

Transition and Collaboration
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Department of Early Childhood 2024 SMART Act Hearing

January 17, 2024
Joint Education Committee

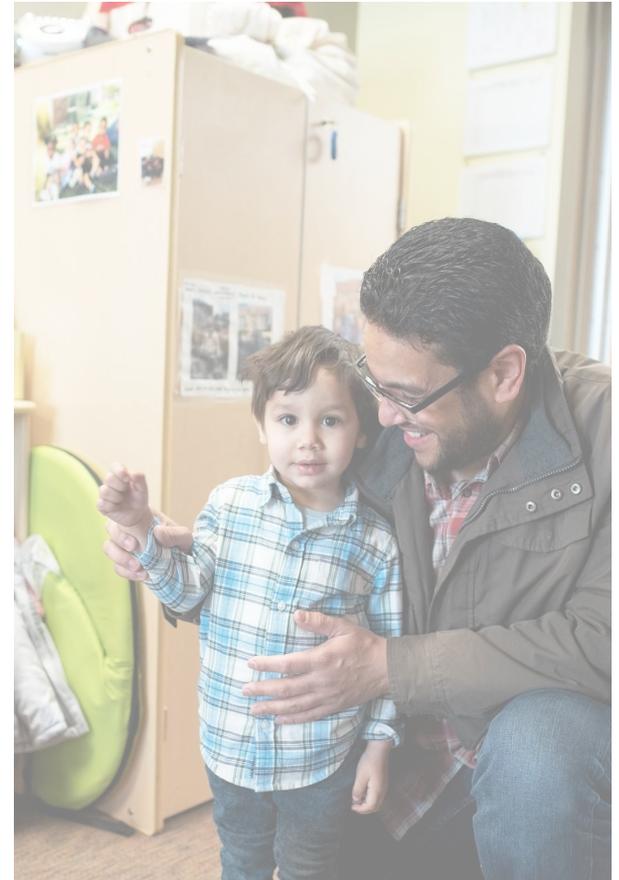


COLORADO

Department of Early Childhood

Transition and Collaboration

- Vision to build a unified, comprehensive early childhood system with programs under one cabinet-level agency
- Early childhood programs and services successfully transferred from the Colorado Department of Human Services and the Colorado Department of Education
- Close collaboration with CDHS, CDE, CDPHE, HCPF, and CDHE on implementing programs and aligning services utilized by children birth through 5 and their families, as well as the early childhood workforce



OUR MISSION

To ensure the delivery of a comprehensive, community-informed, data-driven, high quality and equitable early childhood system that supports the care, education and well-being of all Colorado's young children, their families and early childhood professionals in all settings.

OUR VISION

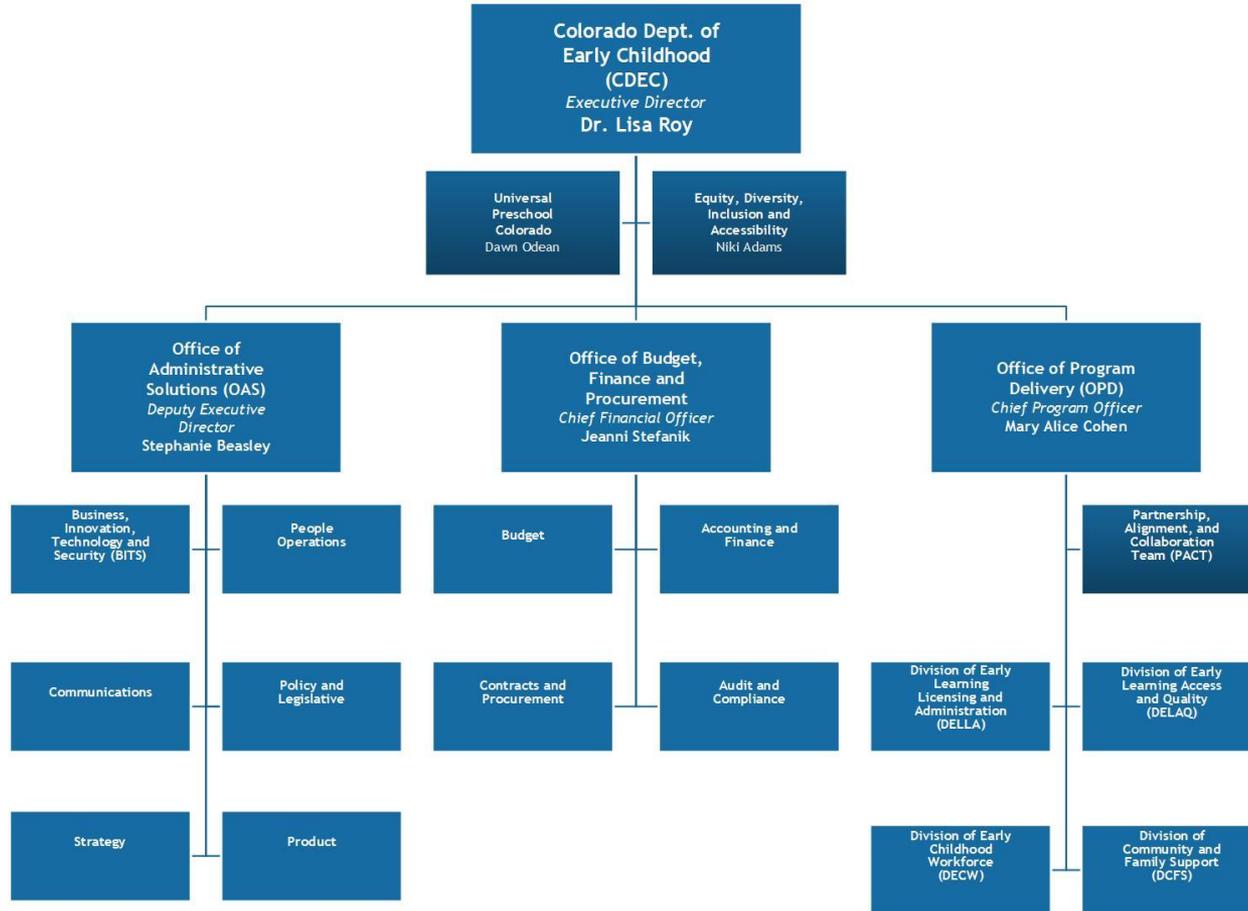
All Colorado children, families, and early childhood professionals are valued, healthy and thriving.

