic direction, the capacity to fulfill its mission and its responsibilities as determined by its statewide strategic report, and the ability to sustain its work.

**Goal 2: Coordinate the development and implementation of an integrated and comprehensive strategic plan for early childhood in New Hampshire** by coordinating and/or conducting a sustainable process for periodic statewide early childhood needs assessments and initiating a statewide planning process to include those to whom the Council provides strategic direction.

**Goal 3: Develop a framework to evaluate the Council’s outcomes/impacts including the progress of New Hampshire’s young children and their families** by convening an evaluation and early childhood data systems task force that works in conjunction with the Governor’s P-16 Working Group<sup>1</sup> to identify key evaluation questions, completing a data mapping process of existing data and information sources and implementing feasible recommendations for enhancing the State’s capacity to document child and family outcomes.

**Goal 4: Foster public awareness of, promote access to, and build commitment for quality early childhood programs and services** by launching a sustainable public engagement and media campaign with the business and philanthropic communities.

## A. Objectives and Need for Assistance

“ INVESTING IN THE EARLY YEARS IS THE BEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK. ”  
Former U.S. Senator Warren Rudman  
Nashua, NH May 2006

### 1. Need for Assistance and for Coordination and Collaboration

New Hampshire consistently ranks among the top states in the nation for many indicators and predictors of child well-being. For example, in 2006, New Hampshire ranked third best in births to mothers with less than 12 years education (10.9%), first in total births to teens (6.1%), and second in births to mothers receiving late or no prenatal care (4.1%) (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006). In 2008, New Hampshire ranked best in the country for the percent of people living in poverty in the past 12 months (8%) and best in the country for children under 18 years of age living in poverty (9%)(Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). New Hampshire ranks fourth nationally for completion of childhood immunization, with 79.6% of children ages two and under immunized (National Immunization Survey, 2008).

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<sup>1</sup> Established by executive order in 2006, the purpose of the P-16 Working Group is to communicate and collaborate across the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary elementary sectors to encourage students to stay in school, improve their academic performance, and to raise aspirations leading to enrollment in colleges and universities.

Despite its high ranking, significant needs remain for New Hampshire's young children and families, particularly in the areas of health care for those without insurance; substance abuse and mental health, childhood obesity, oral health care, family assistance, and access to early childhood supports and services (NH DHHS, 2009; NH Association for Infant MH, 2009). At the same time, New Hampshire, like many states, is experiencing a budget shortfall that has resulted in cuts to essential health and social services, further weakening the safety net for residents in need.

With support from ACF, the Council proposes to improve access to services and outcomes for expectant families and children from birth through third grade and their families through a strategic, statewide, systems approach and the attainment of four major goals articulated in the Project Description section and 11 associated objectives described in the following pages. Specifically, the Council will address the following four needs: a) Need for a strong early childhood system infrastructure in New Hampshire that addresses all areas of health and development for children and supports and services for their families (Goal 1); b) Need to promote systems thinking, coordination and collaboration across public and private organizations and agencies concerned with expectant families and children from birth through third grade and their families (Goal 2); c) Need for a framework and early childhood data system to evaluate child progress as related to the scope and work of the Council and promote quality, accessible early childhood supports and services (Goal 3); and d) Need for increased public awareness of and support for quality early childhood programs and services, as well as supportive public policies (Goal 4). Following is a description of each of the need areas and the associated goals and objectives.

**i. Need for a Strong Early Childhood Infrastructure: The Formation of the Council**

Like many states at the time the Head Start Act was passed, New Hampshire had several councils focusing wholly or in part on young children and families, but none that met all of its requirements. Included were the NH Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC), the NH Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the

Council for Children and Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions (CCACHC), and the Governor's P-16 Working Group. In response, a broad group of early childhood leaders developed recommendations for the establishment of the Council over a 12-month period of intensive planning, outreach to existing councils, and research on similar efforts in other states. In November 2009, Governor Lynch approved the recommendations and appointed representatives to the Council (Appendix A), with the understanding that membership could be expanded or changed and the Council would be fully functioning by fall 2010. The Governor also designated Early Learning NH<sup>2</sup> as the "coordinator of activities" for the Council, as it had been convening statewide meetings around early childhood systems building since 2008 in partnership with state agencies.

The ICC and CCAC agreed to appoint members to serve on the Council's Steering Committee starting in January 2010. Other members of the Steering Committee include representatives as outlined in the Head Start Act. The Council's structure will be further delineated in the coming year, and its stated goals and objectives are expected to evolve. See Section B, Approach, for more information on the structure of the Council.

### Guiding Principles

The NH Early Childhood Advisory Council is guided by the following eight principles pertaining to families and children, early childhood systems, and the Council itself.

#### **Families and Children:**

1. Families should be supported by communities and be partners with stakeholders and service providers in designing, coordinating, and evaluating supports, services, and programs.
2. Preventive approaches early in life provide a rich return on investment and are economically advantageous compared to costly remediation later in life.
3. Successful transitions for young children and their families sustain the foundation of healthy early childhood development.

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<sup>2</sup>Early Learning NH is a private, non-profit organization founded in 2003 to build a single early childhood leadership, public-policy, and member-services organization.

**Early Childhood Systems:**

4. Early childhood systems utilize evidence-based and promising practices to deliver high quality services and programs to young children and their families that are developmentally and culturally appropriate, and universally accessible.
5. Early childhood systems maximize efficiency and collaboration at both the state and local level, and are aligned with the strengths and individual needs of children and families.
6. Early childhood systems set high standards, self-evaluate and continuously improve.

**The Council:**

7. The Council will build on recent and ongoing early childhood planning efforts, research, and initiatives as well as lessons learned from national resources and input from stakeholders.
8. Communication, coordination, collaboration, and partnership across all sectors of the community, both public and private, ensure the effectiveness and impact of services.

As outlined in its July 2010 statewide strategic report (Appendix C), the Council, as required by the Head Start Act and endorsed by the Governor, will:

- Serve as the primary advisory body to the Governor's Office, state legislature, and state agencies regarding early care and education issues in the State of New Hampshire;
- Conduct periodic needs assessments on early childhood education program quality and availability for expectant families and children aged birth through grade 3 and their families, including pre-kindergarten services for children in families with low incomes<sup>3</sup>;
- Identify opportunities and barriers regarding collaboration and coordination among federally- and state-funded early care and education programs and the state agencies that administer these programs;
- Coordinate early care and education-related resources;

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<sup>3</sup> The Head Start Act requires a focus on children from birth to school entry. NH's Council expanded the target population.

- Promote changes in policy, legislation and practice that support and/or improve the lives of expectant families and children from birth through grade 3 and their families;
- Assess the capacity and effectiveness of New Hampshire’s institutions of higher education to support the development of early childhood educators;
- Generate recommendations for:
  - Increasing participation in federal/state/local early childhood education programs
  - Establishing a unified data system for public early childhood care and education programs and services to facilitate data-informed decision making
  - Promoting statewide professional development/career advancement for early childhood educators
  - Improving state early learning standards
- Provide strategic direction to state and community leaders
- Hold public hearings

New Hampshire’s early childhood infrastructure will be strengthened through the establishment of the Council and its work on Goal 1 and four primary objectives:

1. Assure the Council has the authority and mandate to provide strategic direction;
2. Assure the Council has the capacity to fulfill its mission and responsibilities as outlined in the Head Start Act and determined in the statewide strategic report;
3. Assure the Council has the ability to sustain its work; and
4. Determine the ideal governance structure to coordinate the State of New Hampshire’s early childhood programs and services.

## ii. Need to Promote Systems Thinking and Collaboration/Coordination

“ AS THE SLOGAN SAYS, ‘JUST DO IT.’ WE CAN COME TOGETHER  
TO COORDINATE OUR WORK AND OUR PLANNING.”  
*Nicholas Toumpas*  
Commissioner, NH Department of Health & Human Services  
February 2008

A key challenge for New Hampshire’s early childhood system building is that early childhood plans tend to be known almost exclusively within the early childhood community and remain unknown by state leaders and policymakers who have the ability to enact the recommendations. Throughout 2008, the proposed work was designed to bring some of these plans into the spotlight and put them in front of the leaders who have the clout and decision-making power to act. The work throughout 2009 was designed to envision an infrastructure with the authority and capacity to ensure comprehensive early childhood plans are created, well-coordinated, well-funded, and executed. It remains a challenge today for the CCAC to report annually on the five year plan’s progress because the group is comprised of all volunteers.

To further enhance coordination, DHHS’s Child Development Bureau collected strategic plans from public and private agencies, programs, and entities to create a document that provides information regarding cross system alignment of strategic plans. The Cross System Strategic Plan Alignment document was presented to the CCAC, where many of the agencies included in the Strategic Plan Alignment are represented. The goal of this document is to enhance the abilities of State programs, private agencies and professional organizations to coordinate their strategic plans, as well as their planning efforts. The Cross System Strategic Plan Alignment document is considered to be dynamic and will be updated regularly to reflect the needs of young children, school age children in child care, and families, as well as the plans developed and implemented to meet those needs. The next update for this document is scheduled for fall 2010 and will inform the work of the Council.

Additionally, New Hampshire's work with the FrameWorks Institute<sup>4</sup> over the past three years has sharpened the message of and promoted coordination among the disparate voices speaking on behalf of early childhood education in the State. Several members of the New Hampshire state team for the FrameWorks Study Circle sit on the Steering Committee of the Council. Following is a brief history of New Hampshire's statewide systems building efforts to date.

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<sup>4</sup> The FrameWorks Institute "designs, commissions, manages and publishes communications research to prepare nonprofit organizations to expand their constituency base, to build public will, and to further public understanding of specific social issues." [www.frameworks.org](http://www.frameworks.org)

### 2004 – 2006: The Comprehensive Planning

In New Hampshire, professionals and families within each critical area of early childhood development – early education, health (encompassing mental health, oral health and nutrition), family support, early intervention, and more – built networks, affiliations, and systems of care for young children. For years partners across New Hampshire, dedicated to the well being of young children, have been collaborating on initiatives to increase early childhood outcomes within each area. In 2004, the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) project, funded by the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau and administered by DHHS’s Maternal and Child Health Section (MCH), allowed these early childhood partners to begin bridging early childhood areas and work across systems. Those whose everyday work impacts the lives of young children and families dedicated time, effort, and input throughout the process. Their goal was to develop a road map to comprehensive, coordinated statewide systems that would increase outcomes for young children and families. Over 100 early childhood partners guided the development of the *Comprehensive Plan for Early Childhood Health and Development for New Hampshire: A Road Map to Collaboration* (2006) (the ECCS Plan). The ECCS Plan bridged access to medical homes and health insurance; social emotional development; early care and learning; and family support and parenting education (2006 executive summary and implementation plan available at [www.earlylearningnh.org](http://www.earlylearningnh.org)).

Performance measures were developed for each objective within the six goals, listed below, of the ECCS implementation plan.

- Goal #1 - All of New Hampshire’s young children and families are physically and emotionally healthy.
- Goal #2 - New Hampshire’s services for young children are coordinated on the state and local level.
- Goal #3 - State and local agencies that serve families of young children share information.

- Goal #4 - Families of young children in New Hampshire are supported by the State and by the communities they live in.
- Goal #5 - Quality early care and education services are available and accessible to all of New Hampshire's families with young children.
- Goal #6 - Decision makers across the state understand the importance and value of a comprehensive early childhood system (and promote the development of one).

Today, the ECCS project is moving forward the 2006 goals and objectives. The ECCS Coordinator in New Hampshire, Deirdre Dunn, works in close partnership with critical allies in the reshaping of comprehensive early childhood systems, collaborating with a broad representation across areas including the statewide network of Family Resource Centers; community health centers; Early Learning NH; New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund; DHHS, NH Department of Education (DOE), Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), Child Development Bureau, Community and Family Support, NH Head Start Collaboration Office; Bureau of Developmental Services, Family Centered Early Supports and Services; Divisions of Family Assistance and Behavioral Health, Parent Information Center, Family Voices, and the New Hampshire Association for Infant Mental Health. The ECCS project continues to look at creative and collaborative ways to incorporate the state ECCS goals into community specific plans that will encompass its priority areas: Health, Early Learning, Parenting Education, Family Support and Social/Emotional-Mental Health. To avoid duplicative efforts, the ECCS plan will inform the work of the Council.

Throughout 2006 another statewide planning effort was underway: the development of the New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC) five year plan. The CCAC is a legislatively-mandated group with the charge to develop a five year plan "to improve child care services that support children and families in New Hampshire." Many early education public and private partners participated in the year-long planning process. *The Five Year Plan for Child Care in New Hampshire* (January 2007) (5-Year Plan) stated, "New insights into brain

development suggest that as we care for our young children and institute policies or practices that affect their day-to-day experiences, the stakes are very high. We acknowledge that there are many ways that we as parents, caregivers, advocates, businesses, citizens, and policy makers can raise healthy, happy, and smart children. We can also take heart in the knowledge that there are many actions that we as a state are doing and can do, to strengthen the foundation for New Hampshire children for generations to come.” The four strategic goals for 2007-2011 recommended by the CCAC are:

1. Develop adequate, diversified financial resources;
2. Increase public awareness for the value of quality child care services;
3. Continue to develop the professionalism and standards in the field; and
4. Strengthen the infrastructure and capacity to support quality child care services in New Hampshire.

#### 2007 – 2008: The Question and the Call to Action

An early childhood meeting was held at the beginning of 2007 with DHHS leadership to present the two plans, previously described, as well as the recommendations of various legislative study commissions, including a new bill proposing to establish a “committee to study the educational and social services programs that serve families with children 6 years old and younger” (available at [www.earlylearningnh.org](http://www.earlylearningnh.org)). At the end of the presentations, Maggie Bishop, director of DCYF, asked, “Are these plans talking to each other?” After this revealing question was posed, it became evident that New Hampshire had multiple plans, reports and logic models that recommended how best to address in whole or in part the needs of the State’s young children and their families, created by numerous agencies, organizations, committees, councils, workgroups and task forces dedicated to addressing those needs.

It was clear there needed to be more coordination amongst the various planners as the plans did not “talk to each other.” New Hampshire’s array of public and private early childhood programs and services was guilty of “parallel play.” It was concluded that state, regional and

local entities operating in this manner do not serve young children and their families as well as they could.

In response, Ms. Bishop charged Early Learning NH with convening a small team of early childhood experts, including DCYF representatives, to envision how to better coordinate early childhood supports and services statewide. The small group of public and private partners, dubbed the “braintrust” by Early Learning NH (listed in the Council’s strategic report, Appendix C), met monthly to study other state models, brainstorm what might work best for New Hampshire, and advise Early Learning NH on its early childhood systems building efforts. Though the group was purposefully kept small as a brainstorming entity, larger group meetings would be convene throughout 2008 that involved over one hundred early childhood professionals, parents, community leaders, and policymakers. The braintrust was disbanded soon after January 2010 when the Steering Committee of the Council formally began.

Also in 2007, the BUILD Initiative<sup>5</sup> worked with Early Learning NH and the braintrust regarding a system framework (Figure 1) from *Beyond Parallel Play: Emerging State and Community Planning Roles in Building Early Learning Systems* (September 2006), which

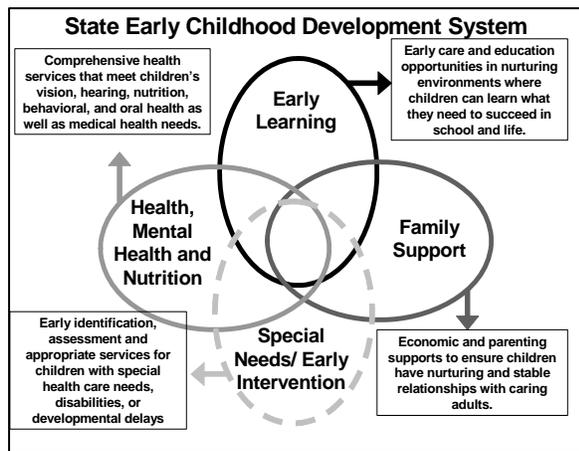


Figure 1. Source: The BUILD Initiative

became the basis for New Hampshire’s comprehensive systems thinking. To truly make a difference for young children, the planning and thinking had to be comprehensive and about all of early childhood: early education, health (encompassing mental health, oral health and nutrition), family support, early intervention, and more.

It was determined that Early Learning NH would convene early childhood stakeholders and state and community leaders to a) continue our

<sup>5</sup>The BUILD Initiative is a national initiative created to help states construct a coordinated system of programs, policies and services that responds to the needs of young children and their families.

state on the path of early childhood systems thinking and b) begin envisioning a comprehensive early childhood system and the policies and practices that support success.

In the beginning of 2008, the New Hampshire Commissioners of Education, Health and Human Services, and Employment Security came together to co-host a forum with Early Learning NH with a cross-section of state and community leaders in the areas of early education, health, family support, early intervention, and more to discuss how they might work together towards realizing a comprehensive early childhood system. The forum keynote, Nina Sazer O'Donnell, the then-director of National Strategies for United Way of America's Success by Six<sup>®</sup>, issued a challenge. She urged those in the audience to work together to put a world-class, early childhood system in place and to build the public will for early education before the next presidential election. If accomplished, the system and the electorate could be a national showcase for candidates, public opinion pollsters, and the media during the 2012 New Hampshire primary, bolstering the understanding of and support for early childhood nationwide.

In June 2008 a symposium was held on early childhood policy in New Hampshire together with the Commissioners of Education, Health and Human Services, and Employment Security. The keynotes were Helene Stebbins of the National Center for Children in Poverty and Kristin Smith of the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire. Ms. Stebbins explained how state policies that promote health, education, and strong families can help the early development of and promote school success for New Hampshire's youngest citizens. The final statewide forum on early childhood systems building was convened in September 2008 to learn about building public awareness of early childhood and about the United Way of America's Born Learning<sup>®</sup> campaign.

