



COLORADO

Department of Early Childhood

Department of Early Childhood Joint Education Committee Presentation

January 20, 2022

Why Early Childhood?

- The quality of a child's experiences in the first five years of life helps shape how the brain develops
- Benefits of quality programs extend not only to the child - but the family as well
- Research shows that ECE:
 - Reduces percentage of children repeating a grade
 - Lowers the rate of special education placement
 - Reduces the likelihood of entering the criminal justice system
 - Increases graduation rates
 - Results in lifelong positive impacts to children and families
 - ROI of \$5 to \$9 for every dollar spent



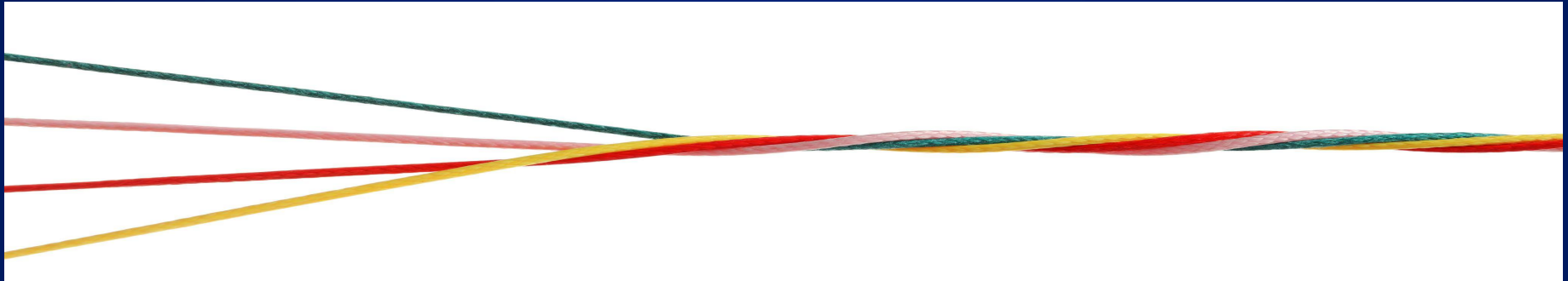
Proposition EE

- Originated with HB 20-1427 by (Caraveo, McCluskie, Fields, Moreno)
- Gradually increases tax on cigarette and tobacco and creates a new tax on nicotine products to provide 10 hours of free preschool for all children the year before kindergarten in a mixed delivery system + additional preschool programming for children with risk factors
- Passed in November 2020 by the voters of Colorado by 2:1 margin
- Will result in \$2 billion for universal pre-k over 10 years



Preschool in the Early Childhood System

- With excitement of Prop EE, stakeholders recognize the need to develop a vision for all of early childhood - not just preschool.
- After Prop EE passed, Early Childhood Leadership Commission recommends the creation of a new single state agency dedicated to early childhood that delivers on the vision of a comprehensive early care and education system.



HB 21-1304: Early Childhood System

HB 21-1304 (Sirota, Garnett, Buckner, Fenberg) introduced to create the Department of Early Childhood to:

- Provide early childhood opportunities
- Coordinate the availability of early childhood programs & services
- Establish state & community partnerships for the mixed delivery of early childhood programs
- Prioritize the interests & input of children, parents, providers & community in the delivery of early childhood programs & services
- Unify the administration of early childhood programs and services