OUR VALUES

Equity
Family and Community Focused
Excellence
Innovation
Strengths-Based



Organizational Chart

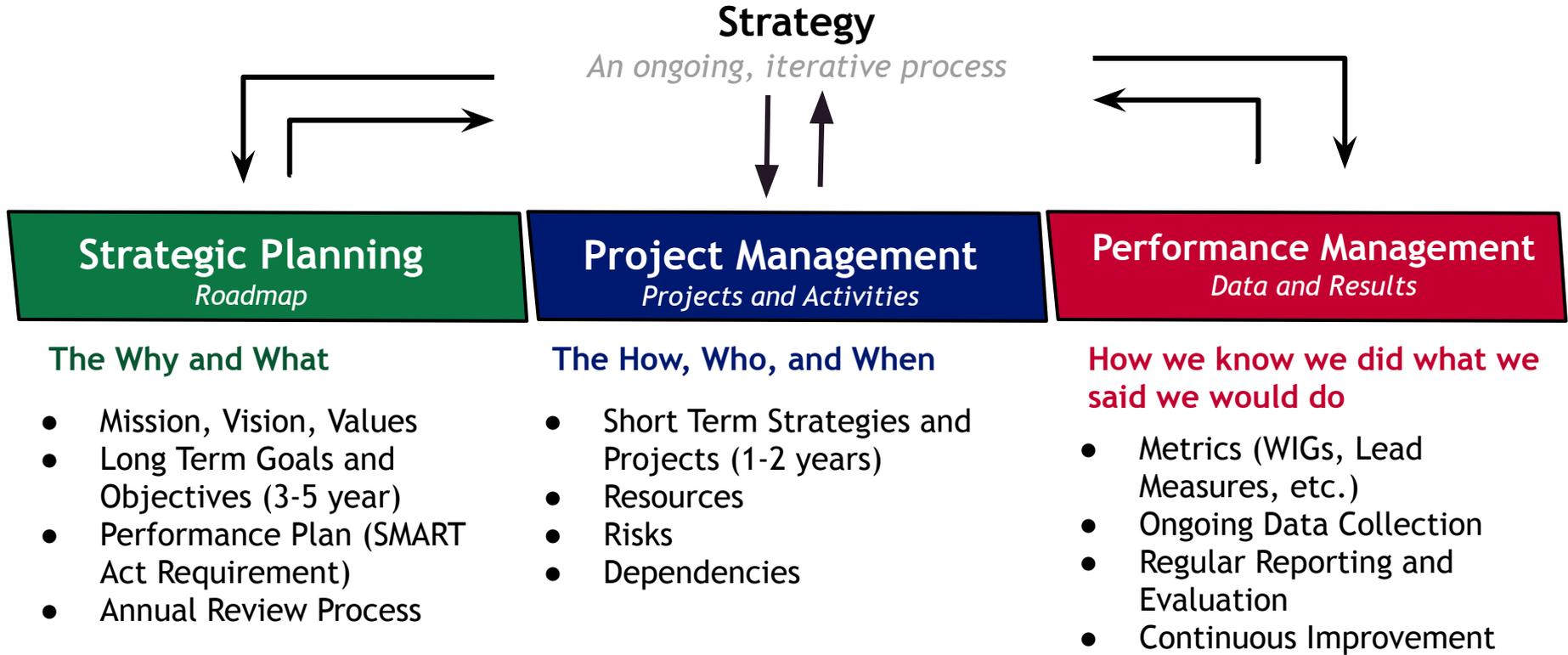


CDEC Strategic Goals



Goals 1-3: Mission-Driven Goals: The work CDEC must accomplish to achieve its mission.
Goals 4-7: Foundational Goals: What CDEC must accomplish to achieve the Mission-Driven goals.

How CDEC Does Performance Management



CDEC Wildly Important Goals (WIGs): SFY 2023-2024

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

WIG #1: Universal Preschool Family Satisfaction

Increase the Universal Preschool family uptake rate by 5%, from 59% in school year 2023-2024 to 64% in school year 2024-2025 by June 30, 2024

WIG #2: Universal Preschool Provider Satisfaction

Retain 94% of Universal Preschool providers from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year by June 30, 2024.

WIG #3: Infant and Toddler Child Care Capacity

Increase the infant and toddler (0-36 months) licensed child care capacity by 5% by June 30, 2024.

WIG #4: Early Childhood Workforce

Increase the number of qualified early childhood professionals working in licensed child care settings available for children under five years old by 4% by June 30, 2024.



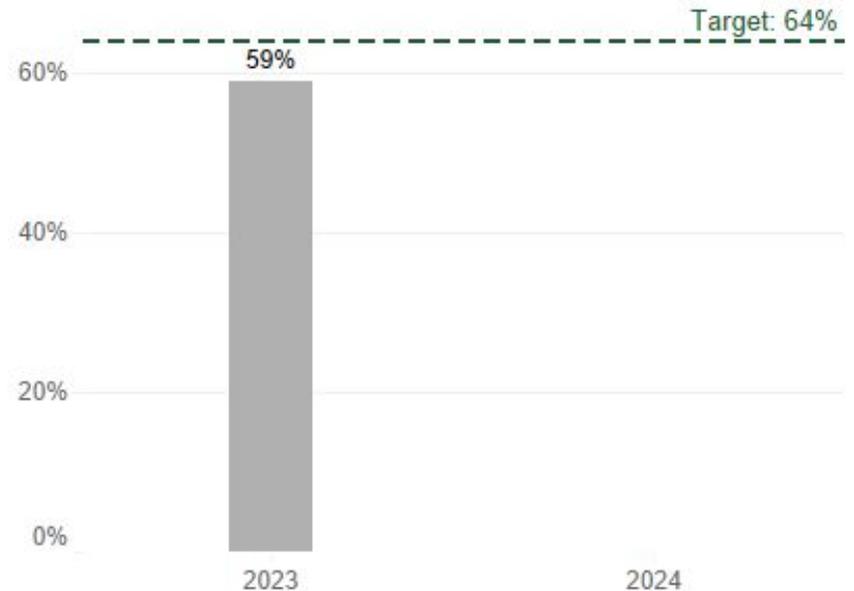
WIG 1 - Universal Preschool: Family Satisfaction (1/2)