“ AS CHAIR OF THE STATE BOARD, I KNOW I SPEAK ON BEHALF OF MY FELLOW BOARD MEMBERS WHEN I TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN COUNT ON OUR SUPPORT. ”  
*John E. Lyons, Jr., Esq.*  
Chair, NH State Board of Education, February 2008

As a result of these statewide forums, the braintrust formulated a call to action by identifying several policy and practice changes necessary to put a comprehensive early childhood system into place:

- A. Encourage Systems Thinking within and across state agencies
- B. Establish and Strengthen Leadership Infrastructure
  - Children’s Cabinet
  - State Early Childhood Advisory Council
  - NH ECCS Plan and NH CCAC 5-Year Plan Implementation
- C. Build Public Awareness and Public Will
  - Create Statewide Economic Impact of Child Care report
  - Launch Public Engagement Campaign – *Born Learning*
- D. Create Public/Private Partnership and/or Funders’ Collaborative to spark and support systems-building innovation
  - Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
  - Shared Services Alliance and Co-op for Child Care
  - Follow the Child from Birth: pilot locally – implement statewide

The 2008 forums were sponsored by the NH Head Start Collaboration Office, Title V and the ECCS Project as a way to further integrate the *Comprehensive Plan for Early Childhood Health and Development for New Hampshire: A Road Map to Collaboration* (2006). Other co-sponsors of the three statewide forums included the Child Development Bureau, Northeast Delta Dental, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the NH Head Start Directors Association, Southern NH University, and Early Learning NH. As outlined above, the 2008 systems-building efforts highlighted the need to instill systems thinking within and across state agencies. Since 2008, the Commissioner of DHHS has taken the lead to educate his management team on systems thinking and continues to bring the heads of state agencies together to discuss how to align their work and services.

The Council will address the need for systems thinking and collaboration /coordination via its work on Goal 2: Coordinate the development and implementation of an integrated and comprehensive strategic plan for early childhood in New Hampshire, and two primary objectives:

1. Coordinate and/or conduct a periodic needs assessment; and
2. Strengthen the coordination and collaboration among early childhood planning efforts.

**iii. Need for an Early Childhood Framework and Data System**

As described in section 7, New Hampshire has no comprehensive early childhood data system. The Council will address this need via Goal 3: Develop a framework to evaluate the Council's outcomes/impacts, including the progress of New Hampshire's young children, and two primary objectives:

1. Convene an evaluation and early childhood data system task force to develop the framework; and
2. Develop a plan to document Council outcomes/impacts and inform its work.

**iv. Need for Increased Public Awareness of and Support for Quality Early Childhood Programs and Services, and Supportive Public Policies**

The previously described history of the emergence of systems thinking in New Hampshire includes a discussion on public awareness and policy issues and the efforts to address the issues to date. The Council will continue its work in this area via Goal 4: Foster public awareness of, promote access to, and build commitment for quality early childhood programs and services, and three objectives:

1. Build public awareness of the importance of the early years within the business and philanthropic sectors;
2. Generate recommendations for increasing overall participation in existing federal and state programs; and
3. Promote policies that support quality and availability of early childhood programs and services.

## 2. Quality and Availability

“ EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTIONS OF HIGH QUALITY HAVE LASTING EFFECTS ON  
LEARNING AND MOTIVATION. ”  
James J. Heckman, PhD  
Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences 2000

New Hampshire consistently ranks among the top states in the nation for many indicators and predictors of child well-being, as described previously. In the just released *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book* (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010) New Hampshire retains its ranking as the number one state for child well-being. Yet this overall snapshot of statewide averages does not tell the whole story of the Granite State. As noted in *KIDS COUNT Data Book 2008*, (Children’s Alliance of NH, 2008), children and families living in 27 cities and towns face an accumulation of disadvantage across a range of indicators: from family economics, where more than four in ten elementary school aged children rely on the free or reduced-price lunch program, to education, where children attend schools with large achievement gaps, to health, where they suffer disproportionately from child abuse and neglect. Most of these data show that the disparity is not getting better, or if there are signs of improvement, significant disparity still exists. The recent 2010 publication reports there was a 50% increase in the percent of children in poverty in the state from 2000 to 2008 – even before the recession had taken hold for most families as the national data available to them was from either 2007 or 2008. It will be important for the Council to have data that fully captures the true impact of the recession on child well-being in New Hampshire.

In 2008 there were 86,582 young children under the age of 6 in New Hampshire<sup>6</sup>. 23% lived in low-income families, with 3.9% living in extreme poverty (less than 50% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Data on the number of children under the Council’s purview – children

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<sup>6</sup> State data were calculated from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (the March supplement) of the Current Population Survey from 2007, 2008, and 2009, representing information from calendar years 2006, 2007, and 2008. The National Center for Children in Poverty averaged three years of data because of small sample sizes in less populated states. The national data were calculated from the 2009 data, representing information from the previous calendar year.

from birth through grade 3 – have not been compiled. The Council will address this as part of its work to expand New Hampshire’s data infrastructure.

The encouraging news regarding the quality and availability of early childhood supports and services in New Hampshire is that efforts to build the public and political will for early care and education, led by then-Governor Shaheen in the 1990s and early 2000s, resulted in an increased understanding of the importance of the early years to a child’s success in school and in life. Current Governor John Lynch has worked hard to translate that understanding into landmark policy and practice changes, as reflected in the following examples:

- The Quality Early Learning Opportunities Initiative expanded eligibility for child care scholarship from 190% of the federal poverty level to 250% to all families to afford licensed child care or preschool;
- Public kindergarten, as of September 2009, is a part of the definition of an adequate education and included in the DOE recently-adopted Common Core State Standards;
- Licensed Plus, the beginning of a quality rating system for the state, was established in 2006 to reward early education programs for quality improvements and to offer parents help in selecting a program;
- Early education supports were expanded by over \$10 million to offer more realistic assistance for working families, enhance program quality, and ensure continuity for children; and
- Child care scholarship and quality initiatives went through an intensive redesign process with public and private partners throughout 2008 and 2009, including a new design for and emphasis on supporting infant/toddler development and strengthening families programming.

During Governor Lynch’s tenure, the budget deliberations among state agency leaders and policymakers have suggested an appreciation of early education as a public good. From

2006 through mid 2009, designing policies to better support New Hampshire's youngest children and their families was a higher priority than ever before. Unfortunately, the national economic crisis and the resultant explosion in the demand for early childhood programs and services in the State caused some regression in progress made to date, as well as cuts in funding for both new and long-standing quality and access initiatives, such as stipends for participating in Licensed Plus and national accreditation. From 2006 through 2009, there was a 100% increase in the number of programs applying for the Licensed Plus designation. A priority of the Council is to build upon the existing infrastructure of New Hampshire's current quality rating and improvement system and to establish a Funders' Collaborative to spark and support such best practices and innovation, as described above in Section A, Objectives and Need for Assistance. The Council will take note of the impact of the suspension of stipends on the number of participating programs.

New Hampshire's latest child care market rate survey, *Final Report of the New Hampshire Early Care and Education Market Rate Survey for 2007* (2008), indicated that, when the provider payment rates were unacceptably low, the number of providers willing to enroll children receiving child care scholarship dipped below 50%. As payment rates increased, a larger percentage of child care providers were willing to enroll children receiving scholarship. As part of the CCDF Redesign process the Redesign Team examined the barriers to equal access that child care providers and families identified. Families expressed that excessive out-of-pocket costs due to having to pay for all child absences and child care program closings was a significant barrier. Child care providers expressed their frustration with the absentee policy and how that policy made budgeting very difficult, as families often could not pay the out-of-pocket costs. To ensure equal access, the CCDF Redesign Team created policies and payment rules designed to reduce family out-of-pocket costs regarding child absences and child care provider closings and increase the predictability of the payments from the Child Development Bureau. Because the budgeted funds were insufficient to meet today's growing need for state child care assistance, DHHS instituted three policy changes in SFY2010: 1) a first-ever waiting list for state

child care assistance was instituted in October 2009 that grew to over 2,400 by June 30, 2010; 2) the suspension of some quality initiatives in January 2010; and 3) decreases in the amount paid for every child on child care subsidy, 7,700 children in March 2010.

Other significant changes in New Hampshire involving the recession and the state budget include a reduction to the ECCS project funding, forcing MCH to withdraw a contract offer for Child Care Health Consultation. Healthy Child Care NH has turned its focus from pilot programs to looking to the communities to help them coordinate existing child care health consultation efforts that informally operate at the local level.

Additionally, as more families apply for Financial Assistance for Needy Families (FANF), the Division of Family Assistance (DFA) has not only been unable to provide support to the child care scholarship system as previously, but their support of the Home Visiting NH (HVNH) program is in jeopardy. The HVNH contracts, monitored by MCH, are funded in large part by FANF as part of New Hampshire's State Plan (FANF). Under the goals of the New Hampshire Employment Program, HVNH provides activities that promote self-sufficiency and strengthen family life and provides family support skills through transition from public assistance to employment. HVNH also helps New Hampshire prevent and reduce the incidence of subsequent pregnancies within the first year following a birth as described in Part A—Block Grants to States for Financial Assistance for Needy Families of the Social Security Act. Advocacy efforts were successful in 2009 as the New Hampshire legislature added a funding footnote to the state budget requiring FANF to continue funding HVNH through the biennium. Ongoing deficits leave the future of HVNH at risk.

New Hampshire was allocated the following amounts from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) federal funding: \$2.3M for statewide IDEA Part C initiatives for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays; \$4.7M for supplement child care for low-income families, with \$391,000 to increase overall child care quality and \$226,000 for use in infant/toddler care quality initiatives; and \$19.2M for FANF. To coordinate and consider the best use of the funding to expand or initiate quality efforts in the state, the CCAC Policy and

Planning subcommittee convened a cross-disciplinary group of early childhood leaders. Several priority areas were identified: Mind in the Making, Environmental Assessment project, Watch Me Grow screening and referral system, and revising Early Learning Guidelines. Due to increasing caseloads and the resultant projected budget shortfall, funds would not be available to support most of these quality expansions.

On a positive note the ARRA funds issued through the Bureau of Developmental Services/Part C office to the Community Based Family Support for Continuous Quality Improvement and Technical Assistance Services (QITAS) contract provided additional funding for the Watch Me Grow screening and referral system. Funds have been committed to support the development of a data collection system and training; materials for developmental screening for each pilot site, Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3rd edition (ASQIII); promotions and marketing materials; and training on screening and referral. The NH Obesity Prevention Program and Tobacco Prevention and Control Programs were also awarded ARRA funding earlier this year for an initiative to improve nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco policies in child care and school settings.

The scope and work of the Council will include taking stock of the effect of the changes described previously, as well as other policy or budgetary changes affecting quality and availability. As New Hampshire strives to maintain its 'first in the nation' status on many levels, it will be important to get everyone to participate in building a comprehensive early childhood system. The Granite State has a history of overcoming challenges. In that spirit, the Council will bring together decision makers, policy experts, early childhood practitioners, the business and philanthropic sectors, parents and other concerned community members to find creative solutions and forge creative public-private partnerships.

### 3. Status of Early Learning Standards

Since the DHHS/DCYF Child Development Bureau published the NH Early Learning Guidelines in 2005, they have been used by a wide variety of professionals and families,

including, child care programs, preschools, home visiting programs, parenting classes, and the DFA Employment Security program.

The DOE has adopted the National Common Core State Standards, k-12. These standards, published in June 2010, have been approved by the State Board of Education and will be fully adopted by all public schools no later than 2014. The NH Early Learning Guidelines are well aligned with the DOE's Common Core State Standards for kindergarten. For example, the mathematics goals are the same for both systems:

**Early Learning Guideline objectives:**

1. Use numbers and counting to solve problems and express quantities
2. Group and order objects according to specific features (i.e. shape, size, texture, color)

**Common Core State Standards objectives:**

1. Representing and comparing whole numbers, initially with sets of objects
2. Describing shapes and space. More learning time in Kindergarten should be devoted to number than to other topics

The Common Core State Standards have more detail regarding the objectives compared to the Early Learning Guidelines. For example, the literacy objectives for the two systems have the same goals, but the objectives for the Common Core State Standards are more in depth:

**Early Learning Guideline objectives:**

1. Understand how books work and that print carries a message
2. Enjoy looking at books, listening to stories, and talking about them
3. Retell familiar stories and create new ones
4. Relate stories, understanding that stories have a beginning, middle, and end

**Common Core State Standards:**

1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text
2. With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details
3. With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story
4. Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text

5. Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems).
6. With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.
7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).
8. With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.
9. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

As part of the Council's professional development activities, a team of stakeholders from both the DHHS and the DOE will meet to enhance the level of detail in the Early Learning Guidelines.

### **Kindergarten in New Hampshire**

Prior to 2009-2010, data on kindergarten enrollment in New Hampshire were incomplete because there was no statewide mandate for students to attend or for districts to offer this program. Beginning in 2009-2010, districts are mandated to offer kindergarten, but students' attendance is optional. Children are legally required to be enrolled in school full time at age six, first grade. The Public School Kindergarten Enrollment Censes as of October 1, 2009 counted 11,969 students registered and attending class. The final attendance and percent of day participation data were due at the DOE on July 15, 2010. Those numbers will be compiled and ready for publication in December 2010.

New Hampshire has 163 school districts that operate under the umbrella of approximately 90 School Administrative Units (SAUs). The DOE *Minimum Standards for Public School Approval* include: kindergarten – grade 2: class size of 25 children: 1 teacher (the DOE encourages schools to strive for a 20:1 ratio); Content requirements include Arts, English/Language Arts, Physical Education and Technology, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Each school must provide a broad and well balanced elementary school curriculum (RSA 193-c:3, III). Schools must also provide: a) an instructional program that includes procedures for

diagnosing learner needs, learning styles and interests; b) methods and strategies for teaching students; c) research-based learning opportunities; d) techniques for the evaluation of student outcomes; and e) differentiated instruction for students based on learning styles, needs and interests.

4. Status of Governance

The oversight of early childhood care and education programs is split between DHHS and DOE. An inventory of the wide array of State health, educational, and social programs and services for children 0-6 years of age by department was created by a legislative study commission in partnership with DHHS and DOE beginning in 2007<sup>7</sup>. The House Children and Family Law Committee plans to oversee the process of updating the document on a regular basis. The matrix will inform the work of the Council and will be of most benefit if expanded to include the Council's broader focus, which is on expectant families and children from birth through grade 3 and their families.

5. Status of Professional Development

New Hampshire currently has eight higher education institutions with a DOE Bureau of Credentialing approved Professional Educator Preparation Program in Early Childhood Education. They are: Antioch University of New England, Colby-Sawyer College, Granite State College, Keene State College, Plymouth State University, Rivier College, Southern New Hampshire University, and University of New Hampshire. Of the previous identified eight institutions, six offer an additional DOE, Bureau of Credentialing approved Professional Educator Preparation program in Elementary Education (K-8). Four additional institutions offer the DOE, Bureau of Credentialing approved Professional Educator Preparation program in Elementary Education (K-8). They are: Dartmouth College; Franklin Pierce University; New England College, and Upper Valley Educator Institute.

The first edition of the New Hampshire Early Childhood Professional Development System Guide to Early Childhood Careers was published in December 1999. New Hampshire has a diverse and growing community of professionals who work with or on behalf of children, youth, and families. Just as this community has grown, the New Hampshire credentialing system has grown and was revised in 2009 to support the ongoing professional development of early

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<sup>7</sup> The matrix document of these programs and services can be viewed at [www.earlylearningnh.org](http://www.earlylearningnh.org) in the "Early Childhood Systems Building Materials" section, entitled HB86Matrix.

childhood and afterschool teachers, administrators, workshop trainers, college faculty, mentors, program consultants, and allied professionals. As noted previously, a key task yet to be accomplished is to align the DHHS-sponsored Early Childhood Professional Credential and the DOE Teacher Certification requirements.

In addition to New Hampshire's higher education institutions, early childhood-related professional development opportunities are available via in-service educational activities, mentoring, and technical assistance and support from a host of organizations and agencies, including the DHHS/DCYF Child Development Bureau, Child Care Resource & Referral agencies, Head Start State Training and Technical Assistance System, the DHHS/DCYF Head Start Collaboration Office, the DOE sponsored Preschool Technical Assistance Network, EEIN (Early Education and Intervention Network), Family Centered Early Supports and Services (Part C of IDEA), NH Association for Infant Mental Health, Early Learning NH, NH Association for the Education of Young Children, DHHS's Special Medical Services, Easter Seals, and many others. New Hampshire has a successful history of leveraging its professional development resources and encouraging cross-disciplinary and cross-program education. For example, New Hampshire is one of the first states in the nation to formally engage child care providers in the Head Start *I Am Moving, I Am Learning* childhood obesity initiative. This program will be presented at the Early Childhood 2010: Innovations for the Next Generation conference in Washington D.C. Additionally, DHHS and DOE have co-funded an early childhood mentorship program since 2006. This program, which is administered by the Early Education and Intervention Network (EEIN), may serve as a model for addressing the professional development needs of the broader early childhood-related community.

Despite efforts to promote a coordinated, collaborative, early childhood professional development system in New Hampshire, much work remains to be completed in this area. Participants in the Council's June 2010 needs assessment offered a number of recommendations to be considered by the Council, including: joint activities (conferences, training, mentors); a unified approach to curriculum and educational requirements for Early Childhood teachers; and

ongoing opportunities to participate in activities and share information, as reflected in the following examples of comments:

“It would be nice and beneficial to all if there were a system of mentorship in the state for trainers to make an impact in programs all over the state. Families are forced to ‘price shop’ for child care instead of actually accessing quality care for their children due to so many barriers. Of the programs that are quality, the accessibility factor is an issue as these programs are full to capacity with wait lists. While we may not be able to ‘fix’ this, we can certainly affect the quality of programs through the use of the fabulous trainers around the state.”

“...having a sort of knowledge coop where if one organization learns from a workshop/conference/study, there is a means of sharing the info with each other.”

“I believe that it is important for faculty in colleges and universities to continue to work closely with early childhood providers to encourage those going into the field to receive specific education that will help create stimulating environments for young children.”

“Collaboration of instructors to keep up with area trends in learning”

“Continue to provide quality training opportunities for staff that include ideas for the K-3 population, not just for those that serve kids aged 5 and under.”

