Early Learning Challenge Grant

CFDA Number 84.412

Appendix

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Appendix A
Framework in Action State Plan

Please note that this file has been converted from a PDF to an image file. The quality may have been affected.

Early Childhood Colorado Framework

A COLLECTIVE VISION ON BEHALF OF COLORADO'S YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Framework in Action State Plan

2010–2012

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Acknowledgement:

The *Framework in Action State Plan 2010–2012* was developed with leadership from the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems and the Head Start State Collaboration grants in the Office of Lt. Governor Barbara O'Brien.

Early Childhood Colorado Framework

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BACKGROUND AND INTENT OF THE *EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK*

The *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* (http://earlychildhoodcolorado.org/inc/uploads/CO_EC_Framework.pdf) was developed in 2008 as a resource and guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado. Over 20 logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints that had previously been developed by a wide of range of Colorado early childhood initiatives served as building blocks for the information included in the overarching framework. Since its release, state and local early childhood stakeholders have used the *Framework* as a resource to help identify needs, guide planning and decision making, and build partnerships. The *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*:

- **Recognizes the needs of the whole child and family** by including outcomes that cut across the early learning, family support and parent education, mental health, and health sectors.
- **Communicates the vision for comprehensive early childhood work** by helping early childhood partners see how their work, individually and collectively, contributes to the greater picture of all children in Colorado being valued, healthy, and thriving.
- **Ties "comprehensive systems building" language to specific strategies for action and measurable outcomes** for children, families, and early childhood professionals.
- **Provides a framework to guide and focus the actions** of public and private stakeholders who work with or on behalf of young children.
- **Promotes an outcomes-based approach** to early childhood systems efforts.

OVERVIEW OF THE *EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK*

The **vision** described in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* is that "All children are valued, healthy, and thriving." Colorado early childhood partners recognize that efforts must be taken to better coordinate, align, and integrate resources in order for Colorado to realize this vision. No one entity, organization, department, or collaborative partnership can realize the vision independently.

A core set of **guiding principles** provide the foundation for the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* and resulting efforts:

- Be child-focused and family-centered.
- Recognize and respond to variations in cultures, languages, and abilities.
- Use data to inform decisions.
- Build on strengths of communities and families.
- Focus on children from birth to age eight.
- Promote partnerships.
- Act at state, local, and statewide levels.

The **goals** in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* focus on three target groups to impact—children, families, and professionals.

- Children have high-quality early learning supports and environments and comprehensive health care.

- Families have meaningful community and parenting supports.
- Early childhood professionals have the knowledge, skills, and supports to work effectively with and on behalf of families and children.

The **outcomes** clearly identify Colorado's desired results for children, families, and/or early childhood professionals in the sectors of early learning, family support and parent education, mental health, and health. The outcomes are grouped into three categories:

- *Access* outcomes include supports and services that all children and families should be able to access.
- *Quality* outcomes underscore what research and practice indicate; access alone does not provide the desired outcomes, high quality supports and services are essential.
- *Equity* outcomes target specific populations. With achievement gaps, disparities in health status, and the geographic and socioeconomic diversities in Colorado, there is a need to target resources and services to specific populations.

The **foundations** noted in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* function as critical systems building elements, essential to reducing the long standing fragmentation of policies and programs serving young children and their families.[1]

The foundations in the Framework include the following functions that support an early childhood system:

- Build and Support Partnerships
- Fund and Invest
- Change Policy
- Build Public Engagement
- Share Accountability
- Generate Education and Leadership Opportunities

For more information on the foundational elements of a comprehensive early childhood system, see the Appendix on page 22.

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The Framework in Action State Plan

THE *FRAMEWORK IN ACTION STATE PLAN*

To identify next steps for cross-sector early childhood efforts at the state level, over 100 partners came together in 2009 to develop the following *Framework in Action State Plan*. The purpose of developing this plan was to capture, integrate and guide various state efforts and initiatives, as well as promote shared leadership, ownership, and action towards systemic improvements and enhancements across the sectors of a comprehensive early childhood system. Using a results-based approach, the *Framework in Action* planning process was designed to:

- **Identify focal points around which to organize state level work**
- **Focus and coordinate activities among multiple partners**
- **Communicate cross-sector priorities**
- **Ensure public accountability for results**

The state-level focus for this plan was intentional as creating partnerships and alignment at the state level positively influences state-level policies, procedures, and interactions across sectors resulting in better aligned and coordinated supports for local communities. Communities engage in an analogous process to identify opportunities for systemic impact through the local early childhood council infrastructure.

Additionally, it was intentional to use a results-based approach to link the **foundations** of systems work to **strategies for actions** and outcomes, i.e. **results**. While this approach was not intended to provide a direct causal link, it did reinforce that actions directed at leveraging foundational, systemic change are initiated in order to ultimately impact positive results for children and families.

DEVELOPING THE *FRAMEWORK IN ACTION STATE PLAN*

Before developing the actions to include in this plan, partners first agreed that **ALL of the work identified in the Early Childhood Colorado Framework is essential** to reach the overarching vision that all young children are valued, healthy, and thriving. Therefore, while there are five results that the *Framework in Action* focuses on, there is strong support for organizations, agencies, and collaborative partnerships to continue their existing efforts to impact all of the outcomes identified within the *Framework*.

Step 1: Select RESULTS

The first step in results-based planning is to select the desired result(s) on which to focus. In order to identify the focus of the *Framework in Action State Plan*, early childhood stakeholders examined the **outcomes** (i.e. desired results), included in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* and applied the following criteria:

- *Population based*: Does the result focus on populations of children and/or families rather than program or service-based measures?
- *Simple*: Is the result clear and easily explained to early childhood stakeholders, as well as those outside the early childhood field?

IDENTIFYING FOCUS

The following criteria were used to select the RESULTS for the *Framework in Action State Plan*:

- Population Based
- Simple
- Shared
- Life Lasting
- Solution-Building

- **Shared:** Can stakeholders involved in various parts of the early childhood system see how the result connects to their work?
- **Silo-busting:** Does impacting the result require collaboration across sectors?
- **Solution-building:** Does the result itself conjure up strategies and actions for positive impact?

Step 2: Identify INDICATORS for each RESULT

In order to measure progress related to each result, early childhood stakeholders identified indicators using the following factors:

- **Cross-sector:** Is there a role for one or more of the early childhood system sectors to impact or influence this indicator?
- **Availability:** Are the data available or can the data be generated? Is it measured at the state level, regional level, and/or community level?
- **Quality:** Is the data source trustworthy? Does the indicator measure what is needed?
- **Communication potential:** Will a variety of audiences understand the indicator?

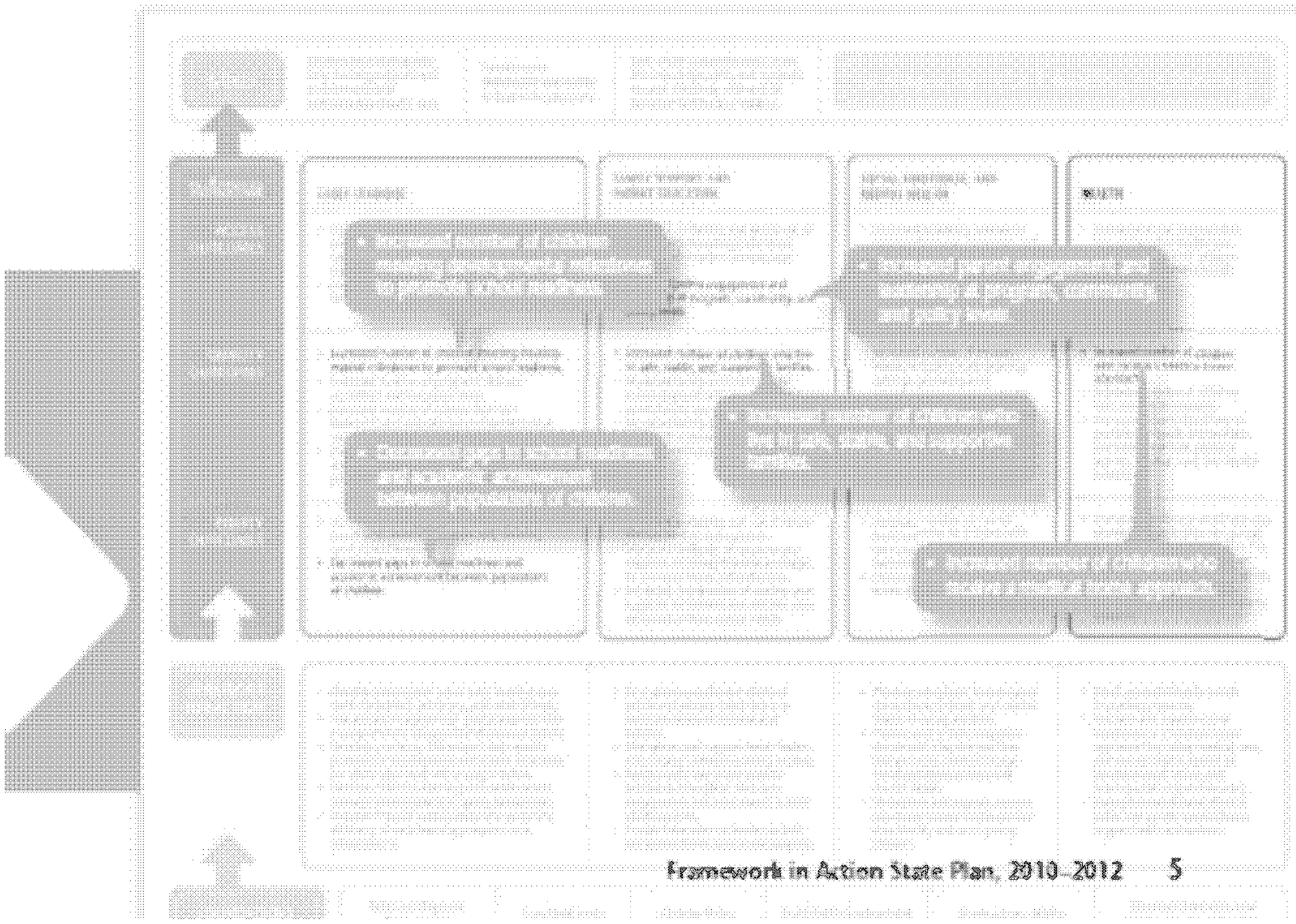
Step 3: Identify STRATEGIES to impact the INDICATORS

The "Strategies in Action" section of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* was used to develop concrete and measurable ACTIONS.

Step 4: Identify LEADS for STRATEGIES and ACTIONS

To identify leads for the strategies and specific actions, existing collaborative partnerships were first identified with the understanding that broader stakeholders and partners must be engaged in decision making and implementation at appropriate times. Where an existing partnership did not already exist, lead partners were identified with the charge that broader stakeholder inclusion in decision making and implementation occur.

The *Framework in Action State Plan* that follows is organized based on the steps outlined above.