Increase the Universal Preschool family uptake rate by 5%, from 59% in school year 2023-2024 to 64% in school year 2024-2025 by June 30, 2024

Background & Context

- This goal will increase equitable access to the Universal Preschool Program and ensure that participating families are satisfied with the program. Measuring family uptake helps CDEC evaluate family satisfaction, understanding that if families are satisfied, more will enroll in subsequent years.
- A 5% increase would result in 40,575 matched children, up from 36,969.
- The enrollment process for the second year of Universal Preschool is estimated to begin in February 2024. Data will be available in Spring 2024.

Universal Preschool Family Uptake



WIG 1 - Universal Preschool: Family Satisfaction (2/2)

4 Year olds Enrolled through January 8th payment				
10 hours	15 hours	30 hours	Total Awards	Percent of Population
9,115	26,558	3,492	39,165	62%

Provider Type	4 Year Olds Served by Provider Type	Providers by Provider Type
School District Site	21,432 (55%)	704 (39%)
Community Provider	16,969 (43%)	877 (48%)
Family Child Care Home	764 (2%)	229 (13%)
Total	39,165	1,820



39,165 Four Year Olds Receiving Universal Preschool

“Our family’s experience with Colorado’s Universal Preschool has been wonderful thus far. Applying was quick and easy. We are thrilled that UPK works in tandem with our child’s Individualized Education Program to keep our childcare/school costs low while supporting our local program.”

Alex Willis
Leadville, Colorado



WIG 2 - Universal Preschool: Provider Satisfaction

Retain 94% of Universal Preschool providers from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year by June 30, 2024.

Background & Context

- This goal will ensure that participating providers are satisfied with the Universal Preschool program. If providers are satisfied, they will continue participating in subsequent years; this measure will also help inform on how to best support participating providers.
- Data will be available in Spring of 2024.

Universal Preschool Provider Retention





1,820 Providers in A True Mixed Delivery Universal Preschool System

"Universal preschool has been a support to me in allowing me to retain 4-year-olds in my family child care program as a preschool. I have lost students when they are 4 years old in the past because I lacked the funding to offer full tuition to those families. UPK has allowed me to be competitive and have the funding I need so I can pass that benefit on for the family. It has also helped me to afford to stay in the family childcare business."

Jennifer Reyelts

Academy de las Estrellas (A Dual Language Preschool in Garfield
County)



WIG 2 - Universal Preschool: Provider Satisfaction

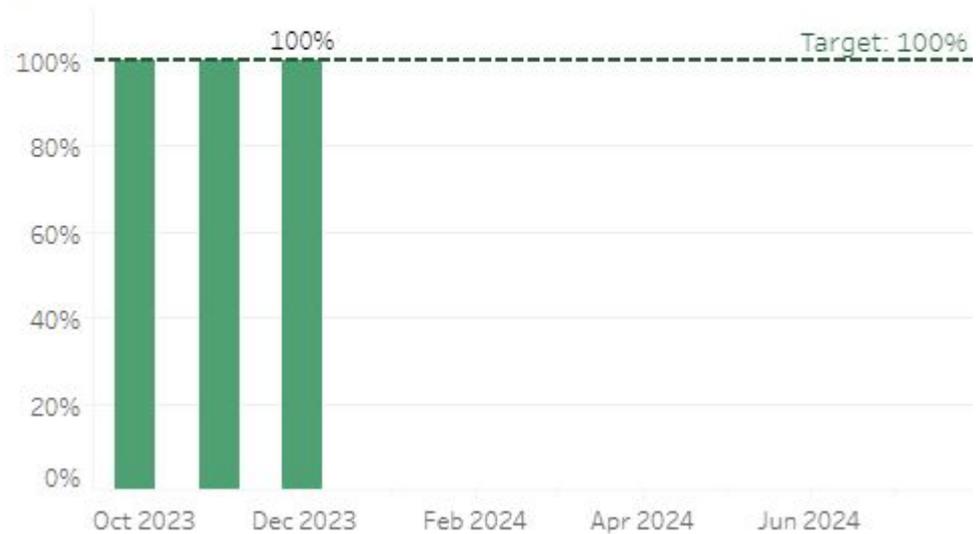
Local Coordinating Organizations

Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs) coordinate Universal Preschool locally. This includes supporting families in navigating enrollment, tracking and reporting on seat availability in preschools, and communicating with and supporting providers.

LCOs support providers by:

- Hosting monthly meetings to provide consistent information and updates to providers and to identify provider concerns to elevate to CDEC
- Execute Technical Assistance Plan goals developed based on specific community needs. Technical Assistance Plans include supports for the early childhood workforce and engagement to support provider retention.

Ensure 100% of Local Community Organizations (LCOs) meet the goals outlined in their technical assistance plans and meet with their community and home-based providers on a monthly basis.



Colorado Universal Preschool Program 2024-25 Priorities

Enrollment and Matching Process

- Streamlined enrollment that supports ease-of-access for families and providers

Online Application System

- Families can apply through a single, easily accessible application. Providers can promote their unique programs and reach a wider audience of potential students.

High-Quality Programming

- Support all providers to deliver high-quality preschool that prepares children for kindergarten, supports healthy development, and engages families.

Full-Day Hours Allocation

- Children who are low-income and have an additional qualifying factor have access to full-day hours and are notified earlier in the process.

Data Collection and Availability

- Data is collected and shared to identify program gaps and drive decision making.

