

New Hampshire's State Early Childhood Council*

Recommendations for a state Early Childhood Council in NH were developed by a broad group of leaders as part of an *Early Childhood Unified System* initiative over a 12-month period of intensive planning, outreach to existing councils/committees and research on similar efforts in other states. In November 2009, Governor Lynch approved the recommendations as described below. Over the next year, Early Learning NH will partner with the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Head Start Directors Association, NH Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC) leaders, NH Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) leaders and other key constituents to establish the council based on the recommendations.

PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

The "State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care" (Council)*, as required by the Head Start Act (Attachment A), 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. It will also serve to:

- 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 or who have children aged birth through grade 3;
- Promote a unified data collection system to facilitate data-informed decision making;
- Provide strategic direction to state and community leaders; and
- Carry out activities as specified in the Head Start Act (please see attachment).

The Council will focus on the needs of expectant families and families of *all* young children (birth through 3rd grade).

AUTHORITY, AFFILIATION & STRUCTURE

The Council will be an independent entity, authorized by legislation, which advises the Governor's Office, state legislature, DHHS, Department of Education, 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.

Comment [OU1]: Spell out

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION-RELATED COUNCILS/COMMITTEES

The Council will combine the functions and mandated membership of several key federal and state-mandated councils and committees, including (but not limited to) the NH ICC and the CCAC. Once appointed, the Council will engage in a process over time (up to 12 months) to:

- (a) Assure that key ICC and CCAC functions and issues will continue to be addressed during the time of transition and within a new leadership infrastructure, and
- (b) Establish collaborative relationships with other existing early care and education-related councils/committees, which may or may not result in a Council/committee merger.

At the completion of the planning process, councils/committees that merge to form the Council will no longer exist as separate entities in their present form.

**NOTE: The name of NH's council (TBD) will be generic to early care and education*

MEMBERSHIP

Attachment B shows a list of mandated members for the Head Start Act, voting and optional/non-voting member categories for the ICC, CCAC and CCACHC. Also included is a list of nominated members for the Council's steering committee, which, at this time, is limited to the Head Start Act mandated members and leaders of the ICC, CCAC, CCACHC and Early Childhood Unified System initiative. At a minimum, the Council will include:

- ♦ Head Start Act mandated members
- ♦ Child Care Advisory Council mandated members
- ♦ NH Interagency Coordinating Council mandated members
- ♦ Head Start Directors Association
- ♦ Family organizations/parents
- ♦ Others: To be determined, but may include:
 - Autism Council representative
 - Advocacy groups representatives
 - Philanthropy representative(s)
 - Business leaders
 - Local government representatives
 - Community Action Program agency representatives
 - Media representative(s)
 - Content experts (ECE, Head Start, Early Head Start, Health, MH, Special Ed., family support, etc.)
 - Community leaders
 - Professional organization leaders (NHAEYC, Early Learning NH)
 - Council for Children and Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions

STAFFING AND LEADERSHIP ROLES

- ♦ Executive Director (recommendation: full time paid staff)
- ♦ Administrative Assistant (FTE to be determined; recommendation ranged from half- to full time)
- ♦ Development capacity (TBD)
- ♦ Evaluation (FTE or consultant contract to be determined)
- ♦ Officers with elections
- ♦ Committee leaders

RESOURCES

In addition to staffing, the Council will require resources to carry out its mandates and activities including, but not limited to:

- ♦ Needs assessment
- ♦ Data collection and evaluation
- ♦ Statewide strategic planning

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Council will report to the Governor and state agency leaders. A written report will be submitted to the Governor on a schedule to be determined.

OTHER

- ♦ Once appointed, the Council will adopt/adapt the guiding principles (Attachment C) developed by the Early Childhood Leadership Subcommittee of the *Early Childhood Unified System* initiative, as well as develop by-laws, a committee structure, a strategic plan (including strategies for sustainability), and procedures to assure ongoing communication/collaboration with key state and community leaders, agencies and programs.
- ♦ The Council will be adaptable and build on existing resources and plans.
- ♦ Each member of the Council will have a place to direct his/her passion.
- ♦ Council will be the "go to" council for all ECE-related issues.

1/14/10

PLAN TO ESTABLISH NH'S STATE EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL

- 1) Hold a series of three facilitated meetings in which the broader early childhood community is invited to work with a national expert, the *Early Childhood Unified System* group and Early Learning NH on council-related issues. Meetings will be co-sponsored by the Bureau of Developmental Services, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Child Development Bureau and Early Learning NH.

Timeframe: January 2010, March 2010 & April or May 2010

- 2) Establish a preliminary, **core council (steering committee)** comprised of mandated representatives from the Head Start Act and key organizations/agencies/councils, etc. that must be involved from the very beginning of the process to establish a council that works for NH. These key entities will name a representative to the core council. Leaders from the *Early Childhood Unified System* initiative will solicit nominations for this committee.

Timeframe: January 2010

- 3) Submit a list of core council representatives to Governor Lynch for appointment

Timeframe: January 2010

- 4) The core council will be charged with leading the planning/establishment process and undertaking the responsibilities described in the model, such as drafting by-laws, determining committee structures, identifying resources, planning for sustainability, etc. The core council will participate in monthly, facilitated meetings and provide regular progress reports to the CCAC, ICC, CCACHC, and others (to be determined). The core council will also garner timely input from these groups on key issues.

Timeframe: January 2010 – October 2010

- 5) At the end of the one-year process, a fully functioning council with broad representation will be in place.