Early Childhood Health and Development Goal 1: Family Economic Security

INDICATORS

State Indicators	Colorado Baseline	Data Source
Percentage of children birth to 5 years who live in families with incomes greater than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.	64% (2008)	National Center for Children in Poverty
Percentage of infants born to a high-risk mother (unmarried, under 25 years of age with less than 12 years education).	7.2% (2007)	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Maltreatment rate (including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and/or neglect) for children birth to 8 years.	10.8/1,000 children (2008)	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare

STORY BEHIND THE ACTION PLAN

Family is one of the most important influences that shape children's early development. To be secure and ready to learn, children need a safe, warm place to sleep, enough healthy food everyday, and loving, nurturing adults who support and care for them.[1] Poverty can threaten a family's ability to provide these basic necessities. As of 2008, 15 percent of Colorado children were estimated to be living in poverty, however, with a 22 percent increase in the number of children in poverty since 2000, the state is rapidly approaching the national average and could surpass it if the trend continues.[2] The Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute developed the Self Sufficiency Standard[3] (SSS) for Colorado that demonstrates that federal poverty levels (FPL) alone are not a realistic measure of income adequacy. The SSS calculates the income a family needs, based on its specific make-up, to meet basic necessities given the unique character istics and costs of the community they live. While the SSS would be a better indicator than the federal poverty level to monitor the number of Colorado families with adequate income to meet basic needs, the percentage of families living at or above the SSS per community is not currently available.

Colorado, like all other states and the nation, has been impacted by the current economic recession. Colorado's unemployment rate is lower than rates in 34 other states and the District of Columbia. However, from 2008 to 2009, Medicaid enrollment is up 20 percent, unemployment insurance rates are more than three times higher, and use of food stamps is up by a third.[3] According to a 2009 national study completed for Zero to Three[4], one in four parents are experiencing child care-related hardships (e.g. not being able to afford child care, cutting back on child care hours) that they attribute to the economic downturn.[5] Half of the parents surveyed who have a regular caregiver for their child, other than themselves or their spouse/partner, rely on a family member to provide child care. Family, friend, and neighbor care refers to child care provided by unlicensed caregivers that include relatives, friends, or others in the community. While families choose this care for many reasons, including inability to find or pay for other care, the majority of families choose it because of the familiar and trusted relationship.[6]

Although there are early childhood health and developmental programs and services aimed at supporting children and families and mitigating the impacts of poverty, it can be a challenge for families to identify and connect to needed supports and services. Even if a family or care provider is aware of a service, navigating the referral and application process can be daunting.

STRATEGY: Strengthen coordinated efforts of public and private stakeholders to meet the needs of children and families.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Build broad awareness about the "Strengthening Families" approach (http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net/index.php/about) that builds upon five research-based protective factors in order to gain support from a wide range of stakeholders and policymakers.	Strategies to build awareness are identified and implemented.	Strategies identified by August 31, 2010, and implemented by August 31, 2011	Strengthening Families Interagency group, leadership provided by the Colorado Children's Trust Fund
Identify purpose and anticipated outcomes for Colorado's adoption of the "Strengthening Families" approach that promotes optimal healthy development and prevents abuse and neglect.	Action Plan for adopting "Strengthening Families" approach is developed and includes strategies, partners, time frames, and outcomes.	Action Plan developed by January 31, 2011	Strengthening Families Interagency group, leadership provided by the Colorado Children's Trust Fund
Integrate the "Strengthening Families" approach into existing child- and family-serving agencies and programs.	Strategies to integrate the "Strengthening Families" approach are identified and implemented.	Strategies identified by June 1, 2011, and implemented by May 31, 2012	Strengthening Families Interagency group, leadership provided by the Colorado Children's Trust Fund
Develop recommendations and a plan including technical assistance targeted at reaching unlicensed family, friend, and neighbor care providers using the "Strengthening Families" approach.	Strategies identified and implemented specifically targeted at family, friend, and neighbor care providers.	Plan developed by June 1, 2011, and technical assistance offered by December 1, 2011	Sub-committee of the Strengthening Families Interagency group, leadership provided by Clayton Early Learning

STRATEGY: Provide information to families to facilitate connection to services and supports.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Facilitate connections to early childhood supports and services by developing and implementing a more coordinated and efficient information, referral, and linkage system. http://www.connecticutchildrens.org/body_dept.cfm?id=92	A comprehensive Colorado Help Me Grow action and implementation plan is developed.	Action Plan developed by December 31, 2010, and implementation begins January 2011	Colorado Help Me Grow Core Team
Study feasibility of an interagency universal application process for early childhood services and supports, including but not limited to Medicaid, CHP+, Colorado Preschool Program, Colorado Child Care Assistance Program, Head Start, and Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children.	Recommendations related to a universal application are developed and compiled in a written report.	Subcommittee established by August 1, 2010, and recommendations submitted by December 1, 2010, as per House Bill 10-1028	Universal Application Subcommittee, as per House Bill 10-1028

Colorado Framework for Early Childhood Professional Development

INDICATORS

State Indicators	Colorado Baseline	Data Source
Percentage of parents with concerns about child's learning, development, or behavior (1 to 6 years of age).	7.7% (2008)	Child Health Survey, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Percentage of parents with concerns about child's emotions, concentration, behavior, or ability to get along with others (1 to 14 years of age).	24.2% (2008)	Child Health Survey, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Percentage of children whose health care provider asked their parent to fill out a survey about development, communication, or social behavior (1 to 6 years of age).	44.2% (2008)	Child Health Survey, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Percentage of infants and toddlers birth to 3 years with Individualized Family Service Plans.	2.17% (2008)	Early Intervention Colorado, Colorado Department of Human Services
Percentage of children, birth to 5 years old, who have received ongoing developmental assessment through the Results Matter program.	10.32% (2008–2009)	Results Matter, Colorado Department of Education
Percentage of children assessed in the Results Matter program who meet developmental milestones within all three of the targeted outcome areas**.	2008 baseline data not available as of April 2010	Results Matter, Colorado Department of Education

**The three targeted outcome areas include: positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

STORY BEHIND THE ACTION PLAN

A child's readiness for school is based upon maturity and skills mastered. Programs that support young children to gain the skills needed to enter school ready to learn and succeed require, among many things, a common, comprehensive set of standards that outline early school readiness competencies. To that end, in December 2009, the Colorado State Board of Education approved an aligned set of content standards from preschool through 12th grade to encourage the highest achievement of every child, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that children should acquire at each age/grade level. Having standards is only a first step; the next step is to identify how the standards are utilized and embedded in practice.

Additionally, it is necessary to have effective processes to identify and address an individual child's developmental concerns early, and efficient mechanisms to link children to appropriate supports and services as needed. While Colorado's 2008 identification rate for Part C early intervention services for infants and toddlers birth to 3 years is less than the national average of 2.66 percent, it is an improvement over the identification rate of 1.92 percent reported by Colorado in 2007.[8] Developmental and social-emotional screening is often the first step in identifying developmental concerns that warrant further assessment and possible intervention.

Through the Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) Project, efforts have been underway in Colorado to promote developmental screening in primary health care, early learning centers, and home visitation programs, as well as to strengthen the referral, assessment, and service delivery process for early intervention (www.coloradoabcd.org; www.ecicolorado.org).

Quality assessment processes are critical to measure and support individual child development and to inform and support program and systems efforts. Research supports assessing and supporting children's readiness for school in a multi-dimensional way including physical, social, emotional, communication/language, and cognitive development,[20] within the context of everyday routines, activities and places; and by adults familiar with them. Results Matter (www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter), Colorado's early care and education child outcomes system, provides a strong foundation in Colorado for authentic, continuous, developmentally appropriate child assessment to capture developmental progress over time and inform program decision making. Approximately 37,000 children participating in programs such as the Colorado Preschool Program, Preschool Special Education, Early Intervention, Head Start and Early Head Start, and child care received ongoing developmental assessment as part of the Results Matter system.

While there is no current common measure in Colorado to assess children's school readiness at kindergarten entry, under the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids established by Senate Bill 08-212, the Colorado Department of Education is developing a kindergarten readiness assessment process using the Results Matter system as a foundation. The information obtained through the school readiness assessment process will help families, communities, and early learning providers improve the ways they support children prepare for school, as well as support schools in being prepared to help children as they enter kindergarten.

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ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY: Monitor children's learning and development through screening and on going assessments.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Identify overlaps, gaps, successes and barriers to implementing routine, standardized developmental and social-emotional screening in a variety of service settings (e.g. primary health care, child care/early learning, parent education/home visitation).	Updated ABCD strategic plan completed with activities, benchmarks, and time frames for a coordinated developmental screening system.	Strategic plan developed by June 30, 2010	Assuring Better Child Health and Development State Team
Promote statewide implementation of routine, standardized developmental and social-emotional screening in a variety of service settings (e.g. primary health care, child care/early learning, parent education/home visitation).	Reports are disseminated via the ABCD web site and other existing early childhood communication mechanisms that document progress on strategic plan goals and objectives.	Reports disseminated biannually beginning January 1, 2011	Assuring Better Child Health and Development State Team
Establish cross-sector coordination and tracking of developmental screening and resulting referrals.	Coordinated data system is in place to track and monitor developmental screening and referrals.	Data tracking system developed by December 31, 2012	Assuring Better Child Health and Development State Team
Promote parent and caregiver education on child development through the use of evidence-based developmental screening tools.	Training curriculum developed for health care providers and early learning providers that promote the use of evidence-based developmental screening tools. Training curriculum developed for families that promote child development and developmental screening.	Provider curriculum developed by July 31, 2011, with regional trainings in 2012 Family curriculum developed by December 31, 2010, with regional trainings in 2011 and 2012	Assuring Better Child Health and Development State Team
Develop and implement a school readiness assessment process.	A statewide school readiness assessment process is adopted and implemented.	Plan for the school readiness assessment process presented to State Board of Education by December 31, 2010	Colorado Department of Education, in collaboration with stakeholders
Establish and provide training and technical assistance to early learning providers, programs, and school personnel regarding the school readiness assessment process.	Training and technical assistance in place to support school readiness assessment process.	School readiness assessment process implemented in kindergarten settings by December 2013	Colorado Department of Education, in collaboration with stakeholders

ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY: Develop and support use of early learning standards by families, programs, and professionals.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Widely disseminate the preschool-3rd grade subset of academic standards approved by the State Board of Education to schools.	All public schools who serve the preschool through 3rd grade population will receive electronic and printed resources with background, context, and purpose of the content standards.	Resources disseminated by June 30, 2010	Colorado Department of Education
Identify strategies to support the implementation of preschool-3rd grade academic standards across a variety of early childhood environments and programs (e.g. child care, preschool, Head Start, early intervention) in order to ensure comprehensive early learning standards for children birth to 8.	Study completed to identify and address the needs of programs and professionals in order to successfully implement the content standards.	Study completed by December 31, 2010	Colorado Department of Education, in collaboration with stakeholders
Provide training and technical assistance to integrate preschool-3rd grade academic standards into a variety of early childhood programs and environments.	Training and technical assistance plan developed and implemented to implement content standards.	Training plan completed and implementation started by June 30, 2011	Colorado Department of Education, in collaboration with stakeholders
Develop the framework and incentives for the vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum, assessment, and instructional delivery in P-3 programs and environments.	Model P-3 curriculum and assessment materials are available.	Materials are available by December 31, 2011	Colorado Department of Education, in collaboration with stakeholders