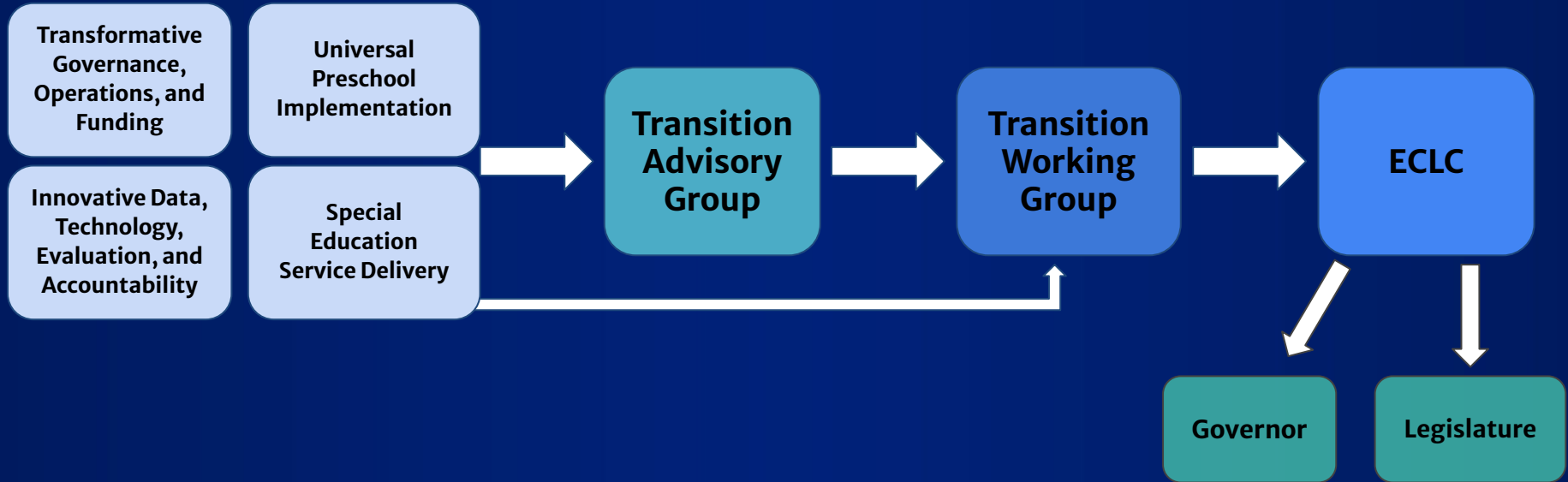
Passed unanimously by the Senate and by a 2 to 1 margin in the House



Transition Process

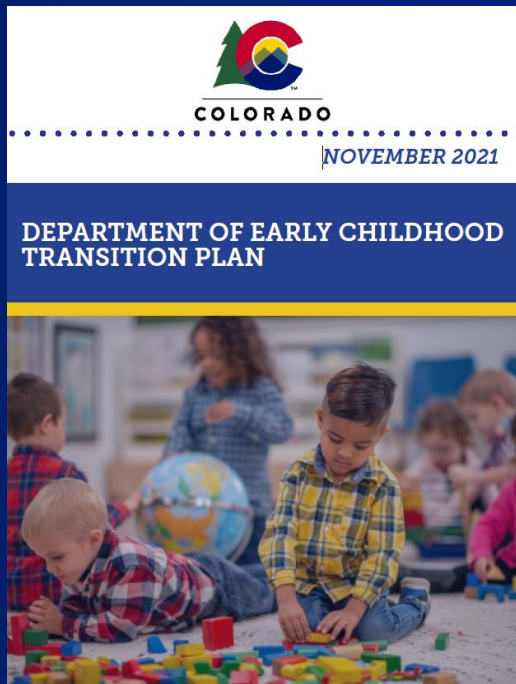
- HB21-1304 tasked ECLC with approving a plan to transition to the new department and to guide the state's new universal preschool program
- To ensure recommendations reflect Colorado's diverse voices, ECLC engaged a wide range of stakeholders including parents, families, ECE workforce, providers, school districts, counties and advocates in over 130 meetings
- Transition Advisory Group (TAG), Transition Working Group (TWG) and Special Education Subgroup created as well as three content-specific subgroups

Department of Early Childhood Transition Process



Department of Early Childhood Transition Plan & Colorado Universal Preschool Recommendations

Transition Reports



Overview of Transition Report Recommendations

The transition report covers the following topics:

- Vision, Mission, Values, and Guiding Principles
- Governance
- Structure of DEC
- Programs and Services to Transition to DEC Beginning July 2022
- Fiscal Structures and Funding Transition to DEC Beginning July 2022
- Re-evaluation of Transition by July 2025
- Ongoing Alignment and Collaboration with Other State Agencies
- Blending and Braiding Funding
- Technology and Data Systems
- Early Childhood Workforce



Department of Early Childhood

Vision

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

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.