## 6. Status of Data Systems

“DATA GIVES US THE ROADMAP TO REFORM. IT TELLS US WHERE WE ARE, WHERE WE NEED TO GO, AND WHO IS MOST AT RISK. HOPEFULLY SOME DAY WE CAN TRACK KIDS FROM PRESCHOOL TO HIGH SCHOOL AND FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE AND COLLEGE TO CAREER.”  
*U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan June 2009*

Creating an early childhood data system is the next step for New Hampshire in order to inform early childhood policymaking, evaluate the quality and effectiveness of early childhood programs and services, and improve outcomes for children and families. An early childhood data system could: a) promote linkages across departments and programs, as well as across age groups; b) link child data with program quality, costs, resources and workforce data; c) include as much of the child population as possible; and d) include data on all areas of early childhood

and track children's progress over time (Schultz, 2010, July). Systems such as Pennsylvania's Early Learning Network provide excellent models for states [such as New Hampshire] embarking on the challenging task of building an early childhood data system (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2010).

New Hampshire state agencies and programs currently have multiple data and information sources regarding young children and families, such as health (e.g., AURIS, Vital Records, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner), child welfare (e.g., NH BRIDGES, New Heights), early intervention, and education (data warehouse, NHSEIS). However, there is a) no comprehensive early childhood data system, and b) little capacity to link early childhood data with the DOE's longitudinal data system.

Recently MCH compiled an "Inventory of Data and Information Currently Available" document, which lists 16 topic areas, data sources for each area, and scope of the data (state or county). This document will provide an excellent starting point for the Council in the identification of existing data and sources. Additionally, DHHS and DOE made some progress in this area in June 2010 when the New Hampshire legislature passed HB 503, which expanded the use of the state-assigned student ID numbers to publicly funded early education programs (child care programs serving children receiving scholarships and Head Start).

The Council will work with partners to expand New Hampshire's data infrastructure and create an early childhood data system to improve outcomes for young children and their families (Goal 3). To determine New Hampshire's ability to assess and continually evaluate early childhood systems, data sources such as those used in the national and state KIDS COUNT data books, MCH's recent needs assessment and "Inventory of Data and Information Currently Available," and the New Hampshire school readiness indicators in Ready, Set, Grow (Children's Alliance of NH, Spring 2004) should be compiled, summarizing data elements, their sources, most recent available year, and available level of data.

## B. Approach

“ WE MUST ACT BOLDLY AND COURAGEOUSLY ON BEHALF OF  
NEW HAMPSHIRE’S YOUNGEST CHILDREN.”  
*Dr. Lyonel Tracy*  
Commissioner, NH Department of Education 2005-2009

As reflected throughout this application, the approach for the work of the Council was guided by a number of efforts and inputs that will strengthen its capacity to achieve the targeted goals and objectives over the next three years. Included were: previous early childhood systems work in New Hampshire (e.g. ECCS, Child Care Advisory Council five year plan); nearly two years of preliminary planning; consultation from national experts; and broad stakeholder input in a series of forums and meetings. In accordance with recommendations from the National Governor’s Association, the Council’s work will: a) be guided by strategic planning; b) include data-informed decision making and accountability for progress; c) address quality improvement; and d) promote sustainability through shared ownership/responsibility throughout the early childhood system (2009, May). Also as recommended, Council efforts will complement and coordinate with existing efforts and engage in an inclusive process to both define the scope of and prioritize its work.

This section includes: 1) a description of New Hampshire’s newly forming Council; 2) the Council’s goals, objectives, activities and timelines; 3) factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and rationale for approach; 4) needs assessment; 5) barriers to collaboration; 6) evaluation; 7) organizations, cooperating entities, and other key parties; and 8) sustainability.

### 1. New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council

New Hampshire’s first state early childhood advisory council will have an early childhood focus that is defined broadly as “expectant families and children from birth to Grade 3 and their families.” The Council’s mission is comprehensive, including the areas of early education, health (encompassing mental health, oral health and nutrition), family support, early intervention, and more. This application describes the current membership, initial structure, and

responsibilities for the newly-forming Council. For more detail on the Council and to read the full vision, mission, and guiding principles statement, please refer to Appendix C, the *New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council Strategic Report (July 21, 2010)*. Over the coming year, the membership may change as the determination of its final structure evolves.

**i. Membership and Structure**

The June 2010 list of Council members can be found in Appendix A. Throughout the planning year of 2009 with a broad array of early childhood stakeholders, it was recommended and approved by the Office of the Governor that the Council be an independent entity, authorized by legislation, which advises the Governor’s Office, state legislature, DHHS, DOE, and others, and is collectively staffed and funded. It will include:

- Standing committees, which will be determined based on function and include the functions of existing bodies with the potential to merge to form the Council.
- Time-limited, targeted task forces/work groups, which will be convened by consensus of the Council to address current issues and/or needs, such as Federal plans, market rate surveys, position papers, IDEA-related issues, etc.

All committees and task forces will adhere to the Council’s guidelines in completing their work. They will also review and prioritize objectives and activities from several sources (this application, the strategic report and public hearings) based on feasibility and other factors; include evaluation activities and address the issue of sustainability in their efforts. Standing committees will include representatives from mandated and optional categories for the ICC, (Part C and B/619 of IDEA), CCAC, and other key councils. Standing committees and task forces/work groups may also include non-voting members who are invited to serve. During the development phase, the Council has a Planning Committee, Communications and Outreach Task Force, and a Fund Development and Sustainability Task Force. To fully establish the Council and undertake the work as outlined in this application, additional committees and task forces will be convened. “Committees” are long standing groups that will continue to meet and work until the Council votes to disband them, while “task forces” and “work groups” are convened to

complete specific tasks on a time-limited basis, such as drafting by-laws, vision/mission statements or procedures.

One committee to be convened is Professional Development. This group will address the Council's requirement to develop recommendations for a statewide professional development system and career ladder for early childhood educators, high quality State early learning standards, and assessing the capacity and effectiveness of New Hampshire's 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education to support the development of early childhood educators.

**ii. Planning**

One of the primary roles of the Council will be to provide strategic direction to state and community leaders. The Deliberative process of initial planning by the New Hampshire Legislative Caucus for Young Children would be a five to ten year "Plan for Young Children" that would culminate in a Governor's Early Childhood Summit, which would be held every two years to monitor and review the plan's progress. The plan would establish and inform the New Hampshire governor's early childhood priorities and spur action and support among the business and philanthropic sectors and community stakeholders. The newly-forming Council will determine its process for statewide, comprehensive planning and will involve from the beginning those to whom the Council provides strategic direction. The Council is determined that the plan and its recommendations for young children and their families will be well known and widely supported.

**iii. Meetings and Public Hearings**

The Council meetings are held from 2-4 PM on the third Friday of the month at Early Learning NH's offices in Concord. Public hearings currently are held by various state agencies on a variety of issues in accordance with their mandates and needs. The Council proposes to schedule a public hearing once each year to share information and garner feedback on its priorities and activities.

On July 13, 2010, from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., the Council held a first public hearing on the Strategic Report, simultaneously, in four New Hampshire sites: Gorham, Exeter, Keene, and Concord. Seven key themes emerged from the testimony and written comments, which will be taken into consideration as the Council proceeds with its work. All testimony and written comments from the public hearing will be posted on the Early Learning NH website.

**Key Themes:**

- Commendations for the Strategic Report
- Resources, including funding and staffing, must be in place to support the work and give it “teeth”
- Consideration should be given to the size and structure of the Council in order to optimize its effectiveness
- The Council should be inclusive of and open to many different constituencies and points of view
- It is important that all groups involved with the Council “buy in” to the work and that there are opportunities for true collaboration
- Address the whole child, including social and emotional development and mental health
- Set clear goals and priorities for where we want New Hampshire’s children, families, and early childhood professionals to be

**iv. Plan to Create the Council’s Infrastructure**

Over the past 18 months of comprehensive early childhood systems building efforts and Council development, a great deal of work has been completed to help guide decisions regarding a sustainable and effective infrastructure for the Council. Included were consultation from Nebraska’s Council leader, the National Governor’s Association, and the BUILD Initiative; and review of state council structures for Minnesota, New York, Vermont, Connecticut, and other

states. During fall 2010, the Council will move forward on this important endeavor by engaging in the following activities:

- Complete a review of Council structures in other states (committees, leadership, membership, by-laws, etc.), as well as their objectives/activities and outcomes, to inform the ongoing development of the Council.
- Hold a facilitated meeting of key stakeholders to garner input on the Council's structure and functioning.
- Based on the above activities, the Council's work to date and other sources (needs assessment, public hearing, etc.), adopt an infrastructure and governance structure best suited to New Hampshire.

## 2. Council Goals, Objectives, Activities and Timeline

“ TODAY REMINDED ME OF WHY I TOOK THIS JOB. THANK YOU. ”  
*Mary Heath*  
Deputy Commissioner, NH Department of Education 2006-2009  
as written on her evaluation of the February 2008 systems building forum

The Council will focus the first year of work on simultaneously formalizing its final structure and activities, beginning work on an early childhood data system that will continue throughout all three funding years, aligning early childhood plans, and starting the process of fostering public awareness to support early childhood. Year 2 will focus on developing a coordinated process for needs assessment, promoting legislation to enact the Council, formulating recommendations for a comprehensive early childhood plan, and creating a public engagement campaign. Year 3 will focus on creating a statewide, comprehensive plan for early childhood and responding to the priorities identified through the strategic planning process. Evaluation and planning for sustainability will occur for all applicable Council activities across all three years.

Table 1 includes the goals, objectives, activities and timelines for the Council. It is important to note that activities may change based on both the evaluation and needs assessment results as well as the strategic planning process.

**Table 1: Council Goals, Objectives, Activities and Timelines**

<b>Vision:</b> ALL NEW HAMPSHIRE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE HEALTHY, LEARNING, AND THRIVING NOW AND IN THE FUTURE													
<b>Goal 1. Strengthen New Hampshire’s early childhood infrastructure</b>													
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Proposed Timeline</b>												
	<b>Year 1</b>				<b>Year 2</b>				<b>Year 3</b>				
	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	
<b>Objective A. Assure the Council has the authority and the mandate to provide strategic direction</b>													
1. Finalize the formal structure and governance of the Council, including the leadership structure and relationship with regional and local EC infrastructures and entities	X	X											
2. Elect Council leadership and nominate members as proposed in governance structure			X			X				X			
3. Identify all relevant organizations, councils, committees and/or task forces and determine how the Council can best communicate and coordinate with these entities		X											
4. Develop a formal structure for meetings and committee work, coordinate with existing groups, and develop shared knowledge among ECAC members		X											
5. Determine role of the business and philanthropic communities in structure of the Council			X	X									
6. Develop plan to increase regional and local community partnerships and collaborations				X									
7. Formalize process for annual update of Council strategic report and public hearing			X										
8. Update Council strategic report and hold public hearing				X				X					X
9. Work with the Office of the Governor, relevant state agencies, and legislative leaders to craft a proposed bill to legislatively enact the Council				X	X								
10. Introduce and pass legislation to enact the Council					X	X	X						

Activities	Proposed Timeline											
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
11. Determine reporting structure and annual, direct communication method between the Council and those to whom it is responsible to provide strategic direction				X								
12. Meet at least annually with Governor, State Agency Commissioners, and legislative leaders to report on progress of New Hampshire's young children and to update Council strategic report and/or NH Statewide Comprehensive EC Plan				X		X				X		
<b>Objective B. Assure the Council has the capacity to fulfill its mission and its responsibilities as outlined in The Head Start Act and determined by its statewide strategic report</b>												
1. Form search committee for Council Director and begin search process	X											
2. Hire Council Director		X										
3. Hire Council support staff		X										
<b>Objective C. Assure the Council has the ability to sustain its work</b>												
1. Explore and secure ongoing funding for dedicated staffing of Council from private sources			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Develop 3-year sustainability plan for the Council using the Finance Project methodology						X	X	X	X			
<b>Objective D. Determine the ideal governance structure to coordinate the State of New Hampshire's early childhood programs and services</b>												
1. Work with the Office of the Governor, relevant state agencies, and legislative leaders to envision the creation of a joint, interagency Office or Department for Early Childhood and a Children's Cabinet and determine how these entities might relate to the Council								X	X	X	X	X

<b>Goal 2. Coordinate the development and implementation of an integrated and comprehensive strategic plan for early childhood in New Hampshire</b>												
Activities	Proposed Timeline											
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>A. Coordinate and/or conduct a periodic needs assessment.</b>												
1. Conduct annual Council survey to identify (a) the status of collaboration/coordination among early childhood-related programs and services at the state and local levels; (b) barriers to and strategies for improving collaboration/coordination among programs and services; and (c) resources that may facilitate the work of the Council and/or improve collaboration/coordination among early childhood programs and services							X				X	
2. Summarize information from existing, recent data about statewide needs of children and families.		X	X									
3. Develop recommendations for how best to integrate and/or expand upon current needs assessments				X								
4. Develop scope of work for Council regarding the production and coordination of periodic needs assessments						X						
5. Coordinate or conduct the first, statewide periodic early childhood needs assessment									X			
<b>Objective B. Strengthen the coordination and collaboration of early childhood planning efforts</b>												
1. Update and expand upon Child Development Bureau's alignment of strategic plan document and determine ongoing plan for updating		X										
2. Formulate recommendation for developing a NH Statewide Comprehensive EC Plan with those for whom the Council is providing strategic direction					X							
3. Coordinate the development and implementation of a NH Statewide Comprehensive EC Plan with those to whom the Council provides strategic direction										X		
4. Determine ongoing process for updating and reporting on progress of plan recommendations, including biennium Governor Early Childhood Summit											X	

<b>Goal 3. Develop a framework to evaluate the Council’s outcomes/impacts including the progress of New Hampshire’s young children and their families.</b>												
Activities	Proposed Timeline											
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Objective A. Convene an evaluation &amp; early childhood data system task force to develop framework</b>												
1. Identify/recruit key representatives from the Council, P-16 Working Group, state agencies, legislative committees, and the community.	X											
2. Review existing state EC data systems and recommendations from national sources to inform NH’s efforts.	X	X										
3. Expand MCH’s data inventory/ identify data to be aligned for an early childhood data system for NH		X	X									
4. Contract with a data systems specialist to work with the Council and relevant state agencies to develop recommendations for an integrated early childhood data system for NH that allows data sharing across selected early childhood-related federal and state programs				X								
5. Begin implementation of recommendations as feasible							X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Objective B. Develop and implement a plan to document Council outcomes/impacts and inform its work.</b>												
1. Contract with an Evaluation Consultant		X										
2. Work with the Evaluation Consultant to finalize targeted outcomes/impacts		X										
3. Create a plan that includes evaluation activities, measures, timelines, & responsible persons		X										
4. Work with the Council and Director to assure that evaluation activities are integrated into all work (committees, task forces)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5. Prepare evaluation reports for the Council				X				X				X

<b>Goal 4. Foster public awareness of, promote access to, and build commitment for quality early childhood programs and services</b>												
Activities	Proposed Timeline											
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Objective A. Build the public awareness of the importance of the early years within the business and philanthropic sectors</b>												
1. Co-host a “Business and State Leader Summit on Early Childhood Investment” with state business and philanthropic leaders		X										
2. Contract with a consultant to help develop a statewide plan to build the public awareness of and commitment for early childhood issues			X									
3. Develop a statewide plan with business and philanthropic community				X								
4. Formulate/implement a public engagement and media campaign plan with the business and philanthropic communities to foster public awareness of and build commitment for early childhood issues						X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5. Determine sustainability plan for continuation of public engagement and media campaign									X			
<b>Objective B. Generate recommendations for increasing overall participation in existing federal and state programs.</b>												
1. Identify an appropriate committee or task force to complete this work		X										
2. Finalize/endorse recommendations				X								
<b>Objective C. Promote policies that support quality and availability of early childhood programs and services.</b>												
1. 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, National Center for Children in Poverty tool, etc.)				X								
2. Collaborate with state agency and policy leaders to identify/support changes in policy					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

3. Factors that Might Accelerate or Decelerate the Work and Rationale for Approach

Throughout this application, mention was made of factors that might facilitate the work of the Council. For example, an alignment of existing early childhood related statewide plans was completed that will inform the development of a comprehensive plan for the state, work has begun on identifying existing data and information sources and on linking early childhood and school age data via SASIDS, co-sponsors have been identified to support a Business and State Leaders summit, and the Council itself completed a great deal of work in a short amount of time, demonstrating its commitment and capacity to meet deadlines. Additionally, the Council can accelerate its work by identifying and then building on the strengths of existing resources, such as programs in operation prior to the inception of the Council.

There are several factors that might decelerate the work, but which have been taken into account in creating tasks and timelines for this proposal. These include the need to establish the Council governance while producing the work and demands on members' time in serving on both the new Council and existing councils.

The Council feels it is critical to first take stock of current programs, services and coordination efforts in New Hampshire and to solidify its mandate to provide strategic direction in order to build capacity. The activities included in the application represent a balance between a direct, immediate impact on children and their families and creating the needed infrastructure that will allow for a comprehensive early childhood system.

4. Needs Assessment

Currently, New Hampshire has no single, statewide needs assessment that meets the requirement as specified in the Head Start Act. Multiple state agencies conduct their own needs assessments targeting particular populations and topics related to early childhood, including DOE and DHHS (Division for Children, Youth & Families Child Development Bureau, Head Start Collaboration Office, Child Protection Bureau, Community and Family Support), Bureau of Developmental Services (Family Centered Early Supports and Services, Special Medical

Services), and Public Health (Maternal and Child Health). Additionally, higher education and other organizations conduct needs assessments relative to early childhood, including the Institute on Disability at UNH, Parent Information Center, Children’s Trust Fund, the Governor’s P-16 Working Group, and others.

The Council proposes to:

- Identify current, ongoing, statewide needs assessment processes/opportunities among state and other agencies/organizations and programs.
- Create, implement and evaluate a plan to coordinate these efforts (e.g., design a core set of questions to be included in each/ascertaining that there is broad representation of ECE programs and services; compile report on results).
- Collaborate with Maternal and Child Health on the needs assessment component of the ACA Home Visiting project.