STRATEGY: Provide personnel in disciplines working with young children and their families with effective promotion, prevention, and intervention strategies and practices that promote social-emotional development and mental health.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Develop and support a statewide infrastructure for early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) for children, families, and providers in a variety of settings (e.g. health care, early learning, home visitation).	Infrastructure framework developed that includes quality indicators for mental health consultants.	Infrastructure framework developed by September 30, 2010 ECMHC professional development plan developed by March 31, 2011	Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Infrastructure Committee of the Blue Ribbon Policy Council
Incorporate best practices around social-emotional development into training, professional development, and coaching for professionals working with young children and their families.	A plan is established that includes funding and policy decisions to support best practices and coaching for early childhood professionals.	Plan developed by June 30, 2010	P-3 Professional Development Task Force

Outcome: Children Are Ready for School

INDICATORS

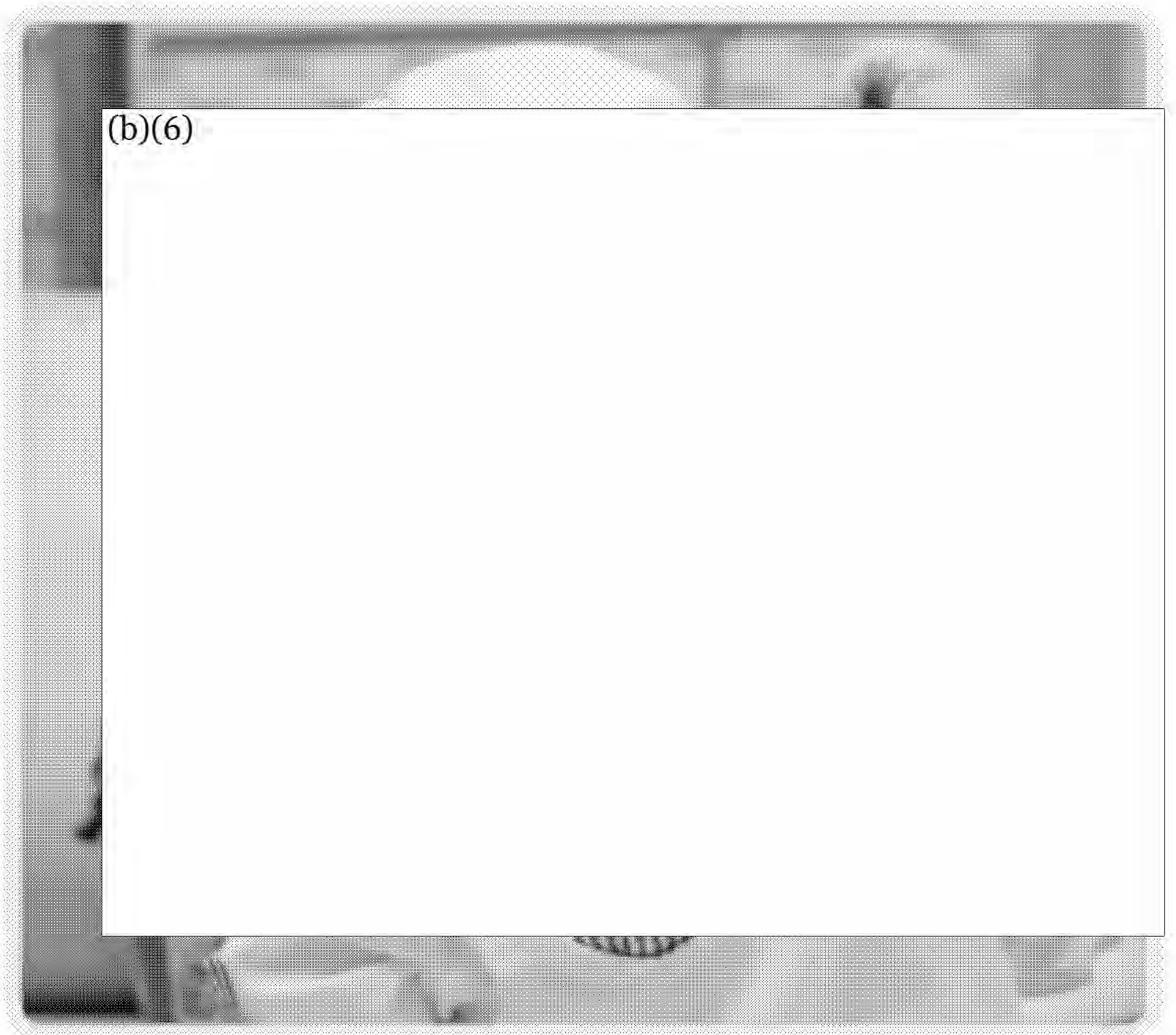
State Indicators	Colorado Baseline	Data Source
Percentage of children in Part C early intervention who were functioning within age expectations per each of the targeted outcome areas* by the time they turned 3 years of age or exited the Part C early intervention program.	84.5% positive social-emotional skills 84.8% acquisition and use of knowledge and skills 87.2% use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs (2008)	Early Intervention Colorado, Colorado Department of Human Services
Percentage of children in the Colorado Preschool Program whose growth rates increased in one or more of the three targeted outcome areas* by completion of the program as compared to their more advantaged peers.	2008 baseline data not available as of April 2010	Results Matter, Colorado Department of Education
Percentage of preschoolers receiving Part B, Section 619 special education services, whose growth rates increased in one or more of the three targeted outcome areas* placing them closer to their same age peers by transition out of preschool special education services.	2008 baseline data not available as of April 2010	Results Matter, Colorado Department of Education
Achievement and growth gaps for 4th and 5th grade students by population (e.g. living in poverty, minorities, or receiving special education services) scoring proficient or advanced on reading CSAP.	http://www.cde.state.co.us	Colorado Growth Model, CSAP, Colorado Department of Education
Achievement and growth gaps for 4th and 5th grade students by population (e.g. living in poverty, minorities, or receiving special education services) scoring proficient or advanced on 4th grade math CSAP.	http://www.cde.state.co.us	Colorado Growth Model, CSAP, Colorado Department of Education

*The three targeted outcome areas include: positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

STORY BEHIND THE ACTION PLAN

There are a number of reasons for gaps in school readiness in different populations, particularly related to disparities in socioeconomic status and race and ethnicity. Studies have shown that children from low-income and minority families are at increased risk for falling behind in school.[17] Disparities in child outcomes are evident at 9 months and grow larger by 24 months of age.[18] These disparities exist across cognitive, social, behavioral, and health outcomes. A couple of specific examples include:

- Children who live in families with low socio-economic status are exposed to three million fewer words by 4 years of age than those from families with higher incomes. In Colorado, 47 percent of children living at less than 200 percent FPL are read to daily as compared to 62 percent of children living at 400 percent or greater FPL.[19]



- Chronic absence in kindergarten and early grades adversely impacts student performance. For example, studies show that chronic absence in kindergarten affected reading performance for Latino 1st graders and chronic absence in kindergarten predicted the lowest levels of educational achievement at the end of 5th grade for low-income children.[14] The Colorado Department of Education tracks absenteeism, however it is not possible to aggregate these data by grade level.

The Colorado Growth Model (http://www.cde.state.co.us) provides data on the academic achievement and progress for both individual students and populations of students. This model focuses attention on maximizing student progress over time and reveals where, and among which students, growth may or may not be occurring. Third grade CSAP scores establish the baseline for comparison of growth and identification of gaps over time.

One strategy proven to decrease gaps in school readiness is to provide high-quality early childhood programs for young children who are experiencing risk factors, such as poverty, parents with less than a high school education or equivalent, substance abuse in the family or high mobility. Young children at risk for being unprepared for school who participate in quality early childhood programs, such as the Colorado Preschool Program, Head Start, or Parents as Teachers, make

better-than-expected developmental progress and start school with better readiness skills.[13,14] Some key indicators of quality in community programs that support the healthy development of at-risk young children include well-trained providers, high-quality program standards, research-based program design, and a multi-generational approach that supports both children and their parents.

ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY: Develop, promote, and support high quality professional development and formal education for early learning professionals.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Develop a comprehensive three-year plan to create an integrated, well-aligned, and financed professional development system for early learning professionals.	Comprehensive plan developed with clear actions, measurable benchmarks and time lines.	Plan completed by July 31, 2010	P-3 Professional Development Task Force
Establish the infrastructure to deliver training and technical assistance to early learning professionals related to social-emotional development, mental health, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion of young children with special needs.	At minimum, two Pyramid Plus sponsored Pyramid Model modules training conducted annually. Mechanism for certification of Pyramid Plus trainers and coaches established. Reports developed and disseminated that highlight successes and challenges of programs and communities partnering with Pyramid Plus.	Training and technical assistance available by December 31, 2010 Processes and technical assistance for certification available by July 31, 2011 Reports disseminated by December 2010 and annually thereafter	Pyramid Plus State Team
Promote awareness of and access to professional development activities and resources focused on social-emotional development and mental health.	Pyramid Plus materials and trainings distributed via local early childhood councils, local interagency coordination councils, Family Resource Centers, Colorado Preschool Program Coordinators, and the Colorado Head Start Association.	Ongoing 2010 through 2012	Pyramid Plus State Team

ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY: Align and integrate child care licensing with a comprehensive rating and reimbursement system to support high quality early learning programs.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Identify standards to define high quality in early learning programs.	"Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS): The Next Generation" study and planning process is completed and a full report with clear vision, strategies, actions, time lines, and resource needs is developed.	"QRIS: The Next Generation" study group convened by March 31, 2010, and full report completed March 31, 2011	Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services, in collaboration with stakeholders
Study opportunities and needs for aligning and integrating child care quality rating system with child care licensing addressing affordability, accessibility, and accreditation.	Results of study are incorporated into the QRIS report.	Full report completed March 31, 2011	Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services, in collaboration with stakeholders
Establish funding needed to support a comprehensive, licensing and quality rating system that is tied to reimbursement.	Cost analysis completed and incorporated into the QRIS report.	Full report completed by March 30, 2011	Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services, in collaboration with stakeholders
Embed the use of evidence-based practices into regulations that govern licensed child care environments including centers and family child care homes.	Revised child care licensing regulations that include evidenced based practices recommended in the QRIS report.	Progress report on child care licensing revisions completed by May 31, 2012	Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services

STRATEGY: Strengthen coordinated efforts of public and private stakeholders to meet the needs of children and families

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Inventory existing and potential family support and education programs that use an evidence-based approach including statewide availability, implementation costs, training, and numbers served.	Inventory of existing and potential programs complete including availability, implementation costs, training needs, and number served is completed.	Inventory completed by March 31, 2011	Colorado Parent & Child Foundation, Invest in Kids, and Reach Out and Read Colorado—in collaboration with partners
Develop a plan, including infrastructure, that supports the statewide dissemination of programs that use good research or evidence to improve outcomes and school readiness for families/children considered "at-risk," including, but not limited to Reach Out and Read, Parents as Teachers, HIPPY, and Incredible Years.	Plan completed and includes strategies, resource needs, and implementation recommendations.	Plan developed by September 30, 2011	Colorado Parent & Child Foundation, Invest in Kids, and Reach Out and Read Colorado—in collaboration with partners