Communications

- Clear, consistent, and frequent communications to ensure families, providers, LCOs, AUs, and partners are informed and engaged.

Supporting Children with Disabilities

- Children with disabilities can seamlessly access the Universal Preschool Program

Division of Early Learning Access and Quality

Supports Colorado children with new and innovative approaches to achieving school readiness; safe, stable, and nurturing environments; and resilience in early childhood. Administers the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program.

Division of Early Learning, Licensing, and Administration

Leads in planning and implementing public child care policy in compliance with federal and state regulations. Responsible for licensing and monitoring approximately 5,000 child care facilities in Colorado.

Division of Early Childhood Workforce

Leads in honoring, professionalizing, and growing early care and education professionals to ensure we recruit and retain a diverse, well-compensated, highly competent, and thriving Early Childhood Educator workforce across Colorado communities.

Division of Community and Family Support

Provides families and communities across Colorado with the resources needed to support young children to thrive. Organized into four units: Early Childhood Mental Health; Early Intervention Colorado; Family Strengthening; and State Systems Building Initiatives.

Office of Program Delivery



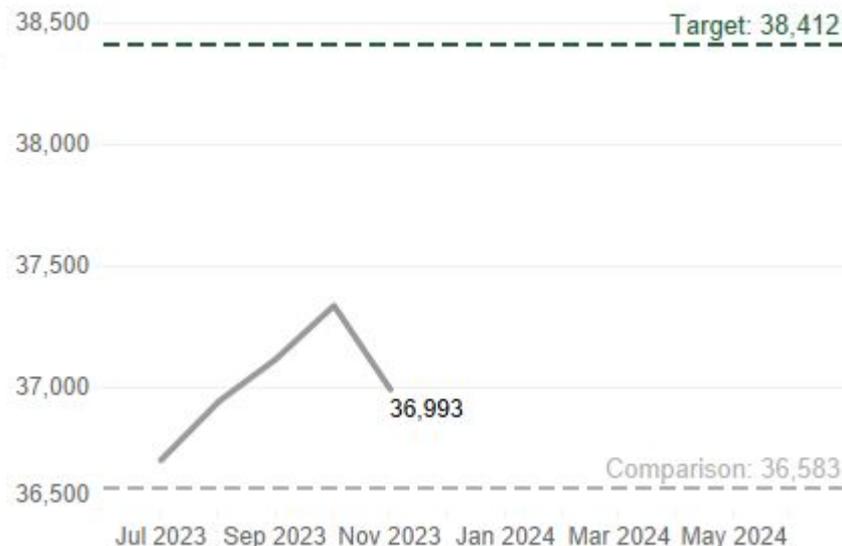
WIG 3 - Infant and Toddler Child Care Capacity (1/3)

Increase the infant and toddler (0-36 months) licensed child care capacity by 5% by June 30, 2024.

Background & Context

- This goal will help to meet the high infant and toddler licensed child care demand across Colorado. Access to infant and toddler child care has been heavily impacted by limited affordability and availability due to the shortage of early childhood professionals.
- A 5% increase in capacity would result in 1,829 new infant and toddler child care slots.
- SFY 23-24 is the third year CDEC is tracking this WIG, set initially as a Lead Measure for increasing birth to five-year-old child care capacity by the Early Childhood Working Group in SFY 21-22.

Infant and Toddler Child Care Capacity: SFY 23-24 *



* The decrease in capacity between October and November 2023 is due to a change in data methods, rather than a true decrease in capacity.



Emerging & Expanding Grant

Provides funding to cover expenses related to the expansion of current program capacity or the opening of a new child care program. Priority is given to those with infant and toddler capacity.

- FY 2021-22: 5,459 new slots were created across 37 counties
- Second round of funding launched in 2023 and will last until FY 2026
- As of December 2023, 170 applications have been approved, creating 1,873 new slots

Employer-Based Child Care Facility Grant

Offers financial assistance to eligible employers to construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care center to provide licensed child care services on- or near-site to its employees.

- 26 grants across 17 counties
- \$15.4M awarded
- 2,314 child care slots estimated to be opened
- 288 total educators and at least 50 staff estimated to be hired

Employer-Based Child Care Grant Specifics

Entity (Grant Rounds 3 and 4)	Industry	Geographic Region	# of children to receive services	# of educators hired (estimate)	# of staff hired (estimate)	Colorado Shines Rating*
ECC SLV	Nonprofit	Alamosa County (San Luis Valley)	160	25	6	
Garfield RE-2	Government	Garfield County	68	13	2	
Mountain Family Health Center	Nonprofit	Garfield County	20	4	2	
Sedgwick County	Government	Sedgwick County	69	11	3	
Copper Mountain	Nonprofit	Summit County	48	13	3	License Pending
Weld Family Cares	Nonprofit	Weld County (Greeley)	54	10	2	
Auraria Early Learning Center	Nonprofit	Denver	180	16	0	
Community of Caring	Nonprofit	Teller County	43	8	3	
Confluence Center	Nonprofit	Mesa County	59	10	1	
Hope House	Nonprofit	Jefferson County	108	26		
Huerfano County School District	Government	Huerfano County	10	6	3	
Town of Basalt	Government	Eagle County	48	5	0	

* Sites without a Colorado Shines Rating are not yet licensed.



Colorado Child Care Assistance Program

Helps families that are homeless, working, searching for work or in school find low-income child care assistance. In FY 2022-23, 25,864 children utilized CCCAP.