### **NH Early Childhood Advisory Council Survey**

In June 2010 the Council created and disseminated a web-based survey designed to garner broad input on: (a) the status of collaboration/coordination among early childhood-related programs and services at the state and local levels; (b) barriers to and strategies for improving collaboration/coordination among programs and services; and (c) resources that may facilitate the work of the Council and/or improve collaboration/coordination among early childhood programs and services. An overview of the survey and link to the web page were emailed to a large list of organizations, agencies, committees and individuals, with a request to forward the survey link to anyone who may be interested in participating. The survey was “open” online for a one-week period.

Among the 299 respondents, a broad array of perspectives was represented, as shown in Appendix C: Table 1. Parents/caregivers and family members by far were the largest number of participants, (N=68, 22.7%), followed by representatives from child care centers (N=48, 16.1%), health/healthcare (N=35,11.7%) and preschool special education (N=32, 10.7%).

### **Other Needs Assessments**

Several needs assessments have been recently conducted that can act as a starting point on which to build rather than duplicate efforts. For example, DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Section, representatives of which sit on the Council, has just completed a comprehensive needs assessment that includes several, though not all, of the areas relevant to the Council's work. Expansion to include more information on early education was recently discussed at the July Council meeting. The Council will review past needs assessments and formulate plans for coordinating and/or conducting needs assessments related to services for young children and their families. The Council will review data about children, families, and services as part of developing its statewide strategic plan.

### **Affordable Care Act – Home Visiting Needs Assessment Work Group**

MCH is spearheading a second statewide needs assessment activity involving the Council. In response to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program funding opportunity announcement, MCH has convened a work group that includes Council members and other early childhood stakeholders. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) funding opportunity will assist New Hampshire in building on existing early childhood infrastructure and improving health and developmental outcomes for children who are at risk through evidence-based home visiting programs. MCH will follow a four-step process beginning with the compilation of ACA-required data. This inventory summarizes data elements, their sources, most recent available year, and available level of data. Next, Maternal and Child Health will assess capacity using a survey tool to be developed by Zero to Three and modified for use in New Hampshire. The third step will involve matching needs to capacity and finally the workgroup will set priorities. Not only will the Needs Assessment Process and ultimately State Planning process, improve and sustain access to home visitation for families, it will inform the Council, strengthening systems development and highlighting opportunities for collaboration, evaluation and policy development.

## 5. Barriers to Collaboration

In the June survey conducted by the Council, approximately 162 people responded to the question, “What are the barriers to early childhood related organizations/agencies working together more efficiently?” Nine major categories of barriers were identified, including: time; funding; variation among programs and agencies (mandates, mission, vision, priorities, policies, philosophy, agendas, forms, language, services, sharing information); communication; knowledge/understanding regarding roles, responsibilities, services, etc.; geography (state outreach to the North Country, travel distance, service areas for various programs); staff (e.g., lack of mentoring, lack of competency/skills in shared areas, staff coverage, personnel resources); and turf/control (systems not being able to look outside of their own systems, territorial of families).

Not surprisingly, the most frequently named barriers to collaboration were time and funding, each of which was mentioned by more than 50 participants. Many found it difficult to find time to convene or participate in collaborative efforts and activities, whether it was due to the lack of administrative support for release time and qualified substitutes to cover while staff attended meetings or events, lack of personal time to attend activities outside of work hours, large workloads, or geographical barriers (distance involved in traveling to meetings and events).

Participants listed a range of funding barriers, including: inadequate funding for programs and services; lack of funds for staff coverage during release time; lack of available funds to support collaboration (e.g., mileage, meeting facilitation); funding “silos” in which programs/agencies are subject to various federal, state and local mandates; competition among programs/agencies for grant and other funding; and low staff salaries. A survey on barriers to collaboration will be conducted each year.

## 6. Evaluation

Since both the Council and its work plan are under development, an evaluation plan will be generated during the first quarter of Year 1 that includes process and outcome/impact measures for the Council itself, as well as for New Hampshire’s early childhood system. Peter

Antal, Ph.D. will lead an evaluation task force that will include representatives from DHHS, DOE and interested others (e.g., parents, early childhood program representatives, higher education, etc.). For more information on Dr. Antal’s qualifications, see Section 7.

The task force will: 1) identify key evaluation questions aimed at the Council’s capacity to function effectively and achieve its targeted outcomes; 2) collaborate with the early childhood data system committee to identify key evaluation questions regarding the accessibility and quality of New Hampshire’s early childhood programs and services; 3) create a logic model (United Way of America, 2006) that specifies inputs, activities, project goals, and long term vision for the work of the Council; 4) specify objectives, benchmarks, measures, and timelines for targeted outcomes; and 5) work with the Council’s committees, task forces and contractors to assure that evaluation objectives, activities and timelines are implemented.

7. Organizations, Cooperating Entities, and Other Key Parties

From the 2009 *Final Report of the Governor’s Task Force for the Recruitment and Retention of a Young Workforce for the State of New Hampshire*

“ ...THE TASK FORCE BELIEVES IT MUST RECOMMEND ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS IF IT IS TO HONESTLY RESPOND TO THE CHARGE GIVEN IT BY THE GOVERNOR. ”

New Hampshire has two state departments involved in the Council; the **New Hampshire Departments of Health and Human Services and Education** have been part of envisioning a comprehensive early childhood system since 2004 and have donated their staff time and expertise to contribute to the Steering and Planning Committees of the Council. Several different divisions and offices within the two departments have offered technical assistance, facilitation and space for meetings held previously and in the future. Their participation has been integral to the success of the Council.

Over the past year the DOE has established an Office of Early Childhood and worked closely with DHHS early childhood program administrators to promote the passage of legislation on assigning SASIDS (state identified student IDs) to children in the child care scholarship and Head Start programs. The Council will continue to work with the DOE on the SASID initiative,

as well as the broader early childhood data system. It will also continue its work with the Governor's P-16 Working Group to ensure early childhood goals and objectives are included in their planning.

**Early Learning NH** is the coordinating body of the Council and will continue to convene the Council, provide contract management for the proposed activities, and employ the dedicated staff. Early Learning NH is serving as the fiscal sponsor of the Council, allowing it to remain independent while it determines its final governance structure and provides strategic direction for strengthening the early childhood infrastructure in the State. Consultants for activities described within the application will be contracted with Early Learning NH and selected through a process determined by the Council.

**Northeast Delta Dental**, the **NH Charitable Foundation** and the **NH Business and Industry Association** have agreed to co-host a Business and State Leader Summit on Early Childhood Investment in 2011 together with the Council and Early Learning NH.

**Antal Consulting, LLC** Peter Antal, Ph.D., director, provides consultant services for nonprofit and public policy organizations seeking to improve the lives and well being of New Hampshire's citizens and will lead the Council's evaluation task force. Previously, Dr. Antal served as a researcher at the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability and research director of the Children's Alliance of NH. Dr. Antal received his Ph.D. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Delaware in 2005. His work has focused on the development of a state-of-the-state report on early childhood mental health (co-author, project evaluator), analysis of hospital discharge data concerning mental health services for children and adults, review of Special Education data to determine availability of mental health services in the school systems, and critical review on research documenting New Hampshire children's needs in the poorest areas of the state. As research director of the Children's Alliance, Dr. Antal collaborated with staff to produce and disseminate special reports on child well being in New Hampshire, including the *Kids Count New Hampshire 2003 Data Book*.

8. Sustainability

Many of the goals and activities delineated within this application were chosen as they could be completed during the funding period or were focused on the firm establishment of a state advisory council that has the authority and capacity to fulfill its mission. Never before in New Hampshire has this been possible. The start-up grant is a unique and timely opportunity for the Granite State. The Council, once established, will plan with perpetuity in mind. The 3-year sustainability plan will focus on a range of strategies that build shared ownership and responsibility throughout the early childhood system. This way, the Council will be in a better position to succeed when there is an economic downturn or change in leadership. Strategies for sustainability may include:

- creating a comprehensive plan for meeting the needs of young children and families that does not rely on a single program or funding stream;
- designing data and evaluation systems that maintain cross-sector monitoring and accountability; and
- developing a unified communications and messaging strategy. (National Governors Association 2009, May)

## C. Staff and Position Data

### 1. Planning Committee

The Council's Planning Committee is charged with developing meeting agendas with input from the group and ensuring the work of the group continuously moves forward. The final governance structure may evolve to include an elected or appointed executive committee. In the interim, the Planning Committee represents the Council in contacts with DHHS, DOE, and other outside organizations, agencies, and individuals. The Planning Committee creates, edits, and disseminates information to and on behalf of the Council and fulfills other functions, with the support and at the direction of the Council, such as providing letters of support for grants and written or oral testimony at public hearings. The Planning Committee reports each month to the Council on its monthly meeting and coordinates the work of the sub-committees and work

groups (once established). Members of the Planning Committee serve on designated sub-committees and include the following representatives: the state coordinator for Council activities (Early Learning NH representative), the Head Start Collaboration Office administrator, the chair of the ICC (or designee), the chair of the CCAC (or designee), a representative from the DOE, and the DHHS Early Childhood Special Projects Coordinator, Maternal and Child Health Section. In lieu of dedicated staffing, the current Council facilitator and administrative staff attend the monthly Planning Committee. Biographical sketches of the Planning Committee members are listed below in alphabetical order.

**Dr. Patricia Cantor, Ed.D. Co-Chair, NH Child Care Advisory Council, Plymouth State University.** Dr. Patricia Cantor is a Professor of Early Childhood Studies at Plymouth State University and Coordinator of the Early Childhood Studies program there. In her 20 years at Plymouth State, she has served as Director of the nationally accredited Child Development and Family Center (1993-1999) and as Chair of the Education Department (2000-2009). She was awarded the Distinguished Teaching Award in 2002 and the Excellence in Faculty Service Award in 2010. Dr. Cantor earned her doctoral degree from Boston University in Early Childhood Curriculum and Instruction and has a BA in English and American Literature and Language from Harvard. She has published articles and presented at national conferences on such topics as constructivist teaching and learning, the impact of screen media on infants and toddlers, leadership and advocacy in early childhood, and the history of early childhood programs. These are consistent with her research interests. Dr. Cantor represents the University System of NH on the NH Child Care Advisory Council and has served as co-chair of the Council for the past two years. She is also a board member for the NH Children's Alliance. Since 2008, she has represented the New England region on the board of the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators. With her colleague Mary Cornish, Dr. Cantor acted as program evaluator for the Quality Matters early childhood initiative in the Lakes Region of New Hampshire in 2003-2005. She and Dr. Cornish are currently participating in the North Country Early Childhood Development Initiative funded by the Neal and Louise Tillotson Fund of the

New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, a multi-million dollar initiative to enhance early childhood development in the North Country of New Hampshire. Their work is focused on enhancing the professional development and preparation of early childhood teachers in the North Country.

**Jackie Cowell, B.A. Executive Director, Early Learning NH.** After graduating from the University of Virginia, Ms. Cowell joined the Peace Corps and taught high school mathematics to French-speaking students in Mali, West Africa. Jackie then worked for five years for Save the Children in Sudan. She ran an emergency relief program there during the famine of the mid-1980s and established several community development initiatives and a child sponsorship program aimed at funding local education. Returning to the U.S. with her husband and two young children, Ms. Cowell served for nine years as the executive director of the White Birch Community Center in Henniker and for four years as the executive director of the Community Child Care Center in Portsmouth. During her tenure, the Community School of SAU 50 was established as the first, combined preschool and full-day early learning program housed within the Seacoast's public schools. Between the two centers, Ms. Cowell served as the Director of Development and Early Childhood Policy for the Children's Alliance of NH. In 2005, she became the executive director of Early Learning NH, a nonprofit organization formed in 2003 from the successful merger of five, longstanding early childhood organizations, with a mission to ensure all New Hampshire children have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Ms. Cowell has served as the President of the NH Child Care Association, the Chair of the NH Child Care Advisory Council, adjunct faculty in the Early Childhood Education department of the NH Technical Institute, and the Public Policy Chair of the NH Association for the Education of Young Children. She was on the 7-member team for Governor Shaheen's "Building the Political and Public Will for Early Care and Education" initiative and one of the four community partners working since 2008 with the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services' Redesign Team for the statewide child care scholarship system. In 2009, she received "The Exemplary Leadership and

Community Partnership Award” from the NH Division for Children, Youth and Families for her work on the Redesign Team.

**Deirdre Dunn, M.S. Early Childhood Special Projects Coordinator, Maternal and Child Health Section, DHHS.** Deirdre Dunn earned a Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education from Wheelock College with a focus on Leadership and Policy Development and has over 25 years of experience working in the field of Early Childhood Care and Education. Ms. Dunn is currently the Early Childhood Special Projects Coordinator for the Maternal and Child Health Section of the Division of Public Health Services within the NH Department of Health and Human Services. In this capacity, she coordinates the activities of a statewide, comprehensive home visiting program called Home Visiting NH, for low-income pregnant and newly parenting women. She is also leading the State’s efforts for the federal Affordable Care Act Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program. As NH’s Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Coordinator, she is responsible for revising and monitoring the ECCS plan to assure collaboration while complying with state and federal laws and approved national early childhood performance standards. Ms. Dunn supervises the efforts of Healthy Child Care NH, a project dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of childcare environments through education, training and the development of a network of Child Care Health Consultants. Ms. Dunn serves on a number of statewide coalitions and task forces, including the Watch Me Grow Steering Committee, NH Early Childhood Advisory Council Steering Committee, NH Child Care Advisory Council, Early Learning NH, NH Association for the Education of Young Children, and the NH Association of Infant Mental Health. She is also Trainer, Mentor, Faculty III Credentialed with NH Early Childhood Professional Development System and a certified Trainer of Zero to Three Curriculum: Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect. In addition to her duties with the MCHS, Ms Dunn is adjunct faculty in the Education Department at NHTI, Concord’s Community College.

**Patricia Bradley Ewen, M.Ed, Early Childhood Specialist, Office of Early Childhood Development, DOE.** Ms. Ewen joined the Department of Education, opening the Office of Early

Childhood Education in February 2010. She provides technical assistance to state-wide Public Kindergarten programs, servicing approximately 12,000 students. She works as the Federal Policy Analyst on Early Childhood for the NH Department of Education and State liaison with Health and Human Services. Patty serves on numerous state boards and councils, providing technical assistance on Early Childhood Education. Her work includes: The Common Core (K-3), Focus Group Coaching for NH Schools In Need of Improvement; primary K-3 and P-16. She is the author of Building Blocks, An Infant Toddler Handbook and research author for Parenting Pages; Cornell University Parenting Program as well as numerous additional articles. Ms. Ewen earned two Masters from Plymouth State University; Early Childhood Cognition & Methodology and Reading. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre; Youth Drama/Storytelling from the University of NH. She has three teaching certifications: Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education and Reading/Literacy Instruction.

**Michelle Lewis, M.Ed, Chair, Interagency Coordinating Council.** Michelle Lewis is a parent of two young children (ages 6 and 4), one who has a physical disability and speech delay. Michelle is chair of the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) and serves on the State Advisory Committee for Special Education. In December 2009, Ms. Lewis received the IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinator Association Regional Parent Leadership Award. She has presented at many state and national conferences on parent involvement in special education. Michelle is currently the Project Director for the Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) project at the Parent Information Center and an early childhood transitions project, supporting early childhood professionals in their work with families and children transitioning from Part C to Part B. She holds a M.Ed. in School Counseling and has worked with families and systems for over 15 years. Michelle has successfully led numerous state and federal grant programs and initiatives, the majority of them focused on IDEA.

**Debra Nelson, M.S, Administrator, NH Head Start Collaboration Office, DHHS.** Debra Nelson joined the NH DHHS, Division for Children, Youth and Families as Head Start Collaboration Office administrator in January 2007, where she promotes access to quality

services and collaboration between Head Start and early childhood programs/services at the state and local levels. Previously, she engaged in an array of projects for more than 16 years at the University of NH Institute on Disability/University Center for Excellence on Disability (IOD), serving as director, co-director, and evaluator of multiple federal, state and private foundation grants; assistant director of the IOD; and clinical assistant professor in the Child and Family Studies department. While at the IOD, Ms. Nelson secured over \$2.93 million in grant funding to advance quality early care and education for all young children and their families. She received her master's degree in early childhood/special education from the University of Oregon and has accrued over 25 years of experience in the early care and education field, including early intervention and preschool, family support, education, training and technical assistance, grant writing, research and evaluation, systems change and policy development. Ms. Nelson serves on numerous boards and committees and has co-authored several publications related to children and families.

Prior to the formation of an elected or appointed Executive Committee, the relationship of the Planning Committee and the Council Director will be similar to that of a Board of Directors and their chief executive officer. Early Learning NH, as the employer of record for the Council's dedicated staff, has the duty of signing employment contracts and hiring or terminating employment as mutually agreed with DHHS and the Planning Committee. See the organizational chart in Section D.