Goal: Increased number of children who receive a medical home approach

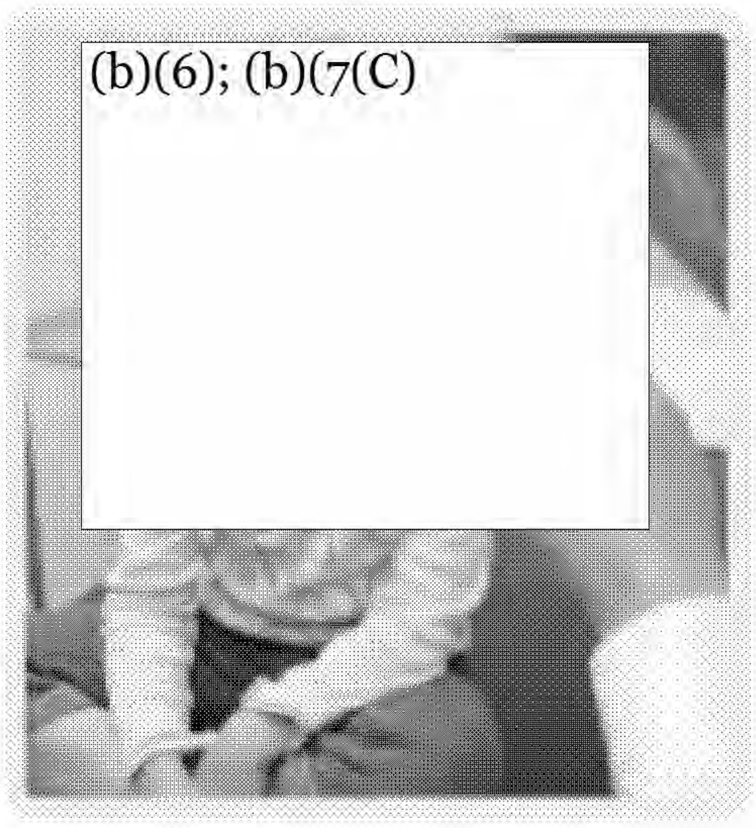
INDICATORS		
State Indicators	Colorado Baseline	Data Source
Percentage of children with a primary health care provider (birth to 14 years)	87.5% (2008)	Child Health Survey, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Percentage of families who (always/usually) feel like a partner in their child's health care (birth to 14 years)	69.2% (2008)	Child Health Survey, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Percentage of children receiving care arrangement and/or coordination from health care providers and/or related services (birth to 14 years)	28.5% (2008)	Child Health Survey, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

STORY BEHIND THE ACTION PLAN

In Colorado, the essential quality components of a medical home approach include accessible, family-centered, compassionate, continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, and culturally responsive care. It is a concept of quality health care that builds from:

- a team approach to coordinated health care services;
- partnership between families and providers;
- comprehensive medical, mental and oral health care; and
- the belief that families should be included in determining care and treatment options through mutual discussion and collaborative decision-making.[3]

In 2007, the Colorado General Assembly developed a state goal of increasing the number of children who receive care consistent with a medical home approach. There are a variety of initiatives focused on increasing access to and quality of a medical home. These include, but are not limited to, the Medical Home Initiative at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF), Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN), Colorado Medical Society (CMS), Colorado Child Health Care Access Program (CCHAP), Colorado Clinical Guidelines Collaborative (CCGC), and Colorado Family Voices. Additionally, there is an increased recognition by other child-serving programs that access to a medical home is important to the healthy development of young children. This increased focus on a medical home approach has also increased the need to better coordinate and align the various medical home efforts and messages, in order to further this result in a more concerted and cohesive manner.



ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY: Strengthen coordinated efforts of public and private stakeholders to support health and wellness through a medical home approach.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Coordinate the various medical home initiatives, projects, and supports that target young children.	"Medical Home Leadership Team" (exact name TBD) developed to guide coordination of medical home initiatives. State medical home plan and implementation schedule developed. Comprehensive report on progress and milestones of medical home initiatives developed by the "Medical Home Leadership Team" for the state legislature twice a year.	"Medical Home Leadership Team" created by March 31, 2010, and includes CDPHE, HCPF, CCIN, CMS, CCHAP, CCCC, Family Voices. Plan and implementation schedule developed by December 31, 2010. "Medical Home Leadership Team" report submitted to the state legislature in January and July of 2011 and 2012.	"Medical Home Leadership Team"—inclusive of CDPHE, HCPF, CCIN, CMS, CCHAP, CCCC, Family Voices, leadership provided by HCPF.
Develop consensus on and disseminate consistent messaging about a medical home approach to stakeholders, families, policymakers, and early childhood professionals.	Coordinated and consistent messaging developed, disseminated, and incorporated in a variety of messaging tools by all partners involved with the "Medical Home Leadership Team".	Consistent message(s) developed by August 31, 2010, and incorporated in partners materials, web sites, etc. by January 31, 2011.	"Medical Home Leadership Team"—inclusive of CDPHE, HCPF, CCIN, CMS, CCHAP, CCCC, Family Voices, leadership provided by HCPF.

STRATEGY: Promote and support use of standards for a medical home approach.

Actions	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Strengthen coordination between primary health care providers and other professionals who provide services for young children (e.g. public health, health care specialists, mental health, and health, early learning, home visitation, early intervention).	Annual report developed that highlights growth and outcomes of the four community Medical Home Action Teams and disseminated via the Medical Home Initiative web site and Advisory.	Annual reports developed by January 31, 2011, and January 31, 2012.	Colorado Medical Home Initiative—in collaboration with the "Medical Home Leadership Team".
Support consumer awareness and understanding of a medical home approach.	Medical home brochure for consumers disseminated via local Medical Home Action Teams, early childhood councils, public health professionals, and medical home partners. Training tools including videos, on-line trainings, and webinars developed and made available via the Medical Home Initiative web site.	Brochure developed by November 30, 2010, and disseminated throughout 2011. Training tools developed by December 31, 2011, and disseminated throughout 2012.	Colorado Medical Home Initiative—in collaboration with the "Medical Home Leadership Team".
Promote medical home as part of professional education programs and ongoing professional development for health care and other interested early childhood professionals.	Three modular curricula that provide an introduction to the medical home concept developed and made available.	Curricula available on CO TRAIN by September 30, 2010.	Colorado Medical Home Initiative—in collaboration with the "Medical Home Leadership Team".

Goal 1: Increase parent engagement and leadership in programs, child-serving systems, and policy boards

INDICATORS		
State Indicators	Colorado Baseline	Data Source
Percentage of families of young children who feel supported and engaged in their role as a child's first teacher.	To be determined	In need of development. (See ACTIONS on page 20)
Number of trained and active family leaders.	To be determined	A number of programs collect information on family leadership (e.g. Head Start, Part C early intervention, Statewide Parent Coalition, The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health). However, this data is not collected in a coordinated, unified method that allows for a population-based data point. (See ACTIONS on page 20)
Number of programs that have embedded the value and importance of family leadership in program and policy decision making (e.g. boards/councils that require family members as voting members, policies and procedures that require family-decision making partnerships between the family and the program).	To be determined	While many programs and initiatives embrace and support family leadership, this data is not collected in a coordinated, unified method that allows for a population-based data point. (See ACTIONS on page 20)

STORY BEHIND THE ACTION PLAN

A significant body of research indicates that when parents participate in their child's health care and education, the result is an improvement in child outcomes. The role of parents is pivotal to shaping development, values acquisition, and lifelong learning. Children also need to see their parents acting in larger social contexts, demonstrating that one can have an impact in a rapidly changing world.[16] Efforts to increase family involvement usually include encouraging parents to pursue at-home behaviors that facilitate development and learning as well as activities that support the parent-teacher and parent-health care provider relationship.[17] Parents will actively participate on behalf of their child when they:

- know that their participation is part of something successful;
- see that they can make a difference in their child's life;
- feel supported, respected and acknowledged for their time and efforts;
- receive hands on training and guidance; and
- have family supports such as food, child care, and transportation.[18]

The following elements constitute a road map of interactive and ongoing family engagement and have been adapted from the Harvard Family Research Project:[19]

- Family engagement is a shared responsibility in which early learning, health, mental health, and family support programs and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways and in which families are committed to actively supporting their child's healthy development.

- Family engagement is continuous across a child's life and entails changing parental roles as children move from birth through the early school years and across the variety of environments where a child develops and learns.

Colorado envisions a continuum that distinguishes the process, progress, and value of family engagement and involvement at the individual level to family leadership at the community and policy level (www.Coloradofamilyleadership.com). While the concepts of family engagement and family leadership have successfully been embedded in cross-sector efforts and there are many committed partnerships focused on various aspects of this continuum, the infrastructure has not been developed to actualize these concepts on a practical level.

(b)(6)

ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY: Provide tools and information to families to strengthen their own engagement and involvement in their children's lives.

Action	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Organize and disseminate messages targeted to parents/ families regarding the benefits of engagement and positive parenting.	www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org web site updated and marketing tools developed to promote parent and family use of this site.	Web site updated by August 31, 2010, and marketing tools developed by December 31, 2010	Marsico Institute for Early Learning and Literacy in collaboration with stakeholders
Identify and develop indicators and data collection processes to monitor and inform family engagement efforts.	Measurable state level indicators identified for this result.	Indicators and data sources identified by December 31, 2011	Colorado Head Start Collaboration Office and CDHE, in collaboration with stakeholders

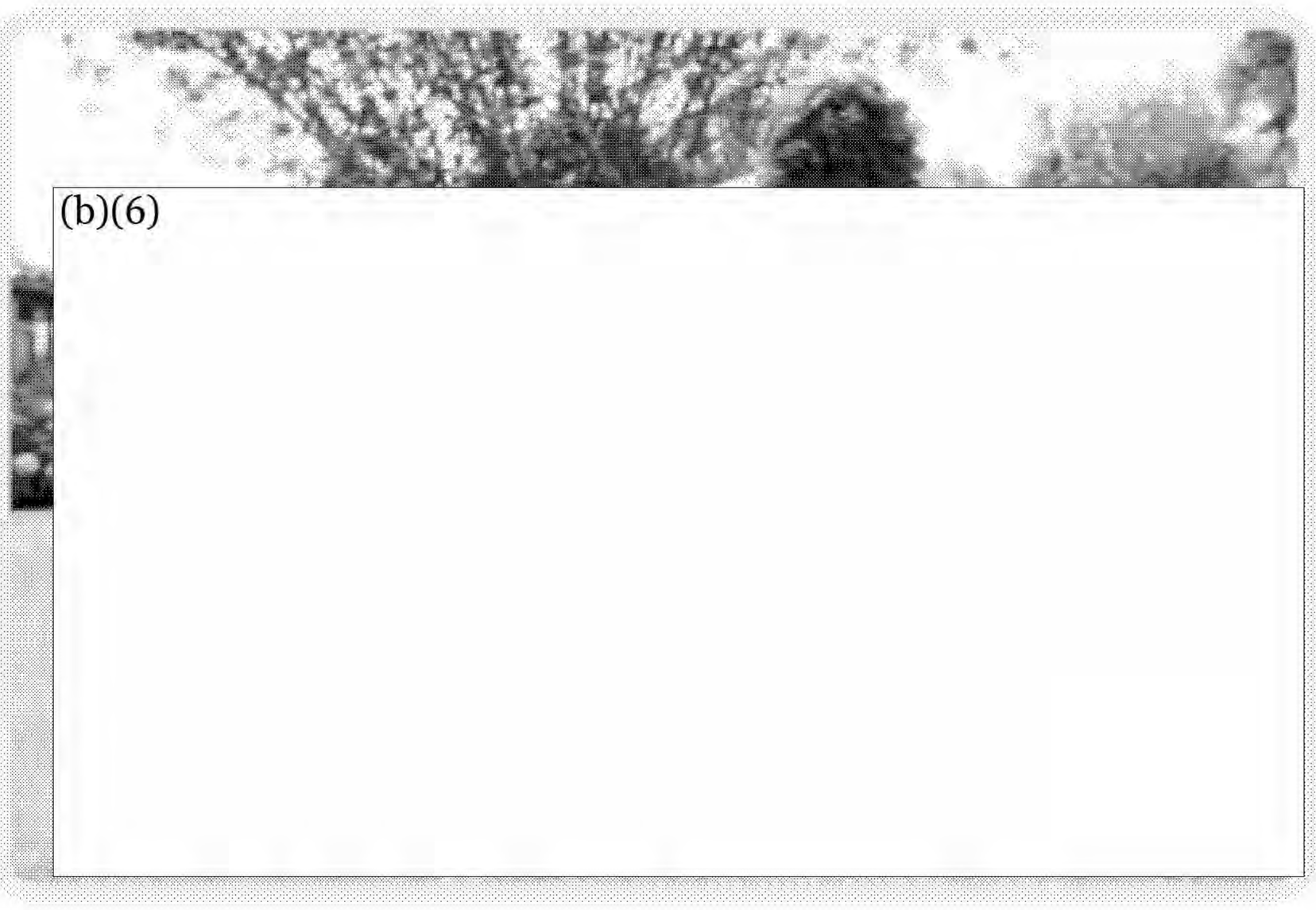
STRATEGY: Strengthen and support family leadership through effective training modules.

