Joint Technology Committee Hearing
March 3rd, 2022

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) will support new administration of programs providing care for children from birth to kindergarten that prioritizes a whole child, whole family approach for kindergarten readiness.

Mission

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood ensures 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.

Vision

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

SINCE WE LAST MET

The **Colorado Digital Service (CDS)** team has helped us to take an intentional step back to look at the overall goal for UPK and with the idea that this investigation supports the Department of Early Childhood's mission.

Utilize existing systems/resources

Look at systems that currently support the Office of Early Childhood and other Department of Human Services systems to understand the lift into a single entry point and where the best place for that entry point to be.

Between these two extremes, we want to explore possible options that may combine these approaches to best serve the needs of families, providers, and the department.
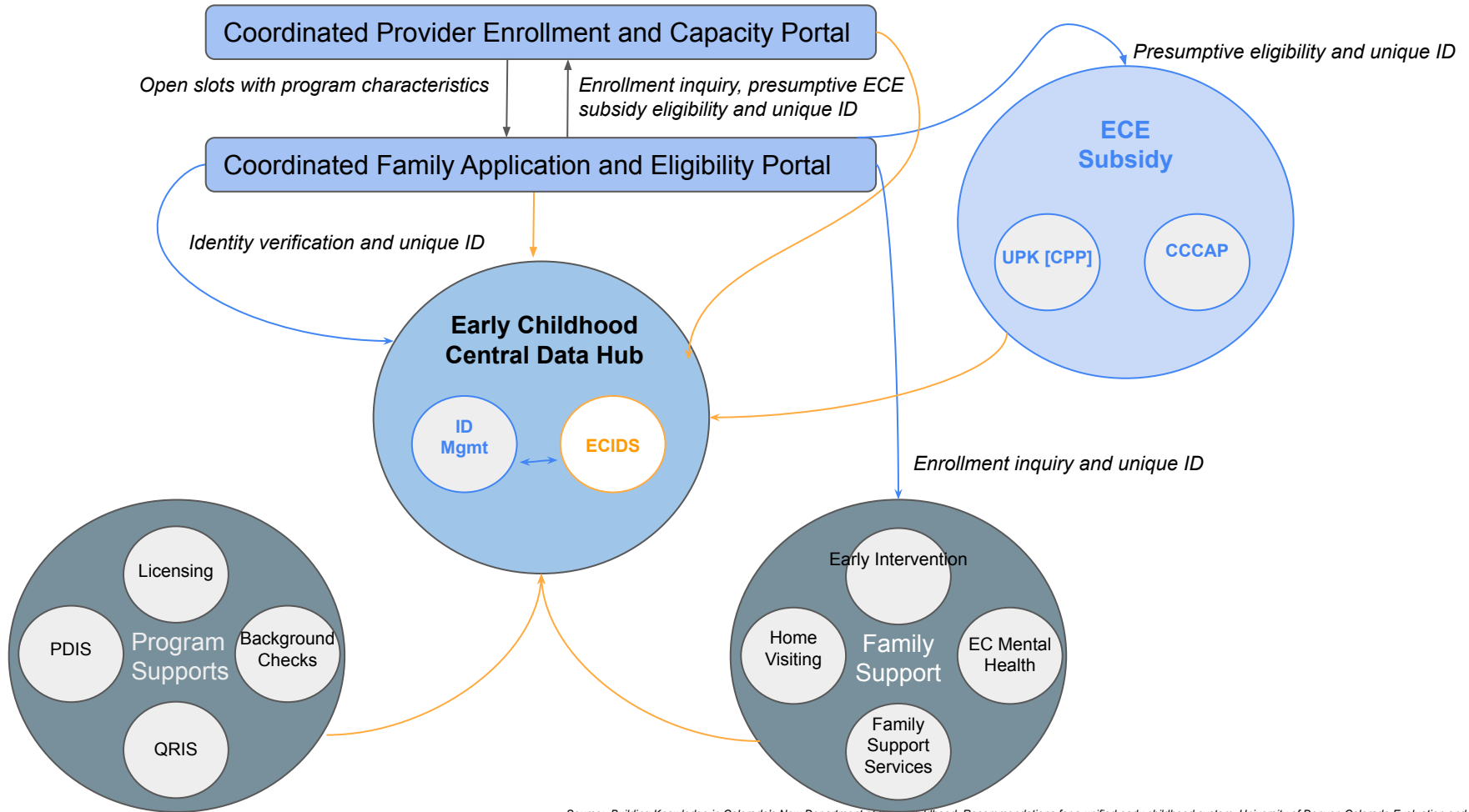
Build from a new system