Timeframe: October 2010












































ATTACHMENT A

Requirements of State Advisory Councils on Early Childhood Education and Care under the Head Start Act of 2007:

- ♦ Conduct a needs assessment on early childhood education program quality and availability
- ♦ Identify opportunities/barriers regarding Federal/State programs collaboration
- ♦ Assess Higher Education's capacity/effectiveness to support the development of early childhood educators
- ♦ Generate recommendations for:
 - Increasing participation in federal/state/local early childhood education programs
 - A unified data system
 - Statewide professional development/career advancement for early childhood educators
 - Improvements in state early learning standards

ATTACHMENT B

**EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCILS
MANDATED and NON-VOTING/OPTIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

	<i>Head Start Act</i> ¹ (9 mandated reps.)	<i>Childcare Advisory Council</i>	<i>NH ICC</i> (13 mandated categories)	<i>CCACHC</i> [*] (7 mandated categories)	<i>Council Steering Committee (TBD)</i> ⁵
State agency – child care					Ellen Wheatley
State educational agency					Patty Ewen, Christina Durkee
Local educational agencies					Barbara Hemingway
Institutions of higher education		 ⁴	 ³		Pat Cantor, PSU
Local providers			 (20%)		ESS: Toni Ellsworth Head Start: Charna Aversa
Head Start agencies					Charna Aversa-ICC vice chair, HS program rep; Gerry Santilli, HS Directors
State director of Head Start Collaboration					Debra Nelson
State IDEA Part B/619 agency	 ²				Ruth Littlefield
State IDEA Part C agency	 ²				Carolyn Stiles
State agency responsible for health	 ²				Trisha Tilley, DHHS, MCH
State agency responsible for mental health	 ²				
Parents		 (3)	 (20%)	 (9)	Michelle Lewis (ICC, PIC) Denise Brewitt (CCACHC)
State legislators				 (2)	
Agency for health insurance					
Mental health providers					
State Medicaid agency					
State foster care					
Education of children & youth who are homeless					
Preschool special education providers					

¹ "A representative of/from," additional members determined to be relevant by the Governor



² Either/or

³ Personnel preparation

⁴ Rep. of Early Education programs as appointed by Chancellor of Community College System of NH

⁵ Steering committee members (a) are the only representatives in this category in the state (e.g., Head Start Collaboration Office, Part B/619) and/or (b) were nominated by their organizations.

*Council for Children and Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions

KEY	
	Mandated
	Non-Voting and/or Optional

ATTACHMENT B (continued)

	<i>Head Start Act</i> ¹ (9 mandated reps.)	Childcare Advisory	<i>NH ICC</i> (13 mandated categories)	<i>CCACHC</i> (7 mandated categories)	<i>Council Steering Committee</i> ⁵ (TBD)
Child/family advocates		●	■	■	Early Learning NH: Jackie Cowell Bill Smith (CCACHC chair)
DCYF		●	●		
Special Medical Services			●	■ (3)	
NH Area Agency system			●		
NH Parent Information Center		●	●		(Michelle Lewis, above)
NH University Center for Excellence on Disability			●		
Special education directors			●		
Health provider			■		
Child Care R & R		●			
NH AEYC		■			Lisa Strout
Business and Industry Assoc.		■			
MCHB/ECCS		■			Dee Dunn
Dept. of Employment Security		●			
Child care licensing		●			
Preschool Technical Asst. Network		●			
Division of Family Assistance		●			
Municipal government		●			
Charitable organizations		●	●	●	Julie McConnell, Community Loan Fund
Early Education & Intervention Network		●	●		

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⁵ Council for Children and Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions

KEY	
■	Mandated
●	Non-Voting and/or Optional

ATTACHMENT C

***Recommended Guiding Principles for
NH's Early Childhood Leadership Council****

- ♦ Parents and families are the most influential people in a child's life and must be supported by communities and included as primary partners at every level.
- ♦ Families should be partners with stakeholders and service providers in designing, coordinating and evaluating services and supports.
- ♦ Programs and supports must be developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate.
- ♦ Preventive approaches are more economical and effective than costly remediation later in life.
- ♦ Utilization of evidence based or promising practices to deliver high quality early childhood services and programs helps ensure that children are ready to succeed in school and in life.
- ♦ Partnership across all sectors of the community, both public and private, is necessary to ensure the effectiveness and impact of services.
- ♦ An early childhood unified system maximizes efficiency and collaboration at both the state and local level, with flexibility to support local decision-making and priorities.
- ♦ Successful transitions into elementary school and beyond sustain the foundation of healthy early childhood development.

Characteristics of an Effective Early Childhood Council for NH*

- ♦ Diverse membership with respect to:
 - Geographic location
 - Race/ethnicity
 - Constituency represented (families/programs/services), including geographic location; nature/size of programs and services; race, ethnicity, income, special needs)
 - Representing the comprehensive needs of young children and their families (health, early care and education, family support)
 - Policy (elected/appointed officials, political translators, policy translators, program personnel and line staff)
- ♦ Works:
 - Proactively, anticipating the need to address dynamic forces that bring both opportunities and unexpected obstacles and impact future policy goals;
 - Transparently, with clear accountability and communication of results; and
 - On behalf of pregnant women and *all* children, birth to 8 years of age and families, regardless of income, geographic location, race, ethnicity, language, or special needs.
- ♦ Non-duplicative purpose and function
- ♦ Capacity to carry out its charge
- ♦ Sustainable
- ♦ Meets NH's needs/wants for early childhood leadership, as well as the mandates of the Head Start Act

* Adapted from Virginia's Plan for Smart Beginnings and Helene Stebbin's presentation 1/13/09