Action	Measures of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Re-establish the Colorado Family Leadership Coalition comprised of partners committed to advancing a family leadership initiative in Colorado.	Coalition norms, purpose, and meeting schedule developed.	Coalition established by December, 31, 2010	CDHE and the Colorado Head Start Collaboration Office
Develop consensus on and disseminate consistent messaging regarding the linkage and progression of family engagement and leadership.	Messaging resources and tools developed and available on the Colorado Family Leadership web site (www.ColoradoFamilyLeadership.com).	Messaging resources and tools are on the web site by June 30, 2011	Colorado Family Leadership Coalition
Develop a strategic plan for a statewide family leadership development initiative.	Strategic plan completed and includes activities, benchmarks, and time frames.	Strategic plan completed by June 30, 2011	Colorado Family Leadership Coalition
Define standards, indicators, and measurement tools for family leadership.	Report developed that outlines standards, indicators, and measurement tools for active family leadership.	Report developed by December 31, 2011	Colorado Family Leadership Coalition
Develop and implement a Family Leadership Registry for use by state, community, and policy-level partners.	Family Leadership Registry developed and functioning.	Registry developed and rolled by June 30, 2011	Colorado Family Leadership Coalition

ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY: Develop, promote, and support high quality professional development and formal education for adults who work with young children.

Actions	Measure(s) of Progress	Time Frame	Lead
Embed family partnership and engagement values and strategies into professional preparation and development programs for professionals working with young children (e.g. health, early learning, mental health, family support providers).	Design team established to develop family partnership and engagement training module(s). Family partnership and engagement training module(s) developed and disseminated through a variety of professional development initiatives including, but not limited to, Pyramid Plus Center, Medical Home, and Colorado Office of Professional Development	Design team established by December 31, 2010 Training module developed by December 31, 2011, and disseminated throughout 2012	Colorado Head Start Collaboration Office and CDPHE, in collaboration with stakeholders



Appendix

ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM

The **foundations** noted in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* function as critical systems building elements, essential to reducing the long-standing fragmentation of policies and programs serving young children and their families.[2]

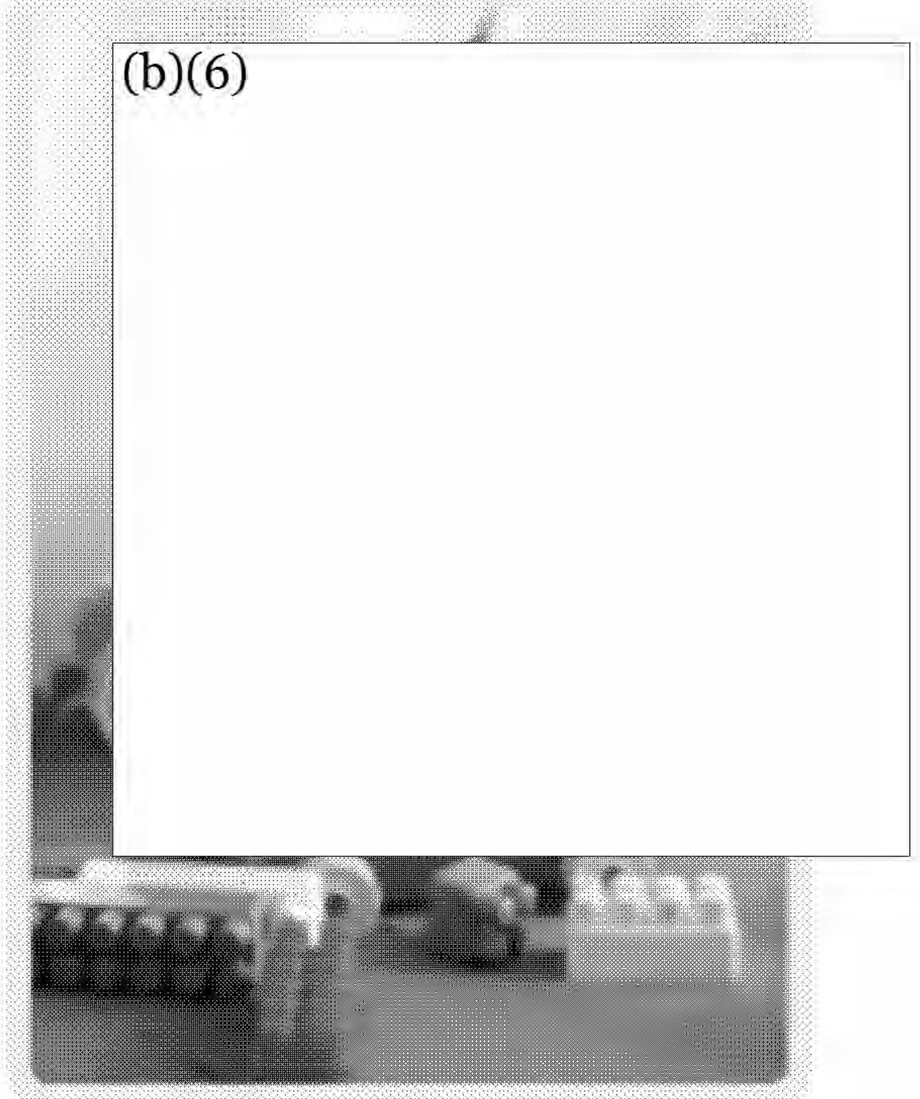
The foundations in the *Framework* include the following functions that support an early childhood system:

- Build and Support Partnerships
- Fund and Invest
- Change Policy
- Build Public Engagement
- Share Accountability
- Generate Education and Leadership Opportunities

Build and Support Partnerships

Young children and their families access supports and services from a variety of programs and providers. When the various organizations and agencies administering these programs work in a concerted approach, the result is more effective and efficient service delivery for children and families. In order to assure coordination, sustainability, and accountability of a comprehensive cross-sector system, both formal and informal organizational structures and agreements are necessary. There is no one single authority, leader, or structure that is solely responsible for the solution.

The concept of "collaborative governance"[3] offers a model for inclusive, deliberative, and consensus-oriented approaches to issues and solutions that involve multiple service sectors and systems. In February 2010, Governor Ritter signed an Executive Order creating the Early Childhood Leadership Commission in Colorado. The purpose of the Commission is to ensure and advance a comprehensive early childhood system for children from birth to age 8 and their families. The initial charge of the Commission is the development of an interagency data system to enhance the use of data and improve decision-making, alignment, and coordination among federally funded and state funded services and programs targeted to young children and their families. The Commission meets the requirements, outlined in the Federal Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, for a state council.



During the development of the *Framework in Action State Plan*, a less formalized and inclusive state level early childhood partnership emerged. This partnership welcomes all state-level, public and private partners who see themselves contributing towards the vision identified in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* and are committed to working in partnership to achieve the results identified in the *Framework in Action State Plan*. In 2010, the early childhood state partnership will meet quarterly to share progress on the state plan and strengthen existing partnerships while building new ones. The activities and outcomes of this state-level collaborative will support and inform the work of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission.

Colorado's state-wide system of local early childhood councils provides the local infrastructure for convening cross-sector community partners to identify, plan, and address systems change

needed to improve outcomes for young children and families within local communities. The Early Childhood Councils Advisory Team (ECCAT), established through legislation, provides a formal collaborative structure to support the advancement of a sustainable, high-quality statewide system of local councils. ECCAT, working in close partnership with the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, provides a mechanism for strong state and local systems connection and ensures a locally informed state-level agenda around early childhood issues. Finally, the Early Childhood Councils Leadership Alliance, a learning organization comprised of local council coordinators, provides a mechanism for cross-pollination of local community systems-building successes as well as the identification of statewide barriers to comprehensive early childhood system building.

Fund and Invest

Financing is a core systems-building element. Ongoing actions needed at the state-level include the alignment and coordination of existing funding resources and the generation of new funding streams. Colorado's efforts in this arena include the development of an interactive Early Childhood Cost Model in 2007. The tool started with a financial scan of all federal and state public dollars directed to services, supports and infrastructure across a comprehensive early childhood system. The Cost Model evolved into an interactive tool designed to inform ongoing discussions and decisions around the development of comprehensive early childhood supports, services, and infrastructure.

Change Policy

In order to maximize efficiencies, coordination, and results across an early childhood system, an understanding of real and perceived policy gaps and barriers is needed. In 2005 and again in 2007, Colorado conducted an audit of state rules, regulations, and statutes that impact young children, in collaboration with the national Policy Matters project. These audits, in addition to policy comparisons across states developed by national advocacy organizations, help identify areas for potential policy change. Several formal collaborative entities exist to identify and address early childhood related policy change including the previously described Early Childhood Leadership Commission and Early Childhood Councils Advisory Team. Additionally, the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission, created in 2009 as a 10-member legislative body, is designed to involve the Colorado General Assembly in the development of early childhood policy. These three entities, working in concert, will ensure a well-informed and effective early childhood policy agenda for Colorado.

Build Public Engagement

Public and political understanding of, and support for, comprehensive early childhood issues is necessary in order to build support for an adequately funded comprehensive early childhood system including both infrastructure and service delivery. Examples of Colorado's efforts to build public engagement include several on-going strategies to inform families, providers, and the general public about the importance of comprehensive early childhood supports, services, and infrastructure. These include a quarterly Early Childhood e-newsletter, the quarterly Partners in Prevention Family e-newsletter, regular Progress & Possibilities e-blasts to stakeholders, and an annual symposium highlighting early childhood systems-building work throughout Colorado. Additionally, the development of an early childhood information clearinghouse located on-line at www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org provides a mechanism for building awareness and sharing information among stakeholders and the public. Additional actions for building public engagement include the exploration of social marketing strategies in supporting stakeholder and public engagement.