Performance is measured by the number of children served and in high quality care. The program improves delivery by utilizing an evidence-based decision making framework, implementing strategies to improve access, and developing policies that reduce access barriers for families. Access strategies include:

- Increasing provider rates and developing an alternative rate methodology to align with the true cost of care
- Reimbursing infant and toddler providers based on enrollment rather than attendance
- Increasing the number of paid absences
- Lowering the maximum family co-pay from 14% to 10%

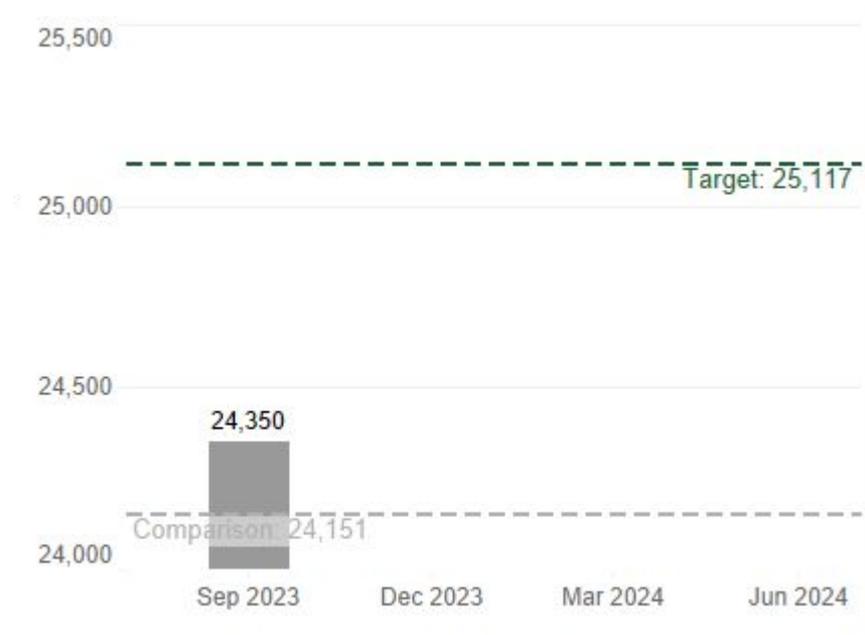
WIG 4 - Early Childhood Workforce

Increase the number of qualified early childhood professionals working in licensed child care settings available for children under five years old by 4% by June 30, 2024.

Background & Context

- This goal will help meet child care needs across Colorado by ensuring we have the qualified early childhood professionals to support both the existing and necessary expansion of child care capacity.
- A 4% increase would grow the workforce from 24,151 to 25,117 professionals (+966).

Increase Child Care Workforce



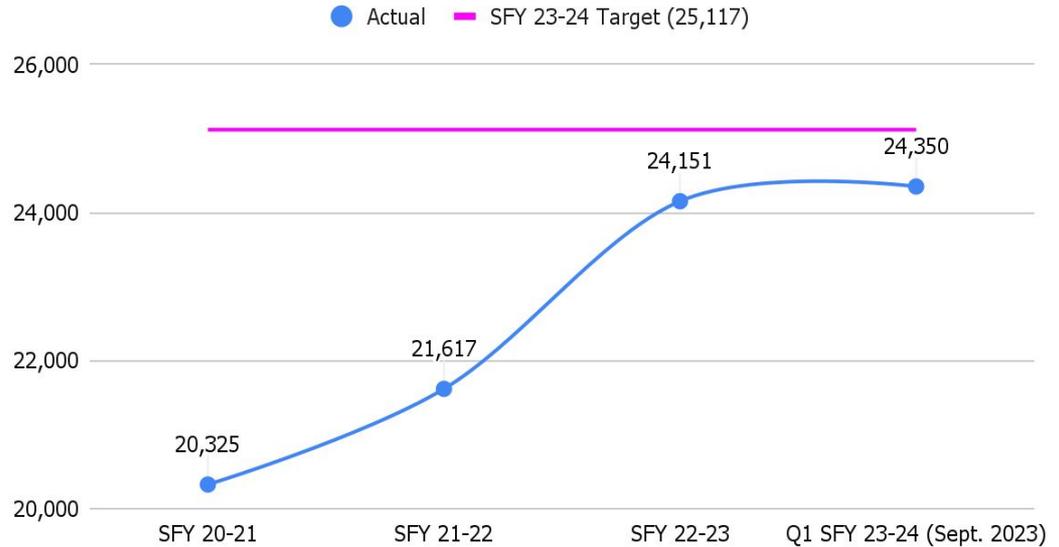
WIG 4 - Early Childhood Workforce

Increase the number of qualified early childhood professionals working in licensed child care settings available for children under five years old by 4% by June 30, 2024.

Background & Context

- SFY 23-24 is the third year CDEC is tracking this goal, set initially by the Early Childhood Working Group in SFY 21-22.
- CDEC increased the workforce by **19.8% (+4,025)** between July 2020 and September 2023.

Early Childhood Workforce: SFY 20-21 - Current



WIG 4 - Early Childhood Workforce (1/3)

Division of Early Childhood Workforce

Takes the lead for the State in honoring, professionalizing, and growing early care and education professionals to ensure that we recruit and retain a diverse, well-compensated, highly competent and thriving Early Childhood workforce across all Colorado communities.



WIG 4 - Early Childhood Workforce (2/3)

	Baseline n	Baseline %	Target %	Target n	Impact	Nov. 2023 Perf.
WIG 4: Qualified Early Childhood Professionals Increase the number of qualified early childhood professionals working in licensed child care settings available for children under five years old by 4%, from 24,151 to 25,117, by June 30, 2024. <i>(Reporting Frequency: Quarterly: Sept, Dec, Mar, Jun)</i>	24,151	N/A	4%	25,117	+966	24,350 +199 from baseline (Sept. 2023)
Lead 4.1: Culturally Appropriate Training and Support Increase child care workforce by 946 by improving access to culturally and linguistically appropriate information, training, and support between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024. <i>(Reporting Frequency: Quarterly: Sept, Dec, Mar, Jun)</i>	24,151	N/A	4%	25,097	+946	+179 (Sept. 2023)
Lead 4.2: Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program Pilot the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) program to increase the number of early childhood professionals working in licensed child care settings by 20 between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024. <i>(Reporting Frequency: Quarterly: Sept, Dec, Mar, Jun)</i>	0	N/A	<1%	24,171	+20	0 (Sept. 2023)
Lead 4.3: Teacher Compensation Pilot Retain at least 80% of the early childhood professionals participating in the Early Childhood Teacher Compensation Pilot program each month. <i>(Reporting Frequency: Monthly)</i>	329	N/A	80%	263	0	92% (303 of 329) (Nov. 2023)

Family, Friend, and Neighbor Support

- Launched the legislatively-mandated Friend, Family, and Neighbor (FFN) Advisory Council
 - Advises on regulations, policies, funding, and procedures
 - 25 members, majority of whom are FFN providers
- Contracting with a vendor to administer professional training, support, and mini-grants to FFN providers statewide



Delivers 24 programs that focus on meeting young children's needs in the places that they spend their time, beyond child care and preschool.