## 2. Council Director and Support Staff

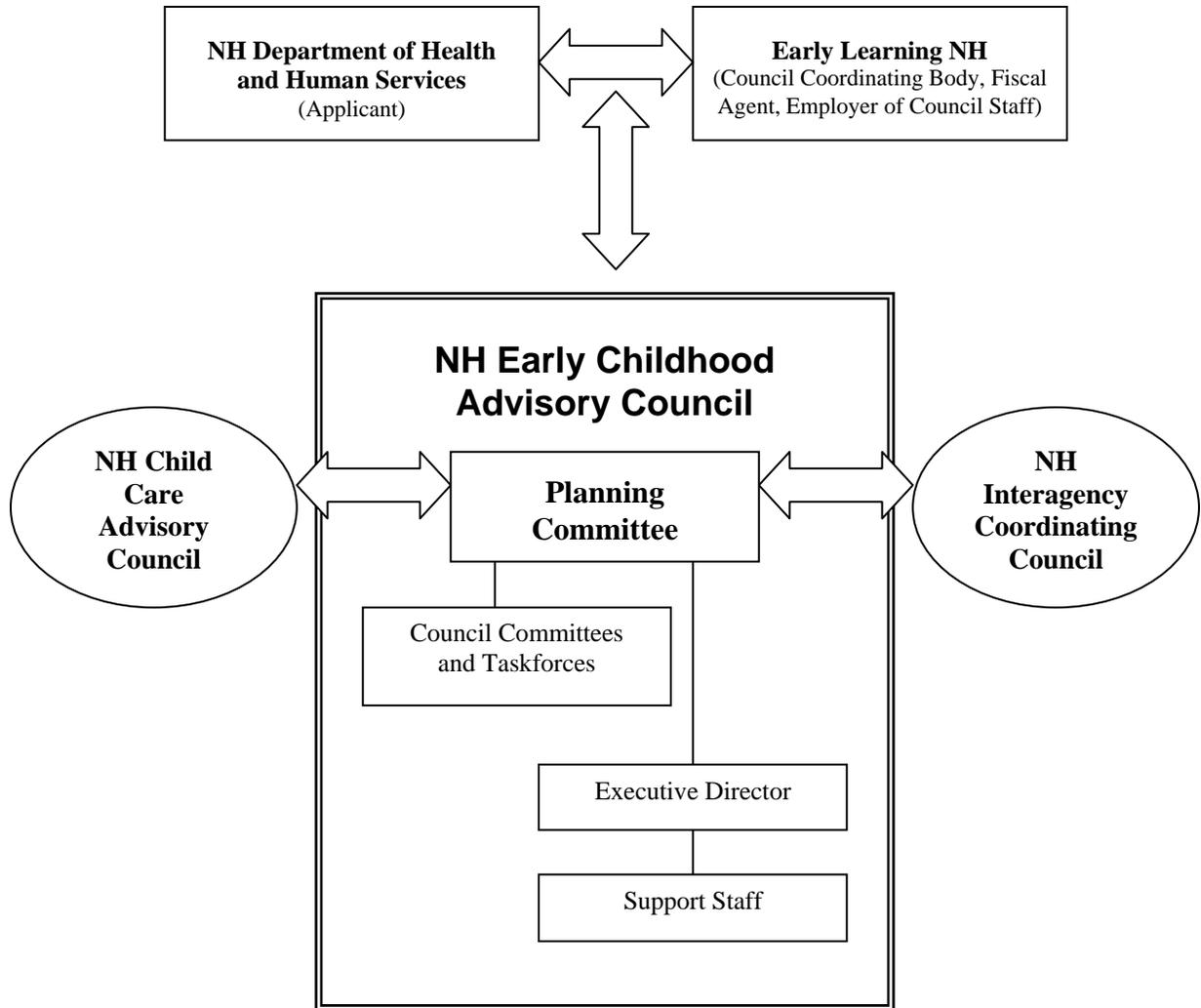
Having dedicated staff for New Hampshire's Council may be the single most important factor in ensuring the Council's work does not repeat the pattern seen throughout the last few decades: too many early childhood committees and councils with great plans, great people, but limited ability to put the plans into the spotlight, let alone into action. The director of the Council and the support staff person(s) will work together to coordinate and guide the comprehensive work of the Council as well as collaborate with state and federal agencies on the implementation issues related to Council recommendations. See Appendix E for a position

description and list of qualifications for the Council director position. DHHS's Child Development Bureau, Bureau of Developmental services, and Maternal and Child Health Section have all pledged to provide limited staffing support or technical assistance to the Council.

Council staff and leadership play a critical role together in supporting the Council's collaborative efforts and recommendations and in engaging in planning and coordination efforts to establish linkages across programs, divisions, and agencies. In the coming three years, we envision the Council to have the full capacity to provide strategic direction for strengthening statewide coordination and collaboration among the wide array of early childhood services and programs in New Hampshire.

Once awarded the start-up funding to establish a statewide advisory council, the first order of business will be to form a director search committee. Early Learning NH will hire the successful candidate after receiving approval from DHHS. The director selects the support staff.

**D. Organizational Profiles**



**Figure 2. DRAFT New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council Organizational Chart, July 2010**

**Early Learning NH** is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization committed to ensuring that all New Hampshire children have the opportunity to reach their full potential by expanding access to affordable quality child care and early education; supporting the child care industry; building public-private partnerships; and helping families balance work and family. Early Learning NH works closely and effectively with leadership in state agencies and the New Hampshire legislature. In 2009, the staff and board of Early Learning NH received the Mary Stuart Gile

Award in recognition for their “commitment to the development of the next generation of early childhood professionals.” The contact information is:

**Early Learning NH**

Two Delta Drive

Concord, NH 03301

603.226.7900

[www.earlylearningnh.org](http://www.earlylearningnh.org)

Jackie Cowell, Executive Director

603.226.7900

[jcowell@earlylearningnh.org](mailto:jcowell@earlylearningnh.org)

**The New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC)** is a legislatively-enacted statewide body that responds to child care issues and facilitates resources and information on early care and education in New Hampshire. The charge of the NH Child Care Advisory Council includes advising the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services and communicating and informing the Office of the Governor and the Commissioner of the Department of Education on policies and legislation regarding child care. The contact information is:

**New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council**

c/o NH Dept. of Health & Human Services

117 Pleasant Street, 4th Floor

Concord, NH 03301

<http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/DCYF/z1-nhccac.htm>

Dr. Patricia Cantor, Chair, NH CCAC

Plymouth State University, Education Department

603.535.2381

[pcantor@plymouth.edu](mailto:pcantor@plymouth.edu)

**The New Hampshire Department of Education (DOE)** is committed to helping students, parents, and educators (including teachers, principals, superintendents, and school communities) meet the educational needs of each student and offers a wide variety of programs and services in support of New Hampshire's students, teachers, educators, administrators, families, and community members. Its mission is "to provide educational leadership and services which promote equal educational opportunities and quality practices and programs that enable New Hampshire residents to become fully productive members of society." The contact information is:

**New Hampshire Department of Education**

101 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301

<http://www.dhhs.ed.nh.us>

Patricia Bradley Ewen, M.Ed., Early Childhood Specialist

Office for Early Childhood

603.271.3841

[patricia.b.ewen@ed.state.nh.us](mailto:patricia.b.ewen@ed.state.nh.us)

**The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Children, Youth and Families (DHHS/DCYF)** has multiple bureaus focused on safety, permanency and well being for New Hampshire's children, youth and their families, including Child Development, Head Start Collaboration Office, Foster Care and Adoption, Child Protection, Community and Family Services, Child Well Being and others. DCYF staff provides a wide range of family-centered services designed to meet a parent's and a child's needs and strengthening the family system. The contact information is:

**New Hampshire Dept. of Health and Human Services/DCYF**

129 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301

<http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us>

Debra Nelson, Administrator

NH Head Start Collaboration Office

603.271.7190

Debra.J.Nelson@dhhs.state.nh.us

**The New Hampshire Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)** is an advisory body to the DHHS, Bureau of Developmental Services and the Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education. The purpose of the ICC is to assist these agencies to promote and increase the quality of Family Centered Early Supports and Services (Part C of IDEA) and Preschool Special Education (Part B/619) supports and services to eligible children, birth through five years, and their families. The contact for the ICC is:

Michelle Lewis, ICC Chair

Project Director

Parent Information Center

603.224.7005 x14

mlewis@picnh.org

**New Hampshire State Parent Advisory Council (PAC)** advises Head Start programs, provides input on Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO) activities, and advocates for children and families. Members are locally elected parents from each of New Hampshire's six Head Start programs. In addition to members, Head Start staff and directors, the HSCO and NH Children's Trust Fund (NH CTF) attend monthly meetings. The group shares information, receives program updates, and plans activities, including an annual Parent Advocacy Day, which is designed to enhance parents' knowledge of the legislative process and advocacy strategies. The contact information is:

Heather Brown, Chair

Head Start State Parent Advisory Council

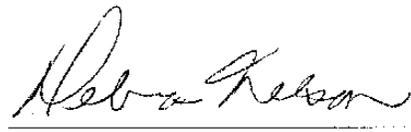
603.848.9660

[jiggerpup@gmail.com](mailto:jiggerpup@gmail.com)

**E. Third Party Agreements****NH DHHS/DCYF and Early Learning MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

- ♦ In January 2010, Governor Lynch designated Early Learning NH as the “coordinator of activities” for The Council, as described in the Head Start Act (sec. 11(b)(1)(A)(ii)). As such, Early Learning NH must assure that the required activities for The Council (subparagraph (D)(i)), which are the same activities that must be addressed in the grant application, are carried out in accordance with the Act. Early Learning NH has been coordinating The Council over the past six months and is the only organization in NH prepared to act in this capacity and assure that The Council meets its obligations in a timely manner. Therefore, DHHS proposes to appoint Early Learning NH as the administrative entity for the grant.
- ♦ Early Learning NH, in collaboration with DHHS/DCYF, will be responsible for hiring and supervising staff, producing financial and program reports, and overseeing the implementation of grant activities.
- ♦ DHHS/DCYF and Early Learning NH agree that DHHS/DCYF has authority to approve the hiring of staff, any necessary budgetary changes and provide oversight of grant activities and outcomes.

  
Jackie Cowell  
Executive Director  
Early Learning NH

  
Debra Nelson  
Administrator  
NH Head Start Collaboration Office

**F. Budget and Budget Justification**

1. New Hampshire DHHS/DCYF: 10/1/10 – 9/30/13

	<b>Federal</b>	<b>Non-Federal</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>FRINGE BENEFITS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>SUPPLIES</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>CONTRACTUAL</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>

This application requests \$500,000 for a contract with Early Learning NH to be awarded in year 1 and expended over years 1-3, as noted above, to (a) serve as fiscal agent and (b) partner with DHHS/DCYF and the Council on the implementation of grant goals, objectives and activities. Jackie Cowell, Early Learning NH executive director, is the designated “coordinator of activities” for the Council, appointed by Governor John Lynch in January 2010 at the recommendation of DHHS/DCYF. A memorandum of agreement between DHHS/DCYF and Early Learning NH is in Section E., Third Party Agreements.

<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,167,000</b>

The State of New Hampshire will contribute \$1,167,000 (required non-federal share) in in-kind matching funds for this grant proposal, which were allocated to the NH DHHS/DCYF Child Development Bureau from State general funds to decrease family cost share for families of children receiving child care scholarships through the U.S. DHHS ACF Child Care and Development Fund. Funds for family cost share were added to the State budget in response to the increasing crisis in child care affordability as a result of the poor economy. These funds will directly benefit families and children in one area of Council responsibility: access to services for

families with low incomes. Matching funds will be applied in year 1 of the grant. A letter of commitment for matching funds is in Appendix D.

**SUMMARY OF NON-FEDERAL MATCH**

As indicated under the “Other” category, the State of New Hampshire will contribute \$1,167,000 (required match) in in-kind matching funds from the NH DHHS/DCYF Child Development Bureau child care scholarship program. These funds will directly benefit 929 young children and their families. Note: The Council will also benefit from non-federal sources of support that will not be documented, including co-sponsorship of meetings and events, meeting space for Council functions, and office space for staff.

<b>TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$1,167,000</b>
<b>INDIRECT CHARGE</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$1,167,000</b>

2. Early Learning NH Contract: 10/1/10 – 9/30/13

Category	Three Year Budget			Total
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
<b>Personnel</b>				
Director of the NH Early Childhood Advisory Council	██████	██████	██████	██████
Support Staff ████████████████████	██████	██████	██████	██████
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>				
Benefits include FICA and employee co-pay medical & dental insurance	19,956	20,780	21,642	<b>\$62,378</b>
<b>Travel</b>				
In State Travel Mileage (approx. 333 miles/mo. @ .50/mile x 12 mos each year)	2,000	2,000	2,000	<b>\$6,000</b>
Out of state/Conferences	2,000	2,000	2,000	<b>\$6,000</b>
<b>Equipment</b>				
Laptop/software for New Staff (Exec. Dir. & Support Staff) (2)	2,200			<b>\$2,200</b>
<b>Supplies</b>	304	304	305	<b>\$913</b>
<b>Contractual</b>				
Evaluation (20 days @\$600/day - report every 18 months)	5,000	4,000	3,000	<b>\$12,000</b>

<b>Three Year Budget</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
Needs Assessment		2,250	2,250	<b>\$4,500</b>
Early Childhood Data System Design	50,000	25,000	25,000	<b>\$100,000</b>
Public Engagement / Media Campaign		20,800		<b>\$20,800</b>
Administrative (██████████ x 2/hrs./month x 12 months)	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
<b>Other</b>				
Phone (\$100/month x 12 months)	1,200	1,200	1,200	<b>\$3,600</b>
Printing	2,000	2,000	2,000	<b>\$6,000</b>
Copying	1,000	1,000	1,000	<b>\$3,000</b>
Meeting Costs	1,100	1,100	1,100	<b>\$3,300</b>
Public Hearing Costs	1,500	1,500	1,500	<b>\$4,500</b>
Parent Stipends (2 @ ██████████ month x 12 months)	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
<b>Indirect Cost Rate</b>	0	0	0	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Federal Sources \$</b>	<b>\$174,560</b>	<b>\$172,184</b>	<b>\$153,256</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>
<b>Non-Federal Resources</b>	<b>\$1,167,000</b>			<b>\$1,167,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,667,000</b>

**BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

	<b>Federal</b>	<b>Non-Federal</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	<b>\$259,409</b>	<b>\$0</b>

NH Early Childhood Advisory Council Director (TBD) (1.0 FTE) will (a) provide leadership to the Council in carrying out its mission, goals, objectives and activities throughout the grant period, and (b) administer the grant project in partnership with the Council and DHHS. A position description and qualifications for the director can be found in Section C., Staff and Position Data. ██████████ is requested to support the director’s salary in year 1; ██████████ ██████████ is requested for salary support in year 2; and ██████████ is requested in year 3.

Support Staff (TBD)(15 hours/week). Support staff will assist the director and the Council with administrative and other tasks related to accomplishing the Council’s goals, objectives and activities. A position description and qualifications for support staff can be found

above in Section C., Support Staff. Examples of responsibilities include organizing meetings, preparing meeting summaries, providing administrative and programmatic support to Council committees and task forces, assisting with the preparation of reports and grant applications, and responding to inquiries about the Council. In order to leverage resources and maximize support for the Council, support staff may include one or more qualified individuals and/or an AmeriCorps/VISTA member, should the Council’s planning committee or new director decide to employ (in full or in part) an AmeriCorps/VISTA position. [REDACTED] s requested for support staff during each year of the grant [REDACTED]. Costs were calculated at [REDACTED] per hour for up to 15 hours per week for individuals. The cost for an AmeriCorps/VISTA member is estimated at [REDACTED] per year for 40 hours per week.

**FRINGE BENEFITS** **\$62,379** **\$0**

Fringe benefits total **\$62,379** [REDACTED]

3). FICA is calculated at 7.65% of the director’s salary and the support staff’s hourly rate. FICA is \$6,464 in Year 1, \$6,613 in Year 2, and \$6,767 in Year 3, totaling \$19,845. Early Learning NH offers full-time employees health insurance coverage. Early Learning NH pays 100% of the cost of single-person coverage and 50% of the cost of any additional family coverage. The FY2010 health insurance monthly premium for a single person is \$525.32 and the family coverage is \$1,596.96. Family coverage is being budgeted as the employee is yet to be hired. The annual health insurance benefit is calculated as follows:  $525.32 + ((1,596.96 - 525.32) / 2) = \$1,061.14 \times 12 \text{ months} = \$12,734$  in Year 1. A 5% increase is calculated for Years 2 and 3. The total cost of the health insurance benefit is \$40,143. Early Learning NH offers full-time employees a benefit of paid, single-person dental insurance coverage. The FY2010 dental insurance premium for a single person is  $\$63.20 \times 12 \text{ months} = \$758$ . A 5% increase is calculated for Years 2 and 3. The total cost of the dental insurance benefit is \$2,391.  $\$19,845 \text{ (FICA)} + \$40,143 \text{ (Health)} + \$2,391 \text{ (Dental)} = \mathbf{\$62,379}$ .

**TRAVEL** **\$12,000** **\$0**

*In-state.* **\$6,000** is requested to support the director and support staff to travel to meetings and activities to carry out the responsibilities of the Council over three years (\$2,000 in each of years 1-3). Costs were calculated based on an estimated 4,000 miles at \$.50 per mile.

*Out-of-state.* **\$6,000** is requested over three years (\$2,000 per year) to support the director’s travel and meeting costs to attend national and regional meetings or conferences directly related to the work of the Council. Costs were calculated at \$1,500 per meeting (national) and \$500 per meeting (regional), including airfare or mileage, food, lodging, registration fees and ground transportation.

**EQUIPMENT** **\$2,200** **\$0**

This application requests **\$2,200** in year 1 to purchase two laptops and basic software (Microsoft Office) for the newly-hired director and support staff to carry out the work of the Council. Laptops and software are estimated at \$1,100 each.

**SUPPLIES** **\$913** **\$0**

This application request **\$913** over three years (\$304 per year in years 1 and 2; \$305 in year 3) for supplies and materials directly related to Council activities and responsibilities. This includes materials such as paper, diskettes, pens, name badges, folders, software, three-ring binders, toner and printer cartridges, meeting supplies, flip charts, markers, and educational materials, such as books or other publications. Costs were estimated based on expenses to support other NH councils.

**CONTRACTUAL** **\$140,900** **\$0**

**\$140,900** is requested over three years (\$56,200 in year 1, \$53,250 in year 2, and \$31,450 in year 3) for contracts relative to evaluation, needs assessment, early childhood data system design, public engagement/media, and administrative support. Early Learning NH will generate the contracts in partnership with the Council, Council Director, and DHHS/DCYF. The Council director will monitor the contracts.

*Evaluation.* [REDACTED] is requested over three years [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to support a contract with Antal Consulting, LLC for the development and implementation of an evaluation plan that addresses outcomes and impacts from the work of the Council and includes the development of recommendations for ongoing statewide evaluation of four components of NH's early childhood system: supportive communities and effective policies; nurturing and financially stable families; safe, enriching environments and relationships; and comprehensive health care. Dr. Peter Antal will serve as evaluation consultant for this project. He will be responsible for convening an evaluation task force, working with the Council on evaluation, and submitting annual reports to the Council. Costs were calculated at [REDACTED] per day for 20 days (approximately 8.3 days in year 1, 6.7 days in year 2, and 5 days in year 3).