Generate Education and Leadership Opportunities

Early childhood professionals need the knowledge, skills, and supports to work effectively with and on behalf of families and children. While there are multiple initiatives within and across the sectors focused on professional development, better coordination and broader dissemination of opportunities is warranted. Examples of Colorado's efforts to support wider dissemination of educational and training opportunities include the Colorado Office of Professional Development; CO TEACH, hosted by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, that serves as a platform for posting, registering, and tracking professional courses; Qualistar Early Learning's

Child Care Resource and Referral network, and several partner web sites that post cross-sector trainings and professional development. Additionally, families provide a critical perspective as consumers of early childhood supports and services and therefore are important partners in developing and implementing changes at the program, community, and policy level. Mechanisms for building family leadership skills are needed.

Share Accountability

The development and use of standards is core to understanding, measuring, and improving outcomes for children and families. Two specific examples of standards development relevant to early childhood are derived from the education and health sectors. The P-3 Content Standards approved by the Colorado State Board of Education as part of Senate Bill 08-212, Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids, are part of an update and alignment of core standards from pre-school through 12th grade. The Medical Home Standards, established as part of the Medical Home Initiative, describe essential aspects and components of quality health care provided through a medical home approach.

Sharing, understanding, and tracking data are essential to monitoring and ensuring accountability. Multiple public and private agencies and organizations provide services, supports, and resources for young children and families. Each entity may collect child, program, and/or systems data. A unified, interagency data system would measure progress and inform planning, policy development, and funding of early childhood supports, services, and infrastructure. House Bill 08-1364 provides foundational support to this effort by convening a Data Protocol Development Council to assist in designing and implementing an interdepartmental data protocol in order to facilitate information sharing across state agencies. The work of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission to create an interagency data system will build from these existing data efforts.

Footnotes

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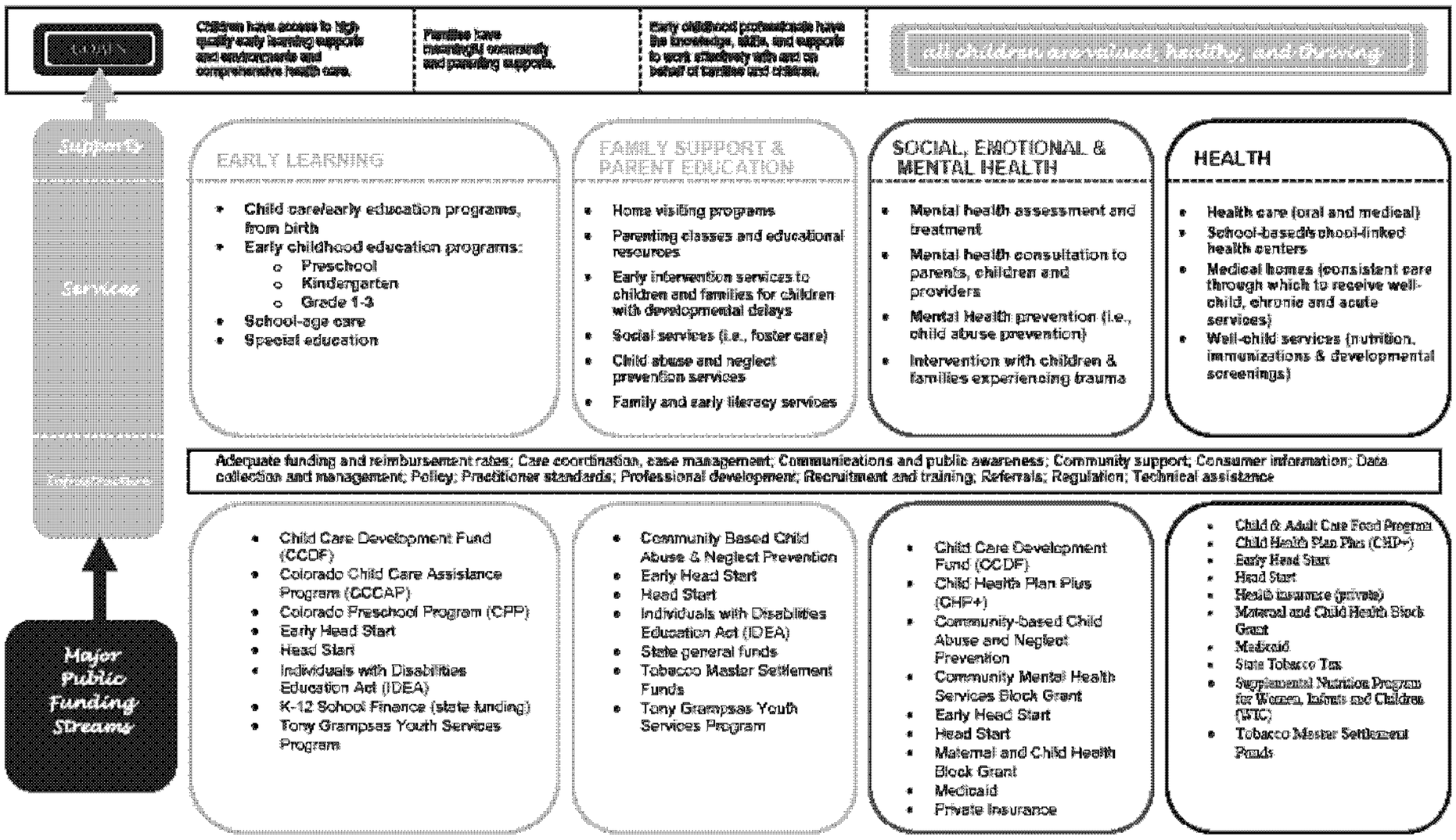
Appendix B
Early Childhood Colorado Framework


GOALS
Children have access to high quality early learning supports and environments and comprehensive health care.
Families have meaningful community and parenting supports.
Early childhood professionals have the knowledge, skills, and supports to work effectively with and on behalf of families and children.
all children are valued, healthy, and thriving
Supports for
Services
Infrastructure
Major Public Funding Streams
EARLY LEARNING
Child care/early education programs, from birth
Early childhood education programs:
Preschool
Kindergarten
Grade 1-3
School-age care
Special education
FAMILY SUPPORT & PARENT EDUCATION
Home visiting programs
Parenting classes and educational resources
Early intervention services to children and families for children with developmental delays
Social services (i.e., foster care)
Child abuse and neglect prevention services
Family and early literacy services
SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH
Mental health assessment and treatment
Mental health consultation to parents, children and providers
Mental Health prevention (i.e., child abuse prevention)
Intervention with children & families experiencing trauma
HEALTH
Health care (oral and medical)
School-based/school-linked health centers
Medical homes (consistent care through which to receive well-child, chronic and acute services)
Well-child services (nutrition, immunizations & developmental screenings)
Adequate funding and reimbursement rates; Care coordination, case management; Communications and public awareness; Community support; Consumer information; Data collection and management; Policy; Practitioner standards; Professional development; Recruitment and training; Referrals; Regulation; Technical assistance
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)
Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)
Colorado Preschool Program (CPP)
Early Head Start
Head Start
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
K-12 School Finance (state funding)
Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program
Community Based Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention
Early Head Start
Head Start
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
State general funds
Tobacco Master Settlement Funds
Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)
Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+)
Community-based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention
Community Mental Health Services Block Grant
Early Head Start
Head Start
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant
Medicaid
Private Insurance
Child & Adult Care Food Program
Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+)
Early Head Start
Head Start
Health insurance (private)
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant
Medicaid
State Tobacco Tax
Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
Tobacco Master Settlement Funds

Appendix C
Contributions to Colorado Early Childhood System from Philanthropic Sector (2007 & 2010)

FUNDERS (Financial Commitment to Early Childhood)	2007	2010
Anschutz Family Foundation	98200	123400
Buell Foundation	4421732	7038511
Chamber Family Fund	365375	221850
Colorado Health Foundation	1380435	4612579
Daniels Fund	1013429	772000
Gates Foundation	65000	602000
Johnson Foundation	279000	253000
Kenneth King Foundation	524500	11000
Merage Foundation	0	1000000
Rose Community Foundation	1432502	1030000
Mile High United Way	3315834	2415000
United Way's from Weld, Larimer, Eagle River	725277	867530
The Colorado Trust	937177	1439790
Marsico Family Foundation	0	1500000
Piton Foundation	1015000	0
Boettcher Foundation	900000	1250000
	Total 2007	**Total 2010**
	$16.473.461	$23.136.660

Appendix D
Glossary of Programs

Glossary of Early Childhood Programs, Services and Funding Streams

Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) Screening: The ABCD Project is a national effort to increase the use of standardized developmental screening tools in health care settings to facilitate early identification and referral. The program aims to assist practices in implementing an office process for standardized development screening; help practices learn about opportunities to obtain reimbursement for developmental screening; and promote early intervention and referral. Funding for the project is provided by the Maternal Child Health Bureau Block Grant and is administered through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Board of Cooperative Education (BOCES): BOCES is an extension of local school districts that provide children with educational services in Colorado. By combining services rooted in cooperative, service-driven philosophy, BOCES helps maintain Colorado's commitment to its students and school districts with supports and services. These include special education, professional development, fiscal operations, alternative schools and programs, standards and assessment reporting, grant management, and other services.

Boettcher Teachers Program: The Boettcher Teachers Program is a fellowship program providing dual licensure and master's degrees to highly-skilled educators willing to make a commitment to teaching in low income communities for five years. The Boettcher Program offers fellows special training to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students. This intense preparation promotes the development of Colorado's workforce and supports students in need of highly-trained educators.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CCAP): This program provides reimbursement for nutritious meals and snacks served to children in child care and family child care homes through non-profit sponsoring agencies, Head Start programs, after school programs, homeless shelters, and adult day care centers. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment administers the program and serves approximately 33,000 children and adults in Colorado.

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF): CCDF assists low-income families in obtaining child care so they can work or attend training/education. The program also improves the quality of child care, and promotes coordination among early childhood development and afterschool programs. CCDF is authorized by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act and the Social Security Act.

Child Care Automated Tracking System (CHATS): All counties must enter child care subsidy information into the Child Care Automated Tracking System, which collects and tracks background information, eligibility, redetermination, changes to eligibility, days authorized, and days billed. CHATS automatically calculates eligibility for households based upon the information entered. CHATS also tracks provider payments and ensures that each provider has a unique identifier, thus minimizing potential double-billing situations. In addition, CHATS tracks nonpayment of fee closures and follows the parent should they attempt to receive benefits in another county.

Child Care Subsidy/Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP): CCAP provides child care subsidies to low income working parents. Counties determine eligibility requirements based on the Federal Poverty Level. CCAP is administered through county departments of social services

under direction of the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care. Funding sources for CCAP are a mix of federal, state, and county dollars, as well as parent fees. The program currently serves about one in ten eligible families, with a wait list of more than 5,000 Colorado children.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHP+): This program is administered through the Colorado Department of Health Care, Policy, and Financing and serves children under 205% of the Federal Poverty Level who do not qualify for Medicaid. CHP+ currently serves approximately 70,000 children and 1,200 pregnant women in Colorado.