Early Intervention

Provides developmental support and services for children from birth through two years of age who are referred due to a suspected developmental delay or disability.

Family Strengthening

Administers 13 home visiting and family support programs focused on building protective factors among children, families and communities.

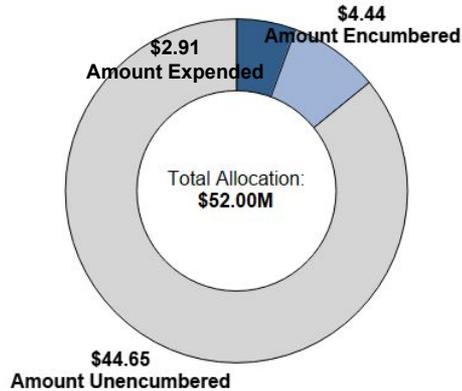
Early Childhood Mental Health

Strengthens adult-child relationships and engages families and child care providers in children's learning and development.

Stimulus Funding Implementation

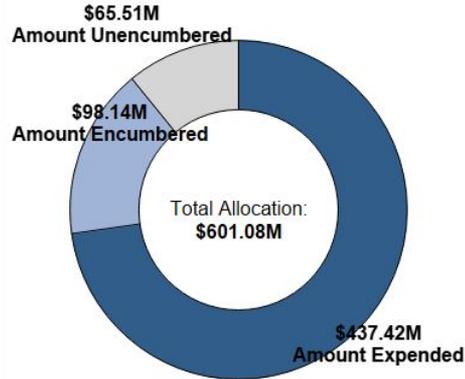
Overall Spending Status - CDEC

ARPA State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)



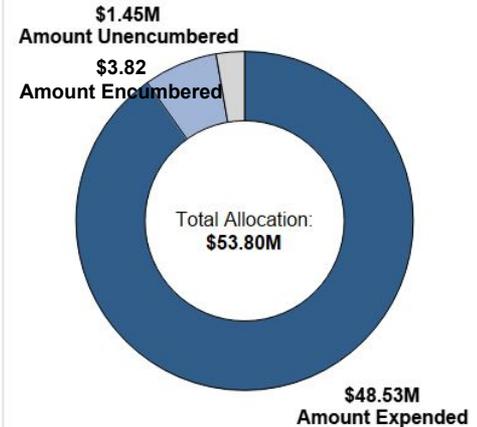
Agency: CDEC
Expenditure Category: All

Direct to Agency Awards (DAA)



Major Program Group: All
State Bill/Funding Source: All

State Stimulus



Timeline to Spend: All values
Year Awarded: All

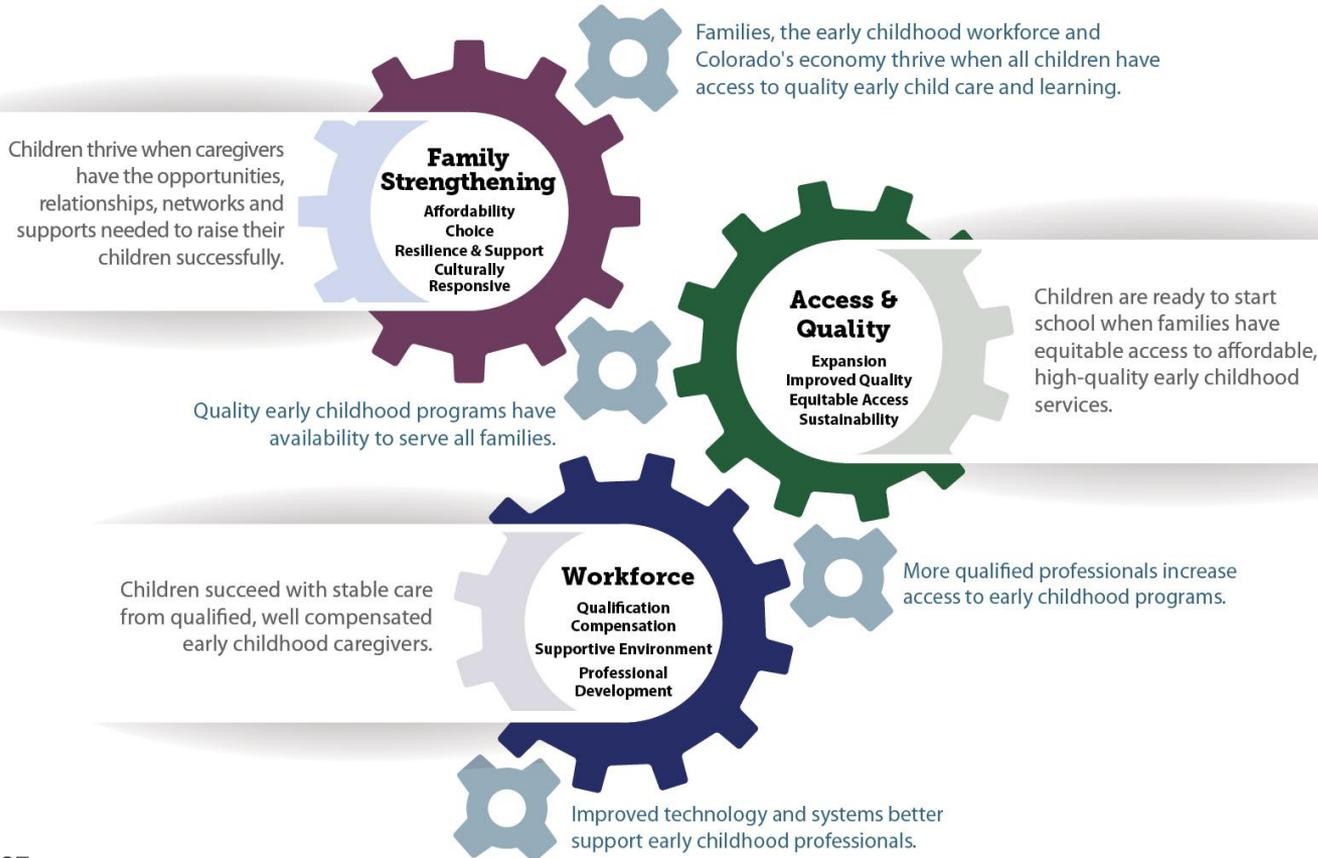
Quarterly updates can be viewed at: <https://coforward.colorado.gov>