Values:

- We value equity across the early childhood system and are committed to utilizing an equity-focused lens to drive priorities and decision making.
- We believe formal and informal care environments can provide high-quality, developmentally appropriate care and learning.
- We respect and appreciate the diversity and strengths of all of our communities in Colorado.
- We believe accessibility to early childhood services considers affordability, cultural responsiveness, and parent choice.
- We value an innovative and expansive approach to our early childhood system.
- We value a whole-family approach.

Agile and Representative Governance

Rules and Regulations Advisory Council (RRAC)

- Up to 15 members
- 50%: lived experience in the EC system or from historically underserved communities
- Holds public, simple majority votes on rules and regulations

Executive Director

- Expert in the field of Early Childhood
- With the advice of RRAC, holds ultimate rulemaking authority

Additional, existing advisory structures

- Groups that currently advise CDE and OEC such as:
- Early Childhood Leadership Commission
 - Counties
 - School Districts

Transfer of Programs & Services

Programs recommended to be transferred include:

- All programs and services delivered by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) in the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)
- The Colorado Preschool Program, Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE), and the Early Childhood Workforce Development Team in the Colorado Department of Education (CDE)

CPP to remain with CDE for the 22-23 school and integrate with Prop EE funds for the 23-24 school year



Universal Preschool Recommendations



Building and strengthening early childhood infrastructure



Simple and unified application process



Eligibility and prioritization



Quality and evaluation standards



ECE workforce



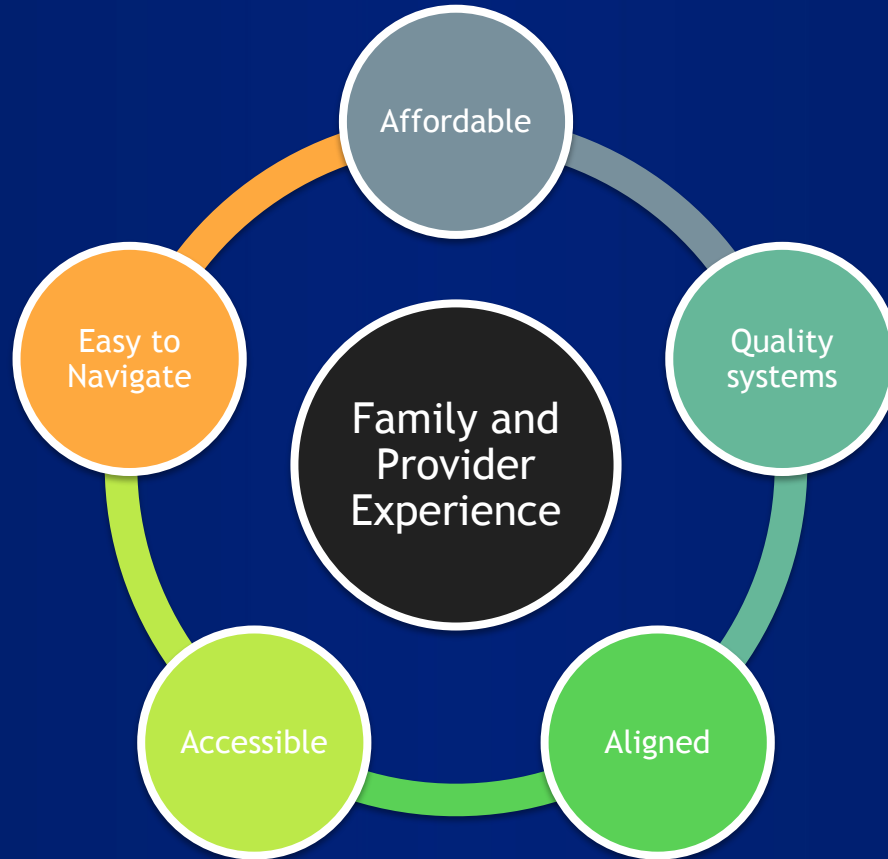
Special education

Building Early Childhood Infrastructure: Local Leads

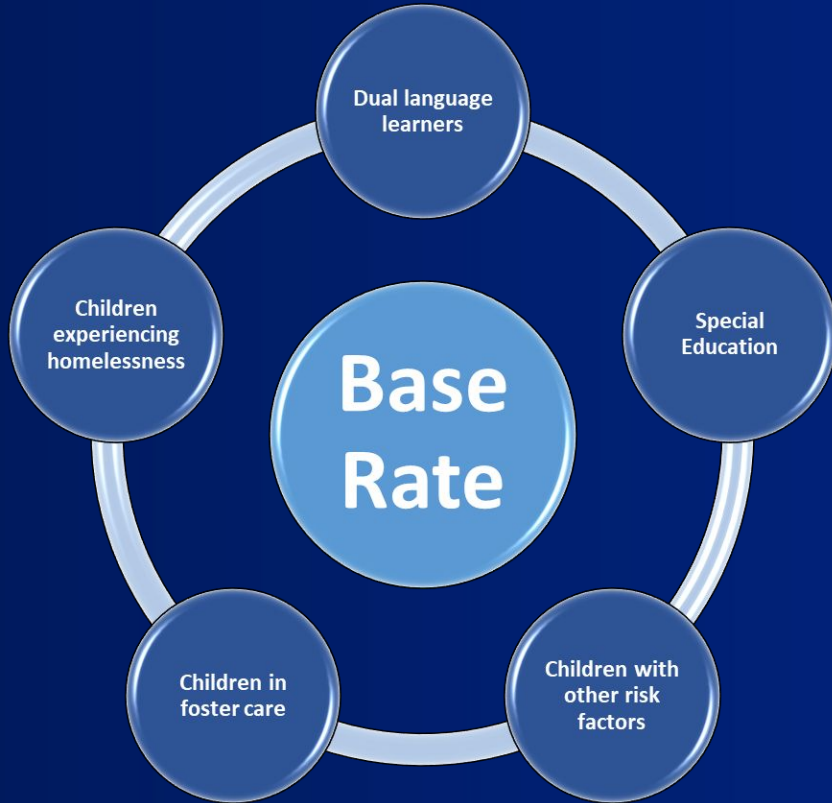
- Local solutions for local challenges
- Flexible to take into account local needs and structures
- Coordinates birth through 5+ approach to early childhood
- Empowered to solve challenges and build local resources
- Responsible for ensuring a mixed delivery system approach



Single Application for Early Childhood Services



Eligibility & Prioritization



Additional preschool programming for children determined to be at-risk

Licensing, Quality Standards, and Evaluation

Today's System

Providers must meet CDHS and CDE standards or requirements