Clayton Educare Center: Clayton Educare focuses on the critical areas of children's growth: trust, security, independence, and initiative. The center supports families and their youngest members by offering prenatal programs for pregnant mothers and high quality care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Their commitment to health and well being extends to the child's family and caregivers. Each year, Clayton works with over 300 young children and their families, offering diverse and research-based program options including home-based, center-based, combination on-site, and collaborations within the community.

Colorado Bright Beginnings: The Bright Beginnings program provides families with information and connections to community resources and support. Home visits through this program promote positive parent-child interactions and relationship building; health, safety and access to health insurance; identifying and finding quality childcare; early brain development in all domains; the importance of reading to children from birth; and interactive games parents can play with their children to stimulate growth and development.

Colorado Early Care and Education Funders Network: The Colorado Early Care and Education Funders Network (ECE Funders) is an information-sharing and strategic planning group that has been meeting since 1996 and is currently made up of approximately fifteen foundations that fund in Denver and across Colorado. Each of the participating foundations has demonstrated an interest in early childhood development by awarding grants for services for very young children and supporting aspects of the infrastructure and development of the early childhood system. The ECE Funders meet on a regular basis to share information on current research, best practices and current activities in the state.

Colorado Children's Trust Fund (CCTF): The Colorado Children's Trust Fund provides leadership and support to promote the establishment, implementation and expansion of state and local programs that reduce the occurrences of child abuse and neglect in Colorado. Administered through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, CCTF serves as match for the Community-Based Grants for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Colorado Preschool Program (CPP): The CPP was created in 1988 to serve children with high needs ages three to five. Considered one of Colorado's flagship programs for early care and education with 168 out of 178 school districts participating in FY 2008-09. Public schools may subcontract with Head Start and community-based agencies to supplement program services. Program evaluation data show that children participating in CPP demonstrate reduced grade retention and increased long-term standardized test scores.

Colorado Trails System (TRAILS): TRAILS is a child welfare data system that contains all provider information, including license status and addresses. The system maintains separation of duties by county eligibility staff maintaining client information, while the business office enters

billing data and issues the payments. The business office cannot modify authorizations to raise the payment amounts; conversely, eligibility staff cannot process and pay providers.

Denver Preschool Program (DPP): DPP is funded through a voter approved initiative to provide tuition credit for parents and quality improvement resources to preschools. DPP is open and voluntary for all Denver children the year before they are eligible for Kindergarten. The amount of tuition credit varies according to family income and size as well as the preschool's quality rating. DPP operates in more than 550 preschool classrooms across the Denver Metro area. DPP offers full-day and half-day programs in addition to options for three and four year olds.

Early Childhood Councils (ECCs): Serving fifty-five counties, Colorado's thirty early childhood councils provide the foundation necessary for agencies and service providers to work together to build an infrastructure to deliver services and supports to young children and their families. Colorado's investment in the system of local councils is premised on the notion that infusing local communities with resources for the creation and maintenance of a coordinated system of services (across all four domains of early learning, health, mental health and family support) helps reduce duplication and leverage additional investments into the system.

Early Head Start (EHS) Home-Based Services: This is one of four service options available to EHS families. Programs offering the home-based option must meet the level of service standards set by the Head Start Program Performance Standards, including weekly home visits and bi-monthly socializations (parent-child play and interaction meetings), as well as other comprehensive services and referrals.

Even Start Family Literacy: The Even Start Literacy program aims to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving educational opportunities of Colorado's low income families through the integration of adult literacy, early childhood education, and parenting support into a unified family literacy program. Even Start is authorized under Title I, Part B of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and is administered through the Colorado Department of Education.

Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC): Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC) is a coalition of business leaders, nonprofits and foundations who are committed to making early childhood care, education, health, and parenting among the highest priorities of Colorado's public and private investments. Focusing on children between the ages of zero to eight, EPIC targets the youngest population in order to see the greatest impact.

Family Leadership Coalition (FLC): The FLC has envisioned a strategic plan for a statewide family leadership development initiative which defines standards, indicators, and measurement tools for family leadership. The Coalition also develops consensus on and disseminates consistent messaging regarding the linkage and progression of family engagement and leadership.

Family Resource Centers: Family resource centers provide a safe and accessible place for families to connect with comprehensive, coordinated services that help strengthen families and promote self-reliant behavior. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Prevention Services Division supports twenty four community-based resource centers.

Framework in Action State Plan/ Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework): The Framework in Action State Plan and the Early Childhood Colorado Framework are companion documents developed in 2008 as a resources and guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado. State and local early childhood stakeholders have used the *Framework*

to help identify needs, guide planning and decision-making, and build partnerships. The *Framework* recognizes the needs of the whole child and family by including outcomes that cut across the early learning, family support and parent education, mental health, and health domains.

Government Data Advisory Board (GDAB): The Government Data Advisory Board was created through HB 09-1285. Its primary mission is to provide recommendations and advise the State Chief Information Officer regarding the ongoing development, maintenance, and implementation of the interdepartmental data protocol.

Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT): The Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT) is responsible for the operation and delivery of information and communications technology (ICT) services and innovation across all Executive Branch agencies in the State of Colorado. Our mission is to increase the effectiveness of government through the use of shared information and technology. As the enterprise provider of ICT, OIT oversees technology initiatives at the state level, recommending strategies and maximizing efficiencies of service delivery in a cost-effective manner through the application of enterprise technology solutions. Our enterprise approach also enables the agile delivery of new applications to state agencies that improve citizen access to government services while increasing accountability and transparency.

Head Start/ Early Head Start (federal): Head Start is a national preschool program for low-income families. Federal Head Start grants are made directly to local public or private non-profit agencies through regional offices of the federal Administration on Children and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services. Services include education, health, nutrition and other socio-developmental services. Parental participation is required and federal law requires a community contribution to each Head Start Program. Early Head Start provides services to pregnant women and children birth through two years old living in families at or below the Federal Poverty Level.

Healthy Steps for Young Children: This program promotes close relationship between health care professionals and parents in addressing the physical, emotional, and intellectual development of children from birth to age three. Home visits by a Healthy Steps Specialist focus on infant care, breast or bottle feeding, and understanding infant behavior.

Help Me Grow (HMG): Building Connecticut Help Me Grow model that identifies at-risk children and effectively links them and their families to services, Colorado is dedicated to developing an integrated identification, resource, and referral system for families, providers, and programs. HMG will support access to health, educational, and developmental resources; improve efficiencies; leverage existing resources; and identify and address gaps for a coordinated system.

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY): HIPPY is a home visiting federal model meeting the evidence-based criteria of the Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting program. In Colorado, the program is supported through the Colorado Parent and Child Foundation and serves parents with low educational achievement levels who lack the skills to prepare their children for success in school. Services target teen parents, parents whose first language is not English, rural families, and areas where low academic performance is prevalent. HIPPY is positioned to help states and communities meet goals of increasing school readiness among vulnerable populations.

Learning Management System (LMS): A learning management system is a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, and reporting of training programs, classroom and online events, e-learning programs, and training content. The LMS would use a tiered set of

performance-based competencies, track data on early learning professionals through a registry, provide easy access to quality and approved professional development opportunities, and network with other systems and other professionals in the early learning field.

Maternal and Child Health Block Grant: The block grant aims to improve the health of all mothers and children, including those with special health care needs. The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant is administered through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Prevention Services and serves approximately 222,600 children ages one to twenty two and pregnant women.

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV): Colorado's Affordable Care Act MIECHV Program supports the implementation and expansion of evidence-based home visiting models for pregnant women and families for pregnant women and families with children from birth to age five. In Colorado, evidence-based models include Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), Parents as Teachers (PAT), Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), Healthy Steps for Young Children and Early Head Start Home-Based Program.

Medicaid: Medicaid is administered through the Colorado Department of Health Care, Policy, and Financing and serves children ages birth through five and pregnant mothers under 133% Federal Poverty Level. Colorado currently serves approximately 300,000 children and 7,900 mothers.

Mental Health Assessment and Treatment: Mental Health Assessment and Treatment programs are administered through the Colorado Department of Human Services and provide services such as assessment and treatment for children with severe mental health needs. This program serves approximately 3,000 children in the state.

Mental Health Consultation: This program funds Master's-level clinicians to deliver services through early care and education programs to staff, parents, and children. The Mental Health Consultation program employs one full time employee at seventeen sites throughout the state and is administered through the Colorado Department of Human Services.

National Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (NCSEFEL): The NCSEFEL works to facilitate and strengthen the capacity of Head Start programs throughout the nation by developing evidence-based training and technical assistance materials. The foundation supports and improves the emotional and social outcomes of children by distributing these materials and providing necessary assistance.

Nurse Family Partnership (NFP): NFP's maternal health program introduces vulnerable first-time parents to maternal and child health nurses to support a healthy pregnancy improve the child's health and development and attain economic self-sufficiency. The model provides valuable knowledge and support throughout pregnancy and until babies reach two years of age. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment administers the program and serves over 2,500 women, children, and families in Colorado.

Parents as Teachers (PAT): This model serves pregnant mothers and their children from birth to age five through a comprehensive package of services aimed to increase parent knowledge of early childhood development. PAT aims to increase parent practices, help identify developmental delays and health issues, prevent child abuse and neglect, and increase children's school readiness and success. The program is administered in thirty five counties and serves approximately 2,700 children and families.

Part B, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Part B serves children with disabilities ages three to twenty one. Part B services are overseen by the Colorado Department of Education and implemented by local school districts. Educational services under Part B are designed and provided through the Individualized Educational Program process (IEP).

Part C/Early Intervention Colorado, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Part C supports a comprehensive, coordinated, early intervention services for infants and toddlers at risk for developmental delays from birth through age tow. The Colorado Department of Human Services, Division for Developmental Disabilities, is the lead agency for implementation. Services are designed and delivered through an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) and focus on supporting the family in meeting the developmental needs of the child.

Preschool to Postsecondary Alignment Act (CAP4K): This Colorado education reform initiative, signed into law in 2008, lays the foundation for a seamless and aligned preschool to postsecondary education system. Through setting new standards and assessments, CAP4K will create the opportunity for all students to all students to graduate high school with the knowledge they need for the 21st century global economy.

Providers Advancing School Outcomes (PASO): The PASO Project aims to ensure the school readiness of Latino children, birth to five years of age through increasing the quality of early learning services. PASO also strives to increase parental involvement and effectiveness with their children's early learning at home and facilitates the development of a community-based training model for informal child care providers through resource sharing and local planning.

Promoting Safe and Stable Communities: Promoting Safe and Stable Communities provides a variety of family preservation and support services to families in times of need or crisis. Administered through the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Welfare, the program provides services in thirty four counties and one Indian reservation.

Pyramid Plus Center: The Pyramid Plus Center works to improve the social and emotional competence and inclusion of young children through the Pyramid Plus Approach: embedded inclusion practices along the entire developmental continuum. The goal of the center is to increase awareness of evidence-based, early childhood social emotional and inclusive practices in early care and education settings, including family care and in-home providers.