*Needs Assessment.* **\$4,500** is requested to support work on a comprehensive statewide needs assessment for NH (\$2,250 in each of years 2 and 3) to be conducted in collaboration with Maternal and Child Health's home visiting needs assessment initiative. A contract to carry out the work will be awarded through a bidding process. Costs were estimated at \$50/hour for 90 hours over years 2 and 3. Work will include a "cross walk" of current statewide, early childhood-related needs assessments to identify existing sources of information, nature of the information collected, gaps and information utilization (e.g., inform policy and practice; planning).

*Early childhood data system design.* **\$100,000** is requested over three years to (a) develop recommendations for an early childhood data system for NH, and (b) begin implementation of those recommendations that are feasible to address given current resources in the state. Costs were estimated to include a part-time data system specialist (FTE per year to be determined based on proposals to be solicited via a bidding process) and modifications to existing data systems that would allow data sharing across selected early childhood-related federal and state programs.

*Public engagement/media campaign.* **\$20,800** is requested to be expended in Year 2 to support the Council's work in the area of public engagement and awareness. A consultant will be

selected through a public bidding process to work with the Council on the development and implementation of strategies to garner broad public support, including the business and philanthropic sectors, for quality early childhood programs and services. The cost was estimated based on a similar campaign in NH regarding early childhood mental health.

*Administrative support.* [REDACTED] is requested over three years [REDACTED] for administrative support to include accounting, payroll and other payments. Costs were calculated at [REDACTED]/hour x 2 hours/month x 12 months. Carmel Duval, Certified Public Accountant, P.L.L.C., who provides administrative and accounting support to Early Learning NH for these services, will serve in this capacity.

<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>\$22,200</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**\$22,200** is requested over three years to support other costs (\$7,400 per year for years 1-3) directly related to the work of the Council:

*Telephone.* **\$3,600** is requested (\$1,200 per year for years 1-3) for telephone service for the director and support staff. Annual costs were calculated at \$100/month (\$50/phone).

*Printing.* **\$6,000** is requested (\$2,000 per year for years 1-3) for printing Council-related documents and materials (e.g., reports, public awareness materials) for broad dissemination.

*Copying.* **\$3,000** (\$1,000 per year for years 1-3) is requested to copy Council-related materials for meetings and other activities.

*Meeting costs.* **\$3,300** (\$1,100 per year for years 1-3) is requested to cover room and equipment rentals, satellite hook-up, and refreshments for large stakeholder meetings and events.

*Public hearings.* **\$4,500** (\$1,500 per year for years 1-3) is requested to conduct public hearings, including technology support and satellite hook-up. The annual cost was based on the actual cost of the public hearing the Council held in July 2010.

*Parent stipends.* [REDACTED] is requested for stipends to support two parents to participate in the Council. Costs are calculated at [REDACTED] month x 2 parents x 12

months. One parent member of the Council is nominated by and represents the Head Start State Parent Advisory Council. A second parent will be nominated by the ICC or the CCAC.

<b>TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>INDIRECT CHARGE</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Appendices**

Attached please find the following appendices:

- Appendix A Membership of the New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Appendix B Letter from Governor John H. Lynch
- Appendix C *New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council Strategic Report (July 21, 2010)*
- Appendix D Letter of Commitment for Non-Federal Match
- Appendix E Draft Council Director Position Description
- Appendix F Certifications

## APPENDIX A

## NEW HAMPSHIRE EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

June 2010

<p><b>Charna Aversa</b>, Disability Serv. Manager Strafford County Head Start PO Box 607, 60 Charles Street Farmington, NH 03835 (603) 755-3108 [REDACTED]</p>	<p><b>Denise Brewitt</b>, Executive Director NH Council for Children &amp; Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions (CCACHC) 21 South Fruit Street, Suite 22 Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-7045 dbrewitt@ccachc.org</p>	<p><b>Heather Brown</b>, Chair Head Start State Parent Advisory Council 90 Main St. Apt. B Pittsfield, NH 03263 (603) 848-9660 [REDACTED]</p>
<p><b>Patricia Cantor</b>, Professor Plymouth State University, Education Dept. 17 High Street Plymouth, NH (603) 535-2381 pcantor@plymouth.edu</p>	<p><b>Jackie Cowell</b>, Executive Director Early Learning NH Two Delta Drive Concord, NH 03301 (603) 226-7900 jcowell@earlylearningnh.org</p>	<p><b>Deirdre Dunn</b>, Early Childhood Special Projects Coordinator DHHS/DPHS/Maternal &amp; Child Health Sec. 29 Hazen Drive Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-4517 deirdre.dunn@dhhs.state.nh.us</p>
<p><b>Christine Durkee</b>, Program Specialist Learn &amp; Serve, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centers NH Dept. of Education 101 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-7306 cdurkee@ed.state.nh.us</p>	<p><b>Toni Ellsworth</b>, Executive Director Rise...for baby and family 147 Washington Street Keene, NH 03431 (603) 357-1395 TEllsworth@riseforbabyandfamily.org</p>	<p><b>Patricia Bradley Ewen</b>, Early Childhood Specialist Office of Early Childhood Education NH Dept. of Education 101 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-3841 Patricia.b.ewen@ed.state.nh.us</p>
<p><b>Barbara Hemingway</b>, Special Education Preschool Coordinator Concord School District 14 Canterbury Road - Dame School Concord, NH 03301 (603) 225-0830 bhemi@csd.k12.nh.us</p>	<p><b>Michelle Lewis</b>, Project Director Parent Information Center PO Box 2405 Concord, NH 03302-2405 (603) 224-7005 x14 mlewis@picnh.org</p>	<p><b>Ruth Littlefield</b>, Preschool Special Education Consultant, Bureau of Special Education NH Department of Education 101 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-3841 rlittlefield@ed.state.nh.us</p>
<p><b>Julie McConnell</b>, Director Child Care &amp; Community Facilities Lending NH Community Loan Fund 7 Wall Street Concord, NH 03301 (603) 224-6669 jmcconnell@theloanfund.org</p>	<p><b>Debra Nelson</b>, Administrator NH Head Start Collaboration Office NH DHHS/DCYF 129 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-7190 Debra.J.Nelson@dhhs.state.nh.us</p>	<p><b>Gerry Santilli</b>, Director Rockingham Community Action Head Start 7 Junkins Avenue Portsmouth, NH 03801 (603) 431-2911 gsantilli@rcaction.org</p>
<p><b>Bill Smith</b>, Chair NH CCACHC 21 South Fruit Street, Suite 22 Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-7045 bsmith@smith-phillips.com</p>	<p><b>Jackie Sparks</b>, Executive Director Children Unlimited, Inc. 182 West Main Street Conway, NH 03818 (603) 447-6356 jsparks@childrenunlimitedinc.org</p>	<p><b>Carolyn Stiles</b>, Coordinator Family Centered Early Supports &amp; Services DHHS, Bureau of Developmental Services 105 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-5122 cstiles@dhhs.state.nh.us</p>
<p><b>Lisa Strout</b>, Executive Director NHAEYC PO Box 85 Lempster, NH 03605 (888) 225-4884 [REDACTED]</p>	<p><b>Patricia Tilley</b>, Title V Administrator DHHS/DPHS/Maternal &amp; Child Health Sec. 29 Hazen Drive Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-4517 ptilley@dhhs.state.nh.us</p>	<p><b>Ellen Wheatley</b>, Administrator Child Development Bureau NH DHHS/DCYF 129 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-8153 <a href="mailto:ewheatley@dhhs.state.nh.us">ewheatley@dhhs.state.nh.us</a></p>
<p>Providing admin support to the NH ECAC: <b>Katie Brissette</b>, Director of Outreach and Support, Early Learning NH (603) 226-7900 kbrissette@earlylearningnh.org</p>	<p>Providing facilitation of the NH ECAC: <b>Elissa Margolin</b>, Margolin Consulting/Project Management Services (603) 427-6076 or (603) 828-5916 elissa@margolinconsulting.com</p>	



JOHN H. LYNCH  
Governor

# State of New Hampshire

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

107 North Main Street, State House - Rm 208

Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Telephone (603) 271-2121

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July 28, 2010

David Kadan, ACF Grants Management Officer  
Administration for Children and Families  
Division of Discretionary Grants  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW  
Aerospace/6th Floor East  
Washington, DC 20447

Dear Mr. Kadan:

New Hampshire has long worked to ensure that all of our youngest citizens are given the opportunities to develop to their fullest potential. We recognize that students who receive quality early learning opportunities are more likely to finish school and to succeed later in life.

The one-time start up allocation from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding will provide New Hampshire with an opportunity to establish an early childhood advisory council. The Council's mission will be to "provide leadership that promotes a comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable early childhood system that achieves positive outcomes for young children and families, investing in a solid future for the Granite State."

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services is authorized as the applicant for the grant of \$500,000 to support the establishment and work of the Council. The coordinating body of the Council is Early Learning NH and Jackie Cowell, Executive Director, will coordinate the activities of the Council. Since 2008, Early Learning NH, in partnership with the New Hampshire Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, and Employment Security, have been convening state and community leaders and other early childhood stakeholders to develop a unified, early childhood system.

Thank you for your time and attention. I hope you will review New Hampshire's application favorably.

*[Faint, mostly illegible text, possibly a signature block or additional correspondence details]*

**New Hampshire Early Childhood Advisory Council Strategic Report  
July 21, 2010**

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## NH EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL STRATEGIC REPORT

"The likelihood of significant change is much higher when government bureaucrats, political leaders and advocates see themselves as playing on the same team." - Anne Mitchell

### INTRODUCTION

The Foundation for a Unified Early Childhood System in NH: Three Years in the Making

*"I challenge New Hampshire to have a first class Early Childhood System in place to showcase to the presidential candidates at the next first in the nation primary."*

- Nina Sazer O'Donnell, United Way of America, 2008

Over the past decade, two convergent forces rendered it possible to strengthen early care and education for New Hampshire's young children and families: Governor Jeanne Shaheen and state agency leaders' efforts to build the public and political will for early care and education and Governor Lynch's firm commitment to bipartisan action. The result was a significant change in early care and education policies, which, for the first time, included kindergarten in the definition of an adequate education in NH, expanded eligibility and increased state support for child care assistance for working families, and established a new quality rating system, "Licensed Plus," to reward child care programs for quality improvements and offer tools for parents to determine which programs in their community exceed the basic health and safety standards of child care licensing.

Over the past three years, much of the foundation work for a unified early childhood system in NH was accomplished through the efforts of a diverse group of public and private early childhood organizations and leaders informally referred to as the braintrust, listed below. Led by Early Learning NH<sup>8</sup>, this group was charged with identifying the policy and practice changes necessary to realize a comprehensive early childhood system in our state. With support from Northeast Delta Dental; Nellie Mae Education Foundation; and the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services and Employment Security; Early Learning NH and the braintrust convened a series of public forums to garner support for and provide input to the design of NH's early childhood system. The forums featured national experts from the National Governor's Association, the Build Initiative, United Way of America's Born Learning, and the National Center for Children in Poverty, as well as state leaders (Commissioners of Education, Health and Human Services, and Employment Security). As a result, four major objectives were identified: 1) Encourage systems thinking within and across state agencies; 2) Establish and strengthen leadership infrastructure (including a Children's Cabinet and State Early Childhood Advisory Council); 3) Build public awareness and public will regarding the importance of early care and education to a child's success in life; and 4) Create public/private partnerships and/or a funders' collaborative to spark and support systems building innovation. Finally, NH's work with the FrameWorks Institute<sup>9</sup> over the past three years has sharpened the focus of and promoted coordination among the formerly disparate voices speaking on behalf of early care and education.

### Early Childhood braintrust Members

Cynthia Billings, PlusTime NH  
 Maggie Bishop, DHHS/DCYF  
 Katie Brisette, Early Learning NH  
 Patricia Cantor, Plymouth State University  
 Karen Carpenter, NH Children's Trust Fund  
 Denise Corvino, DHHS/Child Care Licensing Unit  
 Jackie Cowell, Early Learning NH  
 Deirdre Dunn, DHHS/Maternal and Child Health  
 Iris Estabrook, former State Senator and formerly with Children's Alliance of NH  
 Don Hutchinson, Southwestern Community Services Head Start  
 Joan Izen, PTAN/SERESC  
 Becky Johnson, Belknap-Merrimack Head Start  
 Keryn Bernard-Kriegl, NH Children's Trust Fund  
 Janine Lesser, DHHS/DFA  
 Julie McConnell, NH Community Loan Fund  
 Tessa McDonnell, Granite State College

<sup>8</sup>Early Learning NH is a private, non-profit organization founded in 2003 to build a single early-childhood leadership, public-policy, and member-services organization

<sup>9</sup>FrameWorks "designs, commissions, manages and publishes communications research to prepare nonprofit organizations to expand their constituency base, to build public will, and to further public understanding of specific social issues." [www.frameworks.org](http://www.frameworks.org)

Carol Michael, Consultant  
 Eileen Mullen, DHHS/DCYF  
 Debra Nelson, DHHS/Head Start Collaboration Office  
 Lara Quiroga, Southern NH University  
 Julie Sackett, Belknap-Merrimack Head Start  
 Rep. Mary Stuart Gile, NH House of Representatives  
 Christina Tarness, Elliot Health Systems/VNA Child Care Center  
 Tricia Tilley, DHHS/Maternal and Child Health  
 Rep. Mary Jane Wallner, NH House Majority Leader  
 Ellen Wheatley, DHHS/Child Development Bureau

This report includes a description of New Hampshire's Early Childhood Advisory Council, an overview of preliminary needs assessment activities and results, the plan to address the responsibilities of the Council, and a summary of the public hearing held on July 13, 2010.

### **NH EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL**

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." - African Proverb

Like many states at the time the "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007" (the Act) was passed, NH had several councils focusing wholly or in part on young children and families, but none that met all of its requirements. Included were the NH Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC), the NH Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Council for Children and Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions (CCACHC), and the Governor's P-16 Working Group<sup>10</sup>. In response, a broad group of leaders from the unified early childhood system initiative (described above), developed recommendations for a NH Early Childhood Advisory Council (the Council) over a 12-month period of intensive planning, outreach to existing councils, and research on similar efforts in other states. In November 2009, Governor Lynch approved the recommendations and appointed representatives to the Council (Appendix A), with the understanding that membership would be expanded and the Council would be fully functioning by fall 2010. The Governor also designated Early Learning NH as the "coordinator of activities" for the Council. The Council, as required by the Act and endorsed by the Governor, will:

- Serve as the primary advisory body to the Governor's Office, state legislature, and state agencies regarding early care and education issues in the State of NH;
- Conduct a needs assessment on early childhood education program quality and availability for expectant families and children aged birth through grade 3 and their families, including pre-kindergarten services for children in families with low incomes<sup>11</sup>;
- Identify opportunities and barriers regarding collaboration and coordination among federally- and state-funded early care and education programs and the state agencies that administer these programs;
- Coordinate early care and education-related resources;
- Promote changes in policy, legislation and practice that support and/or improve the lives of families who are expecting a child and/or who have children aged birth through grade 3;
- Assess the capacity and effectiveness of NH's Institutions of Higher Education to support the development of early childhood educators;
- Generate recommendations for:
  - Increasing participation in federal/state/local early childhood education programs
  - Establishing a unified data system for public early childhood care and education programs and services to facilitate data-informed decision making
  - Promoting statewide professional development/career advancement for early childhood educators
  - Improving state early learning standards
- Provide strategic direction to state and community leaders
- Hold public hearings

### **Vision**

The NH Early Childhood Advisory Council's vision is:

All New Hampshire children and their families are healthy, learning, and thriving now and in the future.

<sup>10</sup> Promotes post-secondary education for NH's students

<sup>11</sup> The Head Start Act requires a focus on children from birth to school entry. NH's Council expanded the target population.

**Mission**

Its mission is as follows:

*The Council provides leadership that promotes a comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable early childhood system that achieves positive outcomes for young children and families, investing in a solid future for the Granite State.*

**Definition & Focus**

The Council defines an early childhood system as “a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable network of public and private supports, services, and programs for young children and their families.” The focus of the Council is on expectant families and children from birth through grade 3 and their families.

**Guiding Principles**

The NH Early Childhood Advisory Council is guided by the following eight principles pertaining to families and children, early childhood systems, and the Council itself.

Families and Children:

9. Families should be supported by communities and be partners with stakeholders and service providers in designing, coordinating, and evaluating supports, services, and programs.
10. Preventive approaches early in life provide a rich return on investment and are economically advantageous compared to costly remediation later in life.
11. Successful transitions for young children and their families sustain the foundation of healthy early childhood development.

Early Childhood Systems:

12. Early childhood systems utilize evidence-based and promising practices to deliver high quality services and programs to young children and their families that are developmentally and culturally appropriate, and universally accessible.
13. Early childhood systems maximize efficiency and collaboration at both the state and local level, and are aligned with the strengths and individual needs of children and families.
14. Early childhood systems set high standards, self-evaluate and continuously improve.

The Council:

15. The Council will build on recent and ongoing early childhood planning efforts, research, and initiatives as well as lessons learned from national resources and input from stakeholders.
16. Communication, coordination, collaboration, and partnership across all sectors of the community, both public and private, ensure the effectiveness and impact of services.

**Authority, Affiliation and Structure**

The Council will be an independent entity, authorized by legislation, which advises the Governor's Office, state legislature, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Department of Education (DOE), and others, and is collectively staffed and funded. It will include:

- Standing committees, which will be determined based on function and include the functions of existing bodies that merge to form the Council.
- Time-limited, targeted task forces/work groups, which will be convened by consensus of the Council to address current issues and/or needs, such as Federal plans, market rate surveys, position papers, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)-related issues, etc.

Standing committees will include representatives from mandated and optional categories for the NH Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)(Part C and B/619 of IDEA), NH Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC), and other key councils. Standing committees and task forces/work groups may also include non-voting members who are invited to serve. During the development phase, the Council has a Planning Committee, Communications and Outreach Task Force, and a Fund Development and Sustainability Task Force. To fully establish the Council and undertake the work as outlined in this report, additional committees and task forces will be convened. “Committees” are long standing groups that will continue to meet and work until the Council votes to disband them, while “task forces” and “work groups” are

convened to complete specific tasks on a time-limited basis, such as drafting by-laws, vision/mission statements or procedures.