Confusing, duplicative quality and reporting requirements



Quality standards linked to specific funding streams and ECE settings, in addition to overall standards



Recommendations for CDEC

Streamlined health, safety, and quality standards under the authority of CDEC

Quality standards to be developed by CDEC based on what is working in Colorado and national best practices

Creation of single set of developmentally appropriate quality standards for all settings and funding streams

Workforce

- Colorado experiencing an early childhood workforce shortage
- UPK will not be successful without a strong workforce
- Will require investments in recruitment & retention strategies
- Focus on ensuring that we are not impacting other parts of the child care landscape



Special Education



- The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) should continue to administer and be the identified state education agency responsible for compliance with IDEA Part B.
- DEC should also partner with CDE to ensure all children with disabilities are served equitably in the universal preschool program, ensure access to inclusive classrooms, and operate in accordance with all federal and state regulations.

Department of Early Childhood Budget Requests

November 1, 2021

Department of Early
Childhood
Administration Request
(20 total FTE, \$13M)

December 10, 2021

Universal Preschool
Information Technology
Request (\$3.5M)

January 3, 2022

Department of Early Childhood
Administration Supplemental
Request (3.0 FTE for 6 staff for
6 months, \$552k)

Zero cost Transfer of Early
Childhood Programs from CDHS
& CDE to CDEC Long Bill

Early Childhood Foundations
and Universal Preschool
Administration (10 FTE, \$722k)

CDEC Website - cdec.colorado.gov



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The Department of Early Childhood will launch July 1, 2022. This page serves as a resource for information related to the transition to the new Department in advance of the launch. Until the Department of Early Childhood opens, please continue to use the [Office of Early Childhood Website](#) for early childhood related services.

Next Steps

Stakeholder Focus Groups



Convening focus groups concentrated on Universal Preschool recommendations & monthly town hall meetings

Interagency Working Groups



Four interagency working groups centered around Strategy & Leadership, Communications, Technology & UPK

Upcoming Legislation



2022 legislation to operationalize the new department and implement Universal Preschool

THANK YOU!

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