Take a look at the costs of building a new single point of entry to support the Department of Early Childhood and Universal Pre-K from the ground up, assuming we are not using existing data systems or resources.

We are asking to appropriate the full $16.9 million in the 2022-23 fiscal year as an IT capital request to support agile development needs for the Department of Early Childhood.

DEC Technology Approach

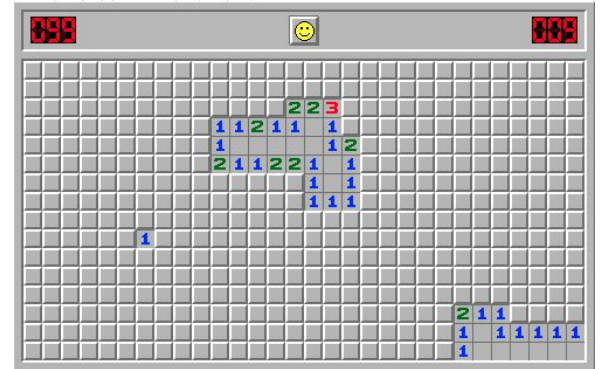| Comprehensive Analysis	System Builds	Sustainability
• Planning and Discovery • Establishing Governance and Legal Framework	• Design and Build of the Solution • Testing and Training for Users and System	• Sustainability Plan • Evaluation and Feedback Loops
• Identify what information is needed, by whom, when, and for what purpose and how existing internal and external knowledge assets can be leveraged. • Ensure all appropriate laws and regulations governing the data have been considered and legal structures are in place to address them.	• Iteratively build and test the solution with a diverse and representative group of willing participants from the field.	• Implement a sustainability plan • Create a cadence to perform check ins with end users • Implement a set of metrics that will be used to assess how well the solution is meeting the desired goal and how much knowledge has been gained.

Source: Building Knowledge in Colorado's New Department of Early Childhood, Recommendations for a unified early childhood system, University of Denver, Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab

DEC Technology Approach

Coordinated Provider Enrollment and Capacity Portal

Open slots with program characteristics

Enrollment inquiry, presumptive ECE subsidy eligibility and unique ID

Coordinated Family Application and Eligibility Portal

Identity verification and unique ID

Presumptive eligibility and unique ID

ECE Subsidy

UPK [CPP]

CCCAP

Early Childhood Central Data Hub

ID Mgmt

ECIDS

Enrollment inquiry and unique ID

Program Supports

Licensing

PDIS

Background Checks

QRIS

Family Support

Early Intervention

Home Visiting

EC Mental Health

Family Support Services

BUDGETING FOR AGILE PROJECTS

We are seeking flexible capital dollars to implement the comprehensive analysis findings. Our guiding values in that deployment work includes:

1. Work to build smaller, **modular components**, of working software. Don't build monoliths.

2. **Avoid single vendor lock** in with modular components. **Reduce the risk of technology debt** by building with loosely coupled parts. ([18F De-Risking Guide](#))

3. **Hire cross functional product teams** to drive our product strategy in-house, starting with a Product Owner for the Universal Preschool effort.

We learn more by doing, and building iteratively.

WHAT'S NEXT

Immediate

Receive $16.9 IT capital appropriation to begin this work.

Near Term

Create a systems understanding to inform the roadmap for the Early Childhood Technology ecosystem and product implementation.

Goal

Transform the way families and children interact with government technology systems that support early childhood.