### PRELIMINARY NEEDS ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

#### NH ECAC Survey

In June 2010 the Council created and disseminated a web-based survey designed to garner broad input on: (a) the status of collaboration/coordination among early childhood-related programs and services at the state and local levels; (b) barriers to and strategies for improving collaboration/coordination among programs and services; and (c) resources that may facilitate the work of the Council and/or improve collaboration/coordination among early childhood programs and services. An overview of the survey and link to the web page were emailed to approximately a large list of organizations, agencies, committees and individuals, with a request to forward the survey link to anyone who may be interested in participating. The survey was “open” online for a one-week period.

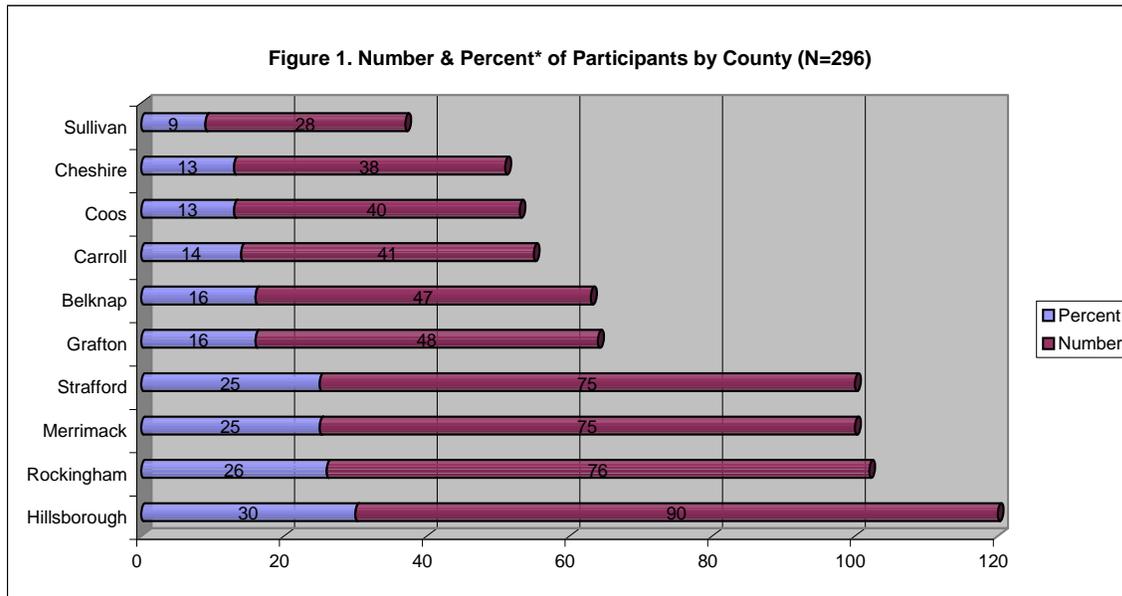
Among the 299 respondents, a broad array of perspectives was represented, as shown in Table 1. Parents/caregivers and family members by far were the largest number of participants, (N=68, 22.7%), followed by representatives from child care centers (N=48, 16.1%), health/healthcare (N=35, 11.7%) and preschool special education (N=32, 10.7%).

Table 1. Number & percent of survey participants by primary role/perspective (N=299)

Primary Role/Perspective	N <sup>1</sup>	%
Parent/caregiver/family member	68	22.7
Child care center	48	16.1
Health/healthcare	35	11.7
Preschool special education	32	10.7
Higher education	16	5.4
Public school (K – 3)	16	5.4
Early Supports & Services (early intervention)	15	5.0
Preschool	15	5.0
State agency	15	5.0
Head Start/Early Head Start	14	4.7
Family child care provider	13	4.3
Mental health	8	2.7
Family organization	8	2.7
Public policy	7	2.3
Advocate	6	2.0
Other	20	6.7

<sup>1</sup>Total exceeds 299 because some participants selected more than one response

Other participants included funders/foundations, business, community members, and students. Although the largest number of participants represented Hillsborough County (N=30), all of NH’s counties were represented, as reflected in Figure 1.



\*Total exceeds 296 and 100% because some participants selected more than one response

As shown in Table 2, 168 participants indicated that they and/or their organizations engaged in Council-related activities. More than half promote changes in policy, legislation and practice that improve the lives of NH’s young children and their families (60.1%); make recommendations to improve early learning standards (55.4%); and identify opportunities for and barriers to collaboration (55.4%).

Table 2. Council-related activities in which participants or their organizations were engaged (N=168).

Council-Related Activity	N <sup>1</sup>	% <sup>1</sup>
Promote changes in policy, legislation and practice that improve the lives of NH families of young children	101	60.1
Make recommendations for improvements in early learning standards	93	55.4
Identify opportunities for and barriers to collaboration/coordination	93	55.4
Provide strategic direction to state and community leaders regarding early care and education issues in NH	74	44.0
Develop recommendations regarding statewide professional development/career advancement for early childhood educators	61	36.3
Develop recommendations for increasing child participation in early childhood education (ECE) programs	60	35.7
Assess capacity of higher education to support the development of EC educators	36	21.4
Develop recommendations for a unified ECE data system and development of programs and services	33	19.6
Conduct periodic statewide needs assessment on ECE program quality and availability	27	16.1

<sup>1</sup>Total exceeds 168 and 100% because some participants selected more than one response

## 1) Increasing the Effectiveness of Collaboration among Early Childhood-Related Programs & Services

When asked, "In your opinion, how could early childhood-related organizations/agencies throughout NH and in your community work together more effectively?" 164 participants offered comments and recommendations pertaining to six broad categories: 1) communication and public awareness; 2) professional development; 3) collaboration; 4) services; 5) an early childhood system; and 6) the NH Early Childhood Advisory Council. Participants also offered multiple examples of effective collaboration among programs and services.

### Communication & Public Awareness

More than 80 comments were directed toward communication and public awareness. Many described the need for increased communication among early childhood programs and services at the state and local levels regarding roles, responsibilities, and services provided; as well as readily available information on resources and best practices for both providers and families. Some participants were specific in their recommendations, such as "increase communication between early childhood and healthcare and Family Centered Early Supports and Services (early intervention) and Preschool Special Education." Others were more general, such as "communicating with one another in a productive forum with individual agency/organization agendas out of the mix."

Participants suggested a number of strategies to promote communication and public awareness. *The most frequently named strategy (with over 26 comments) was to create opportunities for formal networking, communication, collaboration and sharing resources via organized/facilitated meetings (regional and statewide), consortiums, cooperatives and other such groups.* Other suggestions included:

- Create informal networks
- Maximize the use of technology (blogs; listservs; e-mail; website; Internet-based charting/records; central directory; on-line resources)
- Promote the use of comparable assessments across programs
- Promote shared needs assessments
- Create lists of qualified substitute teachers to share across programs
- Publish state agency organizational charts
- Develop an overall mission statement that people can get excited about

Examples of comments in this category are as follows:

*"Communicate and collaborate with one another to help families find the resources they need."*

*"Need to have more parent integration into the child care, mostly in the form of parent education and such."*

*"As a parent, I did not receive information about early intervention until several months after my daughter was born (she has Down syndrome). I would have liked to have known about it (and the importance of beginning services early) sooner."*

*"I believe more focus needs to be placed on working with and supporting the families of very young children. I believe every childcare and early learning center needs to focus on strengthening families and parenting skills as well as providing quality care and early learning for the children in their care. Closer relationships and collaborations between ECE's, family resource centers and schools on a local and regional basis will help."*

*"By building a stronger coalition, through regional groups and a statewide group that has representation from each of the regional groups that consists of providers (all types), parents, advocates from statewide and national organizations, business leaders, legislators and others concerned with the field."*

*"Having one access point for all EC agencies/organizations to access to share information, and to have information available for the public."*

*"Ongoing/improved communication so that health care providers are always aware of the services available and how to access those services for our patients."*

*"I think that agencies should go to the smaller preschools and licensed daycares and introduce themselves and discuss their services."*

## Professional Development

Among the 16 comments related to professional development were recommendations for joint activities (conferences, training, mentors), a unified approach to curriculum and educational requirements for Early Childhood teachers, and ongoing opportunities to participate in activities and share information, as reflected in the following quotations:

*"It would be nice and beneficial to all if there were a system of mentorship in the state for trainers to make an impact in programs all over the state. Families are forced to "price shop" for child care instead of actually accessing quality care for their children due to so many barriers. Of the programs that are quality, the accessibility factor is an issue as these programs are full to capacity with wait lists. While we may not be able to "fix" this, we can certainly affect the quality of programs through the use of the fabulous trainers around the state."*

*"...having a sort of knowledge coop where if one organization learns from a workshop/conference/study, there is a means of sharing the info with each other."*

*"I believe that it is important for faculty in colleges and universities to continue to work closely with early childhood providers to encourage those going into the field to receive specific education that will help create stimulating environments for young children."*

*"Collaboration of instructors to keep up with area trends in learning"*

*"Continue to provide quality training opportunities for staff that include ideas for the K-3 population, not just for those that serve kids aged 5 and under."*

### Collaboration

There were approximately 32 comments in regard to enhancing collaboration between and among early childhood-related programs/agencies in general, as well as between/among specific programs/agencies as follows:

- Family Resource Centers, child care and schools
- Early childhood education and schools
- Area agencies and schools
- Mental health providers and others (schools and Special Medical Services)
- Family Centered Early Supports and Services and others
- Those serving special populations
- Child Care Resource & Referrals and others (to increase resources)
- Child Care Licensing, town government, public schools regarding background checks
- Departments of Health and Human Services and Education

Participants recommended the following three strategies to improve collaboration:

- Have clear goals/rules for collaboration
- 1-Stop Shopping model for families
- Pool/share resources

Examples of comments and insights regarding collaboration included:

*"Be clear as to the goal of collaborative activities. Because of NH's relatively loose configuration of early childhood organizations and agencies, I fear we are not competitive for some foundation and federal dollars"*

*"Combine our buying power, trainings, share waiting lists, be more cohesive"*

*"Blending funding streams so children receive unified services - 1 stop shopping no matter their income or qualification. Good Early Childhood Services for all. Public school need to work closely with community-based child care agencies to provide unified services within the community, especially for children with an IEP/IFSP."*

*"We could work together to better help those children that are in our care that need extra support other than an hour or two a week. We are here for the families but some of us are not equipped to help all children but with other help from organizations we can help create a more successful environment for ALL children."*

## Services

Among the (approximately eight) services-related recommendations were the following:

- Increase in-home services
- Increase options for quality/affordable child care
- Identify commonalities and best practices
  - Support certain organizations/agencies (PTAN, Early Learning NH, CCRR, EEIN, IMH teams)

For example:

*“Find the commonality and best practices of all services then consolidate the information to reach educators, providers, parents and others. Unite early childhood education throughout the state both private and public to give our children the best possible opportunity for success and support. DHHS and DOE need to communicate to create quality early childhood education programs at the staff and student level. Get out of the boardroom and into the classrooms.”*

*“Continue to support the regional infant mental health teams which have been operating throughout the state for the past 10 years. Fund them as well as the NH Association for Infant Mental Health to move their already existing strategic plans forward. Teams are currently working on community education and disseminating research based screening tools through the Watch Me Grow initiative...”*

*“The state needs to understand that for parents to work there needs to be care for the children. As a single parent if there were no before and afterschool program I could not make a living for us.”*

### *Early Childhood System*

The second-largest number of comments (N=30) were systems-related and included the following:

- Identify/reduce redundancy
- Create a less regionalized system
- Identify/promote shared goals and priorities and a collective mission
- Create a unified system
- Provide oversight of public preschool programs
- Produce “cost-benefit” reports
- Provide funding to support collaboration/coordination, professional development, and programs/services
- Use data bases that mesh
- Promote the following philosophy/principles
  - Non-territorial
  - “Keep corporate model out”
  - Acknowledge value of for-profits

In the words of participants, NH needs:

*“...greater consistency in funding of organizations, programs, and projects over time to support long-term collaboration and capacity-building, provision of funding to support collaboration and coordination between various agencies,” and “reports (6 month?) describing specifically how moneys are being distributed and how exactly the children are benefiting from the program.”*

There also were several comments regarding policy and advocacy:

*“Make medical home a requirement in state Medicaid plan; this allows enhanced federal match rate for care coordination.”*

*“Collaboration and open communication is always the best way to support young children. The CDB fosters a transparent planning process, and yet there remain divisions on some public policy issues. Not sure why that is.”*

*“More agencies/organizations should consider joining together with groups like Early Learning NH to speak with one voice about our common goals and challenges.”*

## NH Early Childhood Advisory Council

A few tips were offered regarding the newly formed Council:

*“A broader-based council or cabinet that includes advocacy organizations could help realize increased effectiveness. A “future search” activity with as many players as possible would bring the factions together and help create a vision for future supports for children and families.”*

*“Have a collective mission and focused agenda that unites birth through age 8 children and families.”*

*“...strong central role for a state-funded coordinating or umbrella council with room for individual variation between programs.”*

## Examples of Effective Collaboration

Approximately fourteen respondents provided examples of effective collaboration in early childhood, which included the Seacoast Early Learning Alliance, Early Supports and Services and preschool, the baby group at Wentworth Douglass Hospital, PTAN (Preschool Technical Assistance Network), Southwestern Community Services Head Start, Carroll County Child Care Resource & Referral, Bureau of Developmental Services family support conference, Infant Mental Health teams and Early Childhood Collaboratives. Comments included:

*“They can join the Seacoast Early Learning Alliance and work with this group to band together to make childcare more high quality, cost efficient and more effective in promoting excellence in childcare.”*

*“For the first time we went to the family support conference and found it to be a wonderful way to connect with services and other families. If there was more focus on this kind of ‘hub’ I believe that families would be better served.”*

*“We work through PTAN that I feel is an effective vehicle to promote cooperative to benefit young children particularly those with special needs.”*

*“In my community, Durham, they do work well together.”*

*“I think more recently the changes in the transition from ESS to public school systems have really made a big difference.”*

*“At SCS Head Start we have a wonderful collaboration with our community partners and share trainings with them. The statewide mentorship of IMIL [I Am Moving, I Am Learning] is a good collaboration with the state partners. At Head Start we talk with other regions of the state once a month at our manager's meetings.”*

*“I think that early childhood related organizations and agencies in NH do work together effectively, compared to organizations in many other sectors. I would very much like to see more communication and collaboration across the whole prenatal to third grade age range, and more collaboration across agencies and systems that serve children in early care settings and those that serve children in public schools.”*

## 2) Barriers to Collaboration

Approximately 162 people responded to the question, “What are the barriers to early childhood related organizations/agencies working together more efficiently?” Nine major categories of barriers were identified, including:

- Time
- Funding
- Variation among programs and agencies (mandates, mission, vision, priorities, policies, philosophy, agendas, forms, language, services, sharing information)
- Communication
- Knowledge/understanding regarding roles, responsibilities, services, etc.
- Geography (state outreach to the North Country, travel distance, service areas for various programs)
- Staff (e.g., lack of mentoring, lack of competency/skills in shared areas, staff coverage, personnel resources)
- Turf/control (systems not being able to look outside of their own systems, territorial of families)
- Other

Other barriers named by a few people included the following:

- Privacy/consent
- Lack of a central state vision
- Recognition/respect for agencies other than non-profits
- Politics
- Wait lists
- DHHS website
- Will to collaborate
- Fragmentation
- Over-testing of children

Not surprisingly, the *most frequently named barriers to collaboration were time and funding*, each of which was mentioned by more than 50 participants. Many found it difficult to find time to convene or participate in collaborative efforts and activities, whether it was due to the lack of administrative support for release time and qualified substitutes to cover while staff attended meetings or events, lack of personal time to attend activities outside of work hours, large workloads, or geographical barriers (distance involved in traveling to meetings and events), as reflected in the comments below:

*“Time to be collaborative, go to events/trainings and still be at our centers. I don’t think there is a great fix, but I do think it’s time for some restructuring with the state of the economy being what it is.”*

*“We can’t get our administrators out of their programs long enough to be able to speak up for their own needs.”*

*“We are all so over-worked and stressed. The pay in these sorts of jobs is fair at best. At the end of the day, I have little energy to devote too much more of my time to work related issues. It is all I can do to fulfill my CEUs requirement for licensure.”*

*“Current workloads are so intense that there is little time for broad-based collaboration and visioning together across agencies, divisions and bureaus.”*

Participants listed a range of funding barriers, as listed below and reflected in the comments that follow.

- Inadequate funding for programs and services
- Lack of funds for staff coverage during release time
- Lack of available funds to support collaboration (e.g., mileage, meeting facilitation)
- Funding “silos” in which programs/agencies are subject to various federal, state and local mandates
- Competition among programs/agencies for grant and other funding
- Low staff salaries
- Funding to have university research done more often in connection with lab schools

*“Funding pathways continue to perpetuate silo services. The available funding streams for capacity building neglect the need for continuity of care for children and families, which are the missions of most of our front line agencies.”*

*“Often, funding opportunities create silos. However, recent federal initiatives seem to be promoting more collaboration. Also, everyone is very busy with recent cuts and restrictions. This makes it hard to participate on all projects. The NH ECAC will most certainly alleviate this stressor and enhance collaboration in NH.”*

*“Parallel departments-divisions-bureaus make systemic change difficult since funding is based on narrow definitions and specific categories of clients.”*

Examples of comments from the remaining categories were as follows:

*“Everything is SO disjointed. There’s ESS, MICE, the schools, the doctors, SMS -- and while they mostly do share information, they are all separate agencies. So we now have a ‘coordinator’ at each place. It would be easier for parents if we somehow had a single point of access to our own child’s records so we weren’t trying to keep track of driblets and drabs that come through via email and on paper and sometimes don’t show up at all. And it’s really difficult because some people know about certain services while others do not. So sometimes you find out about something only long after you were eligible and sometimes even after it’s no longer useful. A central list or orientation or... something.”*

*“There are intrinsic divisions in our field: family child care, center-based care, public school preschool, Head Start, etc. Approaches: Waldorf, Montessori, Reggio, etc. Funding divisions: Head Start versus CCDBG versus DOE funding, and all those funding streams have different messages and goals. It is hard to get this field to agree on ANYTHING.”*

*“Communication is a two-way street - people need to read their e-mails and newsletters and also remember to share pertinent information with others.”*

*“Those who work with K-3 have different concerns, needs than those working with infants, toddlers, preschoolers.”*

*“Speaking as a physician I find that getting records is one of the larger challenges, and an electronic record system statewide would help.”*

*“I feel that there is still a profit/non-profit mental barrier that exists between child caregivers that needs to be broken down. It would be great for agencies to hold seminars that introduce their services and how to access them so educators had a more effective approach.”*

### 3) Resources

The third and final question asked participants to name resources that may assist the Council in addressing its responsibilities. Fifty-five people offered a wide variety of ideas, which can be viewed at [www.earlylearningnh.org](http://www.earlylearningnh.org) in the Early Childhood Systems Building Materials. Select “NH ECAC Survey on Collaboration and Resources: Open-Ended Responses,” and look under “Resources.”