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Strengthening Colorado's Early Childhood Sector

Stimulus Funded Activities



- Received over \$700 million in stimulus funding to address pandemic recovery needs and advance efforts to strengthen Colorado's early childhood sector.
- Worked with providers, families, and stakeholders to identify key priorities
- Developed 45 stimulus-funded activities in three areas

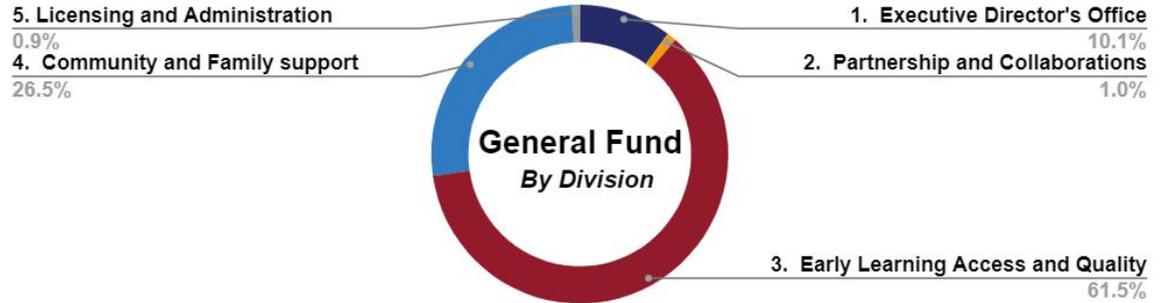
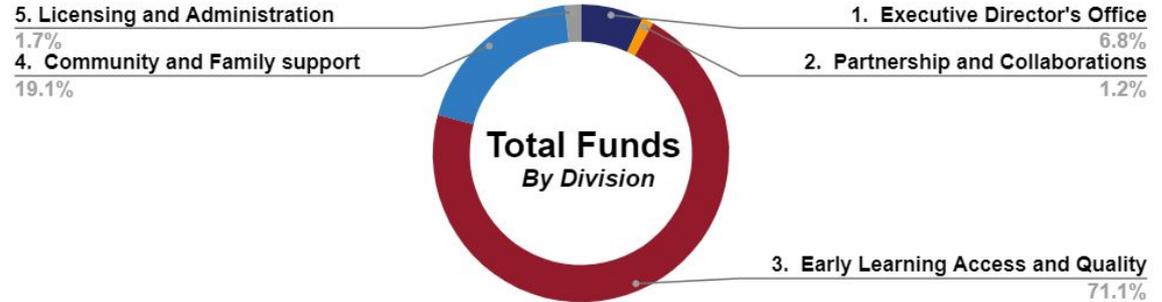
CDEC FY 2024 - 25 November 1 Budget Requests

FY 2024-25 Budget Request Snapshot (November 1)

FY 2024-25 Total Funds: \$74,435,375

FY 2024-25 General Fund: \$23,918,706

FY 2024-25 FTE: 46.4



CDEC FY 2024 - 25 Budget Priorities



- \$28.7M for Universal Preschool Program provider payments and additional hours
- \$1M for Universal Preschool Program online resource bank
- \$2.8M for Universal Preschool Program Local Coordinating Organizations support
- \$3.26M for Universal Preschool Program informational technology system
- \$21.1M in federal funding for Colorado Child Care Assistance Program supports



- \$6.7M to develop early child care professionals, retain preschool staff, ensure proper training, sustain funding for Early Childhood Council navigators, and increased provider rates



- \$4.0 M to expand the universal, voluntary home visiting Family Connects Program
- \$1.1M to support caseload increases in Early Intervention Program

Foundational Investments:

\$5.7M for operational resources, staffing, and technology for successful financial, policy, and program implementation

Additional Non-Appropriated Federal Funds

Federal Grant Program	FFY 2024 Award	Purpose	Statutory Authority
Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Grant	\$9,100,783	Supports pregnant people/parents who live in communities that face greater risks and barriers to achieving positive maternal and child health outcomes.	42 USC § 711(C)
Head Start Collaboration Grant	\$125,000	For Head Start entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low-income children from birth to school entry, and their families.	42 USC 9801 ET SEQ
Family Support through Primary Prevention (FSPP) Grant	\$750,000	Reduce child maltreatment and improve family well-being for Colorado families ages prenatal to 5	42 USC 5101, Sec. 106(a)
Preschool Development Grants Birth to Five (PDG B-5)	\$5,291,007	For efforts of mixed delivery system and maximize the availability of high-quality early childhood care and education options for low-income	42 USC 9858
Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (FIRE) Grant	\$1,495,808	For fathers to sustain healthy relationships, work toward financial well-being, and reinforce responsible parenting through skills-based parent and co-parent education workshops.	Section 403(a)(2) of SSA Act 42 USC § 603a2
Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS): Health Integration P-5	\$255,600	Build integrated maternal and early childhood systems of care that are equitable, sustainable, comprehensive, and inclusive of the health system.	Title V § 501(a)(3)(C) of Social Security Act; 42 U.S.C. § 701(a)(3)
Retention/ Recruitment of Early Intervention Professionals	\$233,052	Recruitment of EI direct service providers and provide professional development opportunities for existing providers.	2 CFR PART 180
Total	\$17,251,250		



Office of Administrative Solutions

**Division of People
Operations**

Product Unit

Policy & Legislative Unit

**Business, Innovation,
Technology & Security**

Communications Unit

Strategy Unit

Legislative Agenda

The Department respectfully requests the General Assembly consider legislation on the following:

- **Bilingual Licensing:** Requires CDEC to ensure that child care licensing services be available in Spanish and establish a Bilingual Licensing Unit. The bill appropriates ongoing funding to staff the Bilingual Licensing Unit and one-time funding to enhance the child care licensing mobile application Spanish capabilities.
- **Imagination Library of Colorado Transfer:** Transfers the authority, along with current levels of program funding, for the Imagination Library of Colorado from the Colorado Department of Education to CDEC.



Regulatory Agenda

Report of Rules Promulgated in 2023

Emergency Adoptions

6

Permanent Adoptions

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Anticipated Rules for Promulgation in 2024

Proposed New Rules

5

Proposed Revised/Repealed Rules

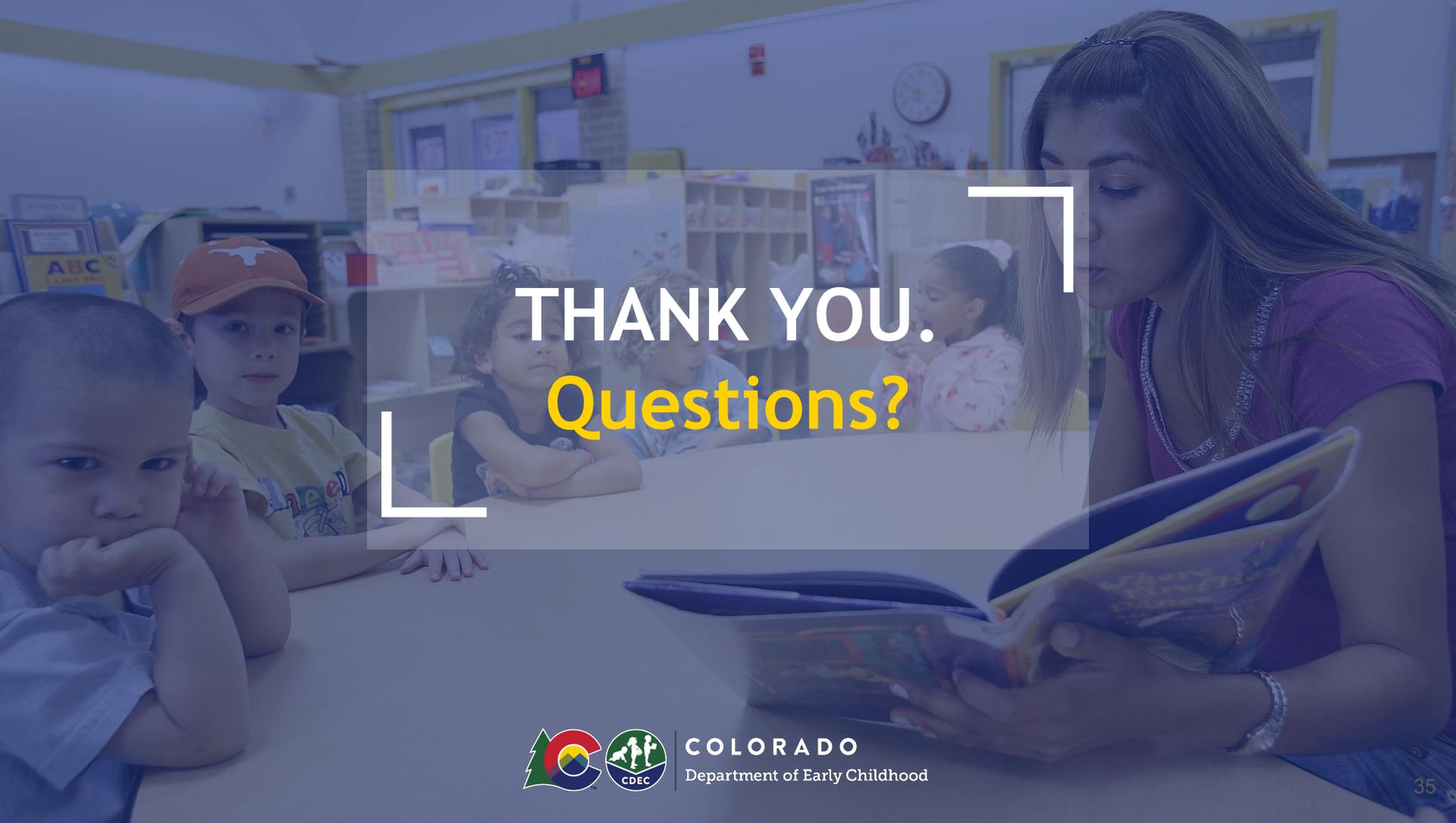
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Equity Action Plan

- Undertaking an equity audit of all programs, services, and policies to inform an Equity Action Plan
- Equity work embedded in operations and program delivery:
 - Hired an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Director
 - Tribal Liaison engages with tribes to ensure tribal needs and concerns are met with responsive services
 - Supporting culturally and linguistically responsive supports to the diverse early childhood workforce



A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a purple shirt and a necklace, is sitting at a table in a classroom, reading a large, colorful book to a group of young children. The children are sitting around the table, looking at the book. The classroom has shelves with books and toys in the background. The text "THANK YOU. Questions?" is overlaid on the image in white and yellow. The text "THANK YOU." is in white, and "Questions?" is in yellow. There are white L-shaped brackets on the left and right sides of the text.

THANK YOU.
Questions?



COLORADO
Department of Early Childhood

More Information

To view monthly updates on Wildly Important Goals and corresponding lead measures, please visit the [Governor's Dashboard](#).

For more information on additional Department goals and context, view our [FY 2023-24 Performance Plan](#).