Information from the survey was incorporated into the “Plan to Address the Council’s Responsibilities,” as described in the next section.

#### Maternal and Child Health Needs Assessment Work Group

Maternal and Child Health is spearheading a second statewide needs assessment activity involving the Council. In response to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) *Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program* funding opportunity announcement, Maternal and Child Health has convened a work group that includes Council members and other early childhood stakeholders. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) funding opportunity will assist NH in building on existing early childhood infrastructure and improving health and developmental outcomes for children who are at risk through evidence-based home visiting programs. Using its standard approach, Maternal and Child Health will follow a four-step process beginning with the compilation of ACA-required data. This inventory summarizes data elements, their sources, most recent available year, and available level of data. Next, Maternal and Child Health will assess capacity using a survey tool to be developed in partnership with the Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services, Home Visiting agencies, and the Endowment for Health. The third step will involve matching needs to capacity and finally the workgroup will set priorities.

### PLAN TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Start Act charges state Early Childhood Advisory Councils with eight major responsibilities, ranging from conducting a statewide needs assessment to generating recommendations on a variety of early childhood related issues. In this section is a description of each Council responsibility, the current status in NH and proposed objectives to address each area (A – H). Finally, a brief description is included of the Council’s plan to develop an effective infrastructure to achieve its vision and accomplish its objectives.

**Conduct periodic needs assessments on the quality and availability of early childhood programs and services for expectant families and children from birth through grade 3 and their families, including services for children in families with low incomes.**

#### Status

Currently, NH has no single, statewide needs assessment that meets this requirement. Multiple state agencies conduct their own needs assessments targeting particular populations and topics related to early childhood, including DOE and DHHS (Division for Children, Youth & Families Child Development Bureau, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Child Protection Bureau, Community and Family Support), Bureau of Developmental Services (Family Centered Early Supports and Services, Special Medical Services), and Public Health (Maternal and Child Health). Additionally, higher education and other organizations conduct needs assessments relative to early childhood, including the Institute on Disability at UNH, Parent Information Center, Children’s Trust Fund, the Governor’s P-16 Council, and others.

### **Proposed Objectives**

- Identify current, ongoing, statewide needs assessment processes/opportunities among state and other agencies/organizations and programs.
- Create, implement and evaluate a plan to coordinate these efforts (e.g., design a core set of questions to be included in each/ascertaining that there is broad representation of ECE programs and services; compile report on results).
- Collaborate with Maternal and Child Health on the needs assessment component of the ACA Home Visiting project.

### **Identify opportunities and barriers regarding collaboration and coordination among existing federally- and state-funded early childhood programs and the state agencies that administer these programs.**

#### **Status**

Three previous efforts will inform NH's work in this area: a) the Council's June 2010 needs assessment; b) the Child Development Bureau's "alignment of federal and state plans" document created in 2009, which describes the goals, objectives and activities for multiple early childhood-related programs and services as a first step to promoting collaboration and coordination; and 3) input from the July 13, 2010 public hearing.

#### **Proposed Objectives**

- Update the "alignment of federal and state plans" document.
- Convene a collaboration/coordination task force to generate and promote recommendations based on all sources of information described previously, including NH ECAC Survey responses (e.g., have clear goals/rules for collaboration, explore 1-stop shopping models for families, pool/share resources. Identify/reduce redundancy, etc.).
- Examine and propose solutions to align the DHHS-sponsored Early Childhood Professional Credential and the DOE Teacher Certification requirements.

### **Strengthen state-level coordination and collaboration among the various sectors and settings of early childhood programs in the State.**

#### **Status**

As reflected in the needs assessment results, NH's early childhood community works well together in some areas and is fragmented in others. NH has a long history of collaboration among key federally- and state-funded programs, such as DHHS DCYF (Child Development Bureau, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Child Protection, Community and Family Support), Bureau of Developmental Services (Family Centered Early Supports and Services, Special Medical Services), Public Health (Maternal and Child Health), and DOE (Preschool Special Education, Learn & Serve 21st Century Community Learning Centers), and others. It also has a demonstrated track record for collaboration among state agency programs/services, private organizations and agencies and community programs and services. However, as identified in the needs assessment, numerous barriers must be addressed before NH can realize its goal of a unified early childhood system.

#### **Proposed Objectives**

- Maximize the use of technology to promote communication/collaboration (blogs; listservs; e-mail; websites—including state websites; Internet-based charting/records; central directory; on-line resources, access to records for families).
- Convene a Programs and Resources Coordination/Collaboration Committee to act on the collaboration/coordination task force recommendations.

### **Promote changes in policy, legislation and practice that support and/or improve the lives of families who are expecting a child or who have children from birth through grade 3.**

#### **Status**

NH has several early childhood champions among its state leaders, as evidenced by the Early Childhood Unified System initiative led by Early Learning NH over the past 18 months, but currently lacks the capacity to "speak with one voice." NH also lacks the capacity to systematically promote best practices, align the driving forces behind policy and practice (vision, mission, agendas, priorities), and encourage practices that facilitate

collaboration/communication at the community level (e.g., shared forms, agreed upon practices for sharing information).

### **Proposed Objectives**

- Create, implement and evaluate a formal process for ongoing communication and collaboration between the Council and state leaders (Governor's office, legislators, state agency commissioners), as well as between the Council and stakeholders (other committees and task forces; community leaders, programs and services; the public).
- Create/disseminate public awareness materials that inform state and community leaders about the work of the Council.
- Explore the feasibility of regional meetings amongst Early Childhood professionals for bi-annual collegial networking opportunities.
- Explore the possibility of including Medical Home in the state Medicaid plan, which allows enhanced federal match for care coordination.

### ***Assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education to support the development of early childhood educators.***

#### **Status**

NH currently has eight higher education institutions with a NH DOE; Bureau of Credentialing approved Professional Educator Preparation Program in Early Childhood Education. They are: Antioch University of New England, Colby-Sawyer College, Granite State College, Keene State College, Plymouth State University, Rivier College, Southern New Hampshire University, and University of New Hampshire.

Of the previous identified eight institutions, six offer an additional NH DOE, Bureau of Credentialing approved Professional Educator Preparation program in Elementary Education (K-8). Four additional institutions offer the NH DOE, Bureau of Credentialing approved Professional Educator Preparation program in Elementary Education (K-8). They are: Dartmouth College, Franklin Pierce University, New England College, and Upper Valley Educator Institute.

In December 2009 the DHHS's Child Development Bureau completed a revision of the NH Professional Development System Guide to Early Childhood Careers and a new Afterschool Credential System. A key task yet to be accomplished is to align the DHHS-sponsored Early Childhood Professional Credential and the DOE Teacher Certification requirements.

### **Proposed Objectives**

- Promote statewide recommended assessment tools to facilitate children's transitions between early childhood private programs and public education. They would include: Creative Curriculum, Work Sampling, Environmental Rating Scales, Brigance, QRIS (Quality Rating & Improvement System) and AEPSi (Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System Interactive)
- Utilize the Common Core State Standards in Language Arts and Mathematics to support Early Childhood Curriculum Education for both Teaching and Learning to support high quality programs and smooth Kindergarten/First grade transitions.
- Include NH DOE PreK-16 Literacy and PreK-16 Numeracy Action Plans to promote a seamless system between private PreK and public K-3 for a comprehensive focus on readiness.
- Promote the use of Early Childhood curriculum that attends to the needs and individual differences of children and creates an active learning environment that prepares children to be successful in school.
- Set high standards and incentives to inspire the attainment of accreditations, licensure and continued professional development.
- Review articulation agreements between early childhood teacher preparation programs at two- and four-year college systems.
- Establish a crosswalk of professional development requirements between higher education and early childhood credentialing.
- Increase participation of higher education in supporting early childhood professional development credentials and certification
- Support an "afterschool" credential that is jointly supported by DHHS and DOE.

- Promote the integration of QRIS, Early Learning Guidelines, and Child Care Licensing into two- and four-year higher education programs.
- Explore strategies to address early childhood education recruitment, retention and compensation issues.
- Increase credit-bearing learning opportunities dedicated to the specialized skills and core knowledge areas necessary to support quality afterschool programming.
- Involve higher education in building early childhood leadership (including mentors, coaches, etc.).
- Examine and propose solutions to align the DHHS-sponsored Early Childhood Professional Credential and the DOE Teacher Certification requirements (same as in section B).
- Convene a Professional Development Committee to prioritize and address (or generate recommendations to address) the above proposed objectives.
- Assure that early childhood professionals are prepared to support parents/families to (a) achieve their current and future goals, and (b) support their children's development.

**Generate and promote recommendations for:**

1. **Increasing overall participation of children in existing Federal, State and local early childhood programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;**
2. **Establishing or improving the core elements of the State early childhood system, such as a statewide unified data collection system;**
3. **A statewide professional development system and career ladder for early childhood educators; and**
4. **High quality State early learning standards.**

**Status**

The Council's work on this mandate will be facilitated by a number of existing statewide plans, reports and initiatives, as well as by the foundation work from the Early Childhood Unified System initiative. Included, among others, are:

- Early Childhood Comprehensive System Plan;
- The Child Care Advisory Council 5-Year Plan (2007-2011);
- Federal plans for the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Child Development Bureau, Preschool Special Education, Family Centered Early Supports and Services, Special Medical Services, and Maternal and Child Health;
- A privately funded "state of the state" report on the status of early childhood mental health;
- NH's proposed model for a unified early childhood system that includes five major components (Supportive Communities & Effective Policies; Nurturing & Financially Stable Families, Safe, Enriching Environments & Relationships; Comprehensive Health Care), which lead to children being born healthy, developing on track, entering school ready to succeed, and learning on track) ("Unified Early Childhood System to Promote Child Development and School Success");
- Watch Me Grow (screening, referral and education system under development);
- Early childhood-related programs and projects supported by NH's foundations in areas such as childhood obesity, health, early childhood mental health, and others.

As noted previously, the Child Development Bureau completed an "alignment of plans" document that also will facilitate the Council's efforts in this area.

Two recent developments in the state will provide a starting point for promoting a unified early childhood data system. In June 2010, the NH legislature passed an amendment to RSA 193-E3, the Delivery of an Adequate Education, which will enable the DOE and early childhood programs to share data and information that ultimately will promote program improvement via longitudinal tracking of child/student outcomes. The effort will begin in 2013 with child care programs serving children receiving child care scholarships and Head Start preschools and will expand to include other early childhood programs on a voluntary basis. Secondly, the Watch Me Grow system is in the process of developing a web-based data system for tracking screening and referrals for young children (aged birth to six) and their families, which is compatible with the data system utilized by Maternal and Child Health for home visiting, newborn screening and Early Hearing Detection and Intervention.

**Proposed Objectives**

- Identify Council committees and task forces to generate and promote recommendations in each of the targeted areas (e.g., Professional Development Committee, Afterschool Task Force, Family Access Committee, Data and Evaluation Committee, etc.).

### **Provide strategic direction to state and community leaders.**

#### **Status**

As described in section D above, NH has several early childhood champions amongst its leaders, but lacks the capacity to “speak with one voice,” as well as a formal, cohesive process to provide them with strategic direction.

#### *Proposed Objectives*

- Create, implement and evaluate a formal process for ongoing communication and collaboration between the Council and state leaders (Governor’s office, legislators, state agency commissioners), as well as between the Council and stakeholders (other committees and task forces; community leaders, programs and services; the public) regarding all aspects of the Council’s work (systems building, access, quality, fund development & sustainability, data system, etc.)
- Continue to work with the Frameworks Institute on public engagement and messaging.

### Hold public hearings

#### **Status**

Public hearings currently are held by various state agencies on a variety of issues in accordance with their mandates and needs. On July 13, 2010, the Council held public hearings in four NH regions regarding the draft of the Strategic Report.

#### **Proposed Objectives**

- The Council will schedule a public hearing once each year to share information and garner feedback on its priorities and activities.

#### **Plan to Create the Council’s Infrastructure**

Over the past 18 months of Early Childhood Unified System building and Council development, a great deal of work has been completed to help guide decisions regarding a sustainable and effective infrastructure for NH’s Council (e.g., consultation from Nebraska’s Council leader, the National Governor’s Association, and the Build Initiative; review of state council structures for Minnesota, NY, Vermont, CT, and others). During August and September 2010, the Council will move forward on this important endeavor by engaging in the following activities:

- Complete a review of Council structures in other states (committees, leadership, membership, by-laws, etc.), as well as their objectives/activities and outcomes, to inform the ongoing development of NH’s Council.
- Hold a facilitated meeting of key stakeholders to garner input on the Council’s structure and functioning.
- Based on the above activities, the Council’s work to date and other sources (needs assessment, public hearing, etc.), adopt an infrastructure best suited to NH.

### **PUBLIC HEARING ON THE NH ECAC STRATEGIC REPORT**

A public hearing was held on July 13, 2010 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., which took place simultaneously in four sites: Gorham, Exeter, Keene, and Concord. Across sites, 23 people attended, along with 10 members of the NH Early Childhood Advisory Council. Seven people offered oral testimony during the hearing: one at Keene; two at Concord; two at Gorham; and two at Exeter. Additionally, three people submitted written comments and questions. Seven key themes emerged from the testimony and written comments, which will be taken into consideration as the Council proceeds with its work. Testimony and written comments from the public hearing will be posted on the Early Learning NH website.

#### **Key Themes:**

- Commendations for the Strategic Report and the Council’s work
- Resources, including funding and staffing, must be in place to support the Council’s work and give it “teeth”
- Consideration should be given to the size and structure of the Council in order to optimize its effectiveness
- The Council should be inclusive of and open to many different constituencies and points of view

- It is important that all groups involved with the Council “buy in” to the work of the Council and that the Council offers opportunities for true collaboration
- The Council should address the whole child, including social and emotional development and mental health
- The Council should set clear goals and priorities for where we want New Hampshire’s children, families, and early childhood professionals to be



Nicholas A. Toumpas  
Commissioner

Maggie Bishop  
Director

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

129 PLEASANT STREET, CONCORD, NH 03301-3857  
603-271-4451 1-800-852-3345 Ext. 4451  
FAX: 603-271-4729 TDD Access: 1-800-735-2964

July 19, 2010

David Kadan  
ACF Grants Management Officer  
Administration for Children and Families  
Division of Discretionary Grants  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW  
Aerospace/6<sup>th</sup> Floor East  
Washington, DC 20447

Dear Mr. Kadan:

This is to verify that the NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Children, Youth and Families is pledging \$1,167,000 of State General Funds, allocated to the Child Development Bureau for the Care Scholarship Program under CCDF, as match for the NH Department of Health and Human Services gr application for the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Ellen C. Wheatley.

Ellen C. Wheatley, Ph.D.  
Administrator, Child Development Bureau

– DRAFT –

## NH Early Childhood Advisory Council DIRECTOR Position Description

### **General Statement of Duties:**

The Director is the administrator of the NH Early Childhood Advisory Council (the Council), with primary responsibility for the Council's administration and operations. The Director has overall responsibility for assuring that the Council administration and operations comply with the policies and requirements of the Guiding Principles, Head Start Act, and funding sources. The Director participates in the development and oversees the implementation of internal policies, plans, systems, and procedures that support the implementation of the Council's mission, policy, and legal and funding source requirements.

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

- Provide effective staff support to the Council.
- Develop plans, pertaining to the Council's goals and objectives.
- Communicate with and nurture shared responsibility among agency heads, agency staff, and private partners to promote improvements in early childhood policy and programming.
- With state program and private partner leadership, develop, implement, and monitor plans related to the Council recommendations.
- Implement initiatives of the Council.
- Cultivate and nurture partnerships with public and private leaders to promote shared responsibility and accountability for the success and well being of New Hampshire's young children and their families.
- Identify barriers to streamlined services and seek collaborative ways to overcome these barriers.
- Leverage resources to improve coordination and reduce duplication of services to young children.
- Facilitate communication and collaboration among partners, both public and private.
- Develop strong partnerships with the non-profit and corporate sectors.
- Represent the NH ECAC, as relevant, in local, state, and national level events, conferences, and training or planning activities.
- Write grants and serve as key contact for current and prospective technical assistance and/ or monetary grants from foundations and national organizations.
- Establish and maintain good community, public, and inter-agency relationships.
- Analyze policy challenges and opportunities and provide recommendations and briefings for the Council.
- Assure timely responses to action requests.
- Provide thorough and timely assistance to both external and internal stakeholders; refer stakeholders to resources both within the state and nationally.

### **Required Work Experience, Skills and Abilities**

- Master's degree in education, early education, public policy, or a related field preferred
- Five years of administration experience and/ or any combination of knowledge, skills, and experience that is substantially equivalent
- Exercise independent judgment; communicate effectively orally and in writing with a variety of audiences; work effectively and coordinate activities with a wide variety of individuals and committees; apply effective problem-solving strategies to complex situations; work effectively as a team member
- Knowledge of early childhood and public policy administration
- Strong partnering techniques to build community awareness and support
- Ability to translate strategic direction into concrete plans and activities
- Motivated toward execution and anticipates opportunities to excel
- Skilled in utilizing multiple strategies simultaneously and solving problems
- Ability to work well within a team structure and with diverse groups.
- Skilled in facilitating groups, communicating effectively (written and verbal) and skilled in working collaboratively.