Qualistar Colorado: is a non-profit that provides free child care referrals to parents looking for child care and assessments of child care programs throughout. Qualistar partners with parents through a statewide network of local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to help them find quality child care that best meets their child's needs. Through a 4-Star Qualistar Rating™ and accompanying quality improvement tools and resources, the organization collaborates with early childhood education centers and family child care home settings to improve the quality of care they provide in order to ensure all children have quality early learning experiences.

School Readiness Quality Improvement Program: This program is designed to improved the school readiness of students ages birth to five who are in child care programs or public elementary schools receiving Title I funding. The School Readiness Quality improvement program gives $2.2 million of federal Child Care Development Funds annually to local Early Childhood Councils. Colorado currently has fourteen Early Childhood Councils participating in the program.

Strengthening Families: The Strengthening Families is a systematic approach to child abuse prevention. It reaches a large number of children and is proven to promote optimal development through the prevention of child abuse. Supports are universally available, focused on development and growth, and is delivered through prevention and family support agents.

Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): WIC serves to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk. The program provides nutritious foods to supplement diet, information on healthy eating habits, and referrals to health care. There are 116 clinics throughout the state that provide WIC services and is administered through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH): TEACH helps increase the education levels of Colorado's early childhood educators by providing college scholarships. By enabling higher education students to more easily gain their childhood educator credentials, TEACH prepares teachers while aiming to decrease turnover rates in childhood education sectors.

Teaching Strategies GOLD: Teaching Strategies GOLD is an assessment system that helps provide observation-based insight into individual children's progress that considers the entire experience of a child. Through this assessment, teachers can work in partnership with parents to provide students with the best support for their early childhood education.

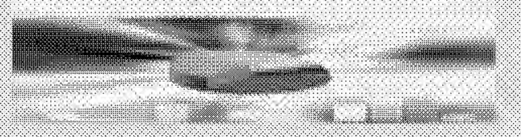
Tony Grampsas Youth Services (TGYS): The Tony Grampsas Youth Services program provides funding to community-based organizations that serve children, youth, and their families with evidence-based programming. The statutory goals of the TGYS program are to reduce youth crime and violence and to prevent child abuse and neglect. The Colorado Department of Health and Environment administers the program and is projected to serve approximately 6,500 children and families in FY2011-12.

Universal Application: The universal application is a project under the Early Childhood Universal Application Subcommittee of the Government Data Advisory Board. In accordance with HB10-1028, the subcommittee is responsible for making recommendations to the Chief Information Officer and the Advisory Board for creating and implementing a universal application to be used by all state agencies and school districts for applications for programs related to early childhood care and educations.

Appendix E
Overview of SLDS Design

PROVIDE

SchoolView™ Performance Platform



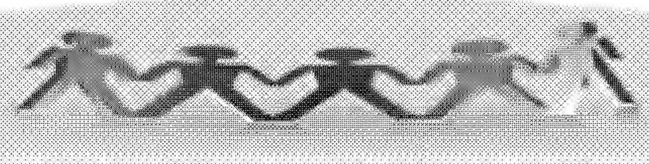
Interactive portals provide parents, students, educators, policymakers and researchers access to performance information, online content and collaboration tools to inform decisions and improve student performance.

PERFORM

Knowledge Management Capacity

Multiple stakeholders use, learn, and leverage information to drive increased student performance through professional development, innovative programs and improved instructional practices.

LINK

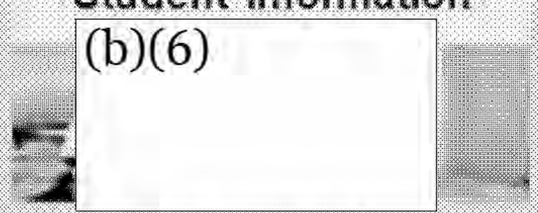


Cross Agency Interoperability

Efficient and effective data exchange exists across agencies (human services, K-12, higher education, labor, corrections) and levels (district, state, federal) to promote accountability , inform policy and ensure a holistic view of student success.

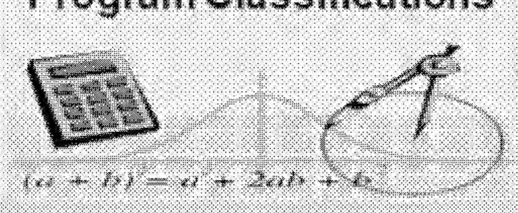
CAPTURE

Student Information



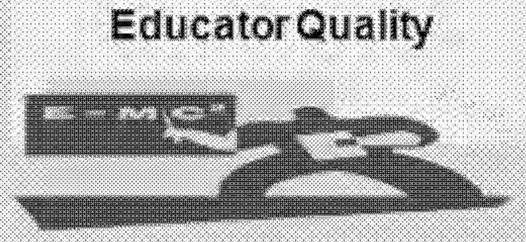
Student data is captured from early childhood through college to guide educational decision-making at all levels, classroom to statehouse.

Program Classifications



Information about educational settings, courses taken and interventions implemented share common definitions to link program information to student performance.

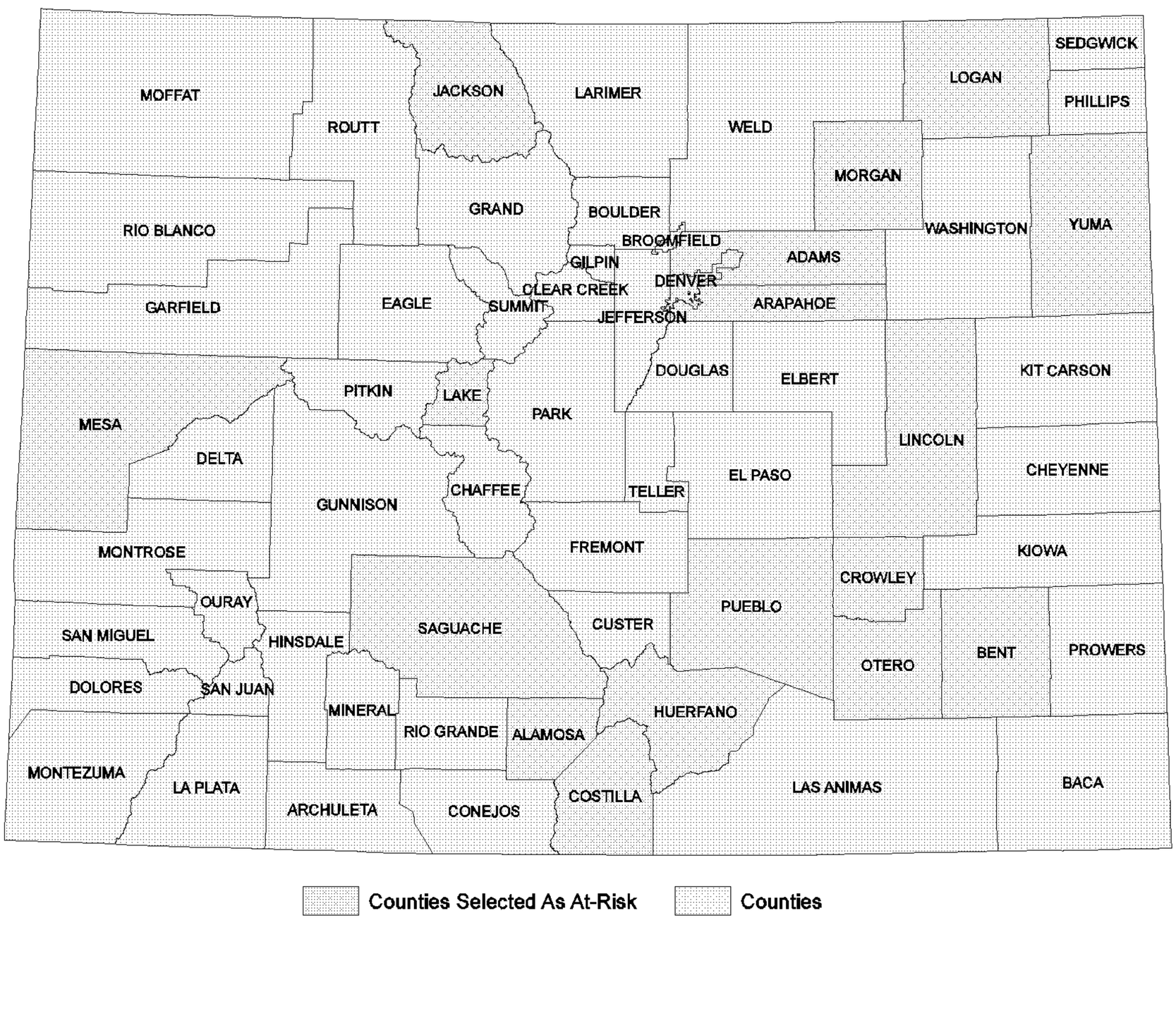
Educator Quality



Educators have a unique identifier that links their training, development and effectiveness to student performance.

Appendix F
Methodology and Maps for Identifying High Needs Places and Programs

High Needs Places Methodology



A spreadsheet was developed listing all 64 counties in Colorado and the eight indicators used to determine risk. Counties were divided into urban, rural, and frontier categories as defined by the metropolitan statistical areas of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
Within each geographic category, the counties that ranked in the bottom four for each indicator were flagged. Counties were then ranked based on the number of flags they received. The majority of counties had between zero and three flags for all indicators. Because a natural cutoff point appeared between three and four flags, counties that received four or more flags for all indicators were defined as "at-risk" counties. Using this approach, 18 Colorado counties fell into the "at-risk" category: seven frontier counties, six rural counties and five urban counties. Taken together, these counties account for 43.7 percent of the state's child population between birth and age 5.

Indicator Descriptions
Geographic Designations. All indicators were defined using rates or percentages, which are appropriate for comparison. However, indicators for similar counties (based on population size) were compared to each other, rather than compared to all counties to avoid misrepresentation of the distribution due to

population variance. Counties were divided into urban, rural, and frontier categories as defined by the metropolitan statistical areas of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Of Colorado's 64 counties, 17 (26%) are urban, 24 (38%) are rural, and 23 (36%) are frontier.

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visitor Program Statewide Needs Assessment Risk Category. In order to fulfill requirements necessary to receive FY 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA) Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program funding, states had to conduct and submit a statewide needs assessment report. The data report identifies Colorado's "at-risk" communities for purposes of the assessment. The federal guidance instructed states to determine "communities with concentrations of: premature birth, low birth weight infants, and infant mortality, including infant death due to neglect, or other indicators of at-risk prenatal, maternal, newborn, or child health; poverty; crime; domestic violence; high rates of high school dropouts; substance abuse; unemployment; or child maltreatment." Counties were ranked as low, moderate, and high risk based on the presence of these indicators. These results were included as one indicator used in identifying at-risk counties in the Early Learning Challenge Grant application.

1. Children in Low-Income Families. The percentage of children ages birth through 5 years who lived in low-income families in 2010, as estimated by the 2010 American Community Survey. "Low-income" is defined as annual household income that is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, or about $44,000 for a family of four in 2010. See map below.

2. Speaks Language Other than English at Home. Number of persons 5 years and older who sometimes or always speak another language other than English at home divided by the total population surveyed. Five –year estimates obtained from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (2005 – 2009). See map below.

3. Minority Children. The percentage of children ages birth through 4 years who were identified as belonging to racial or ethnic groups other than non-Hispanic white on the 2010 U.S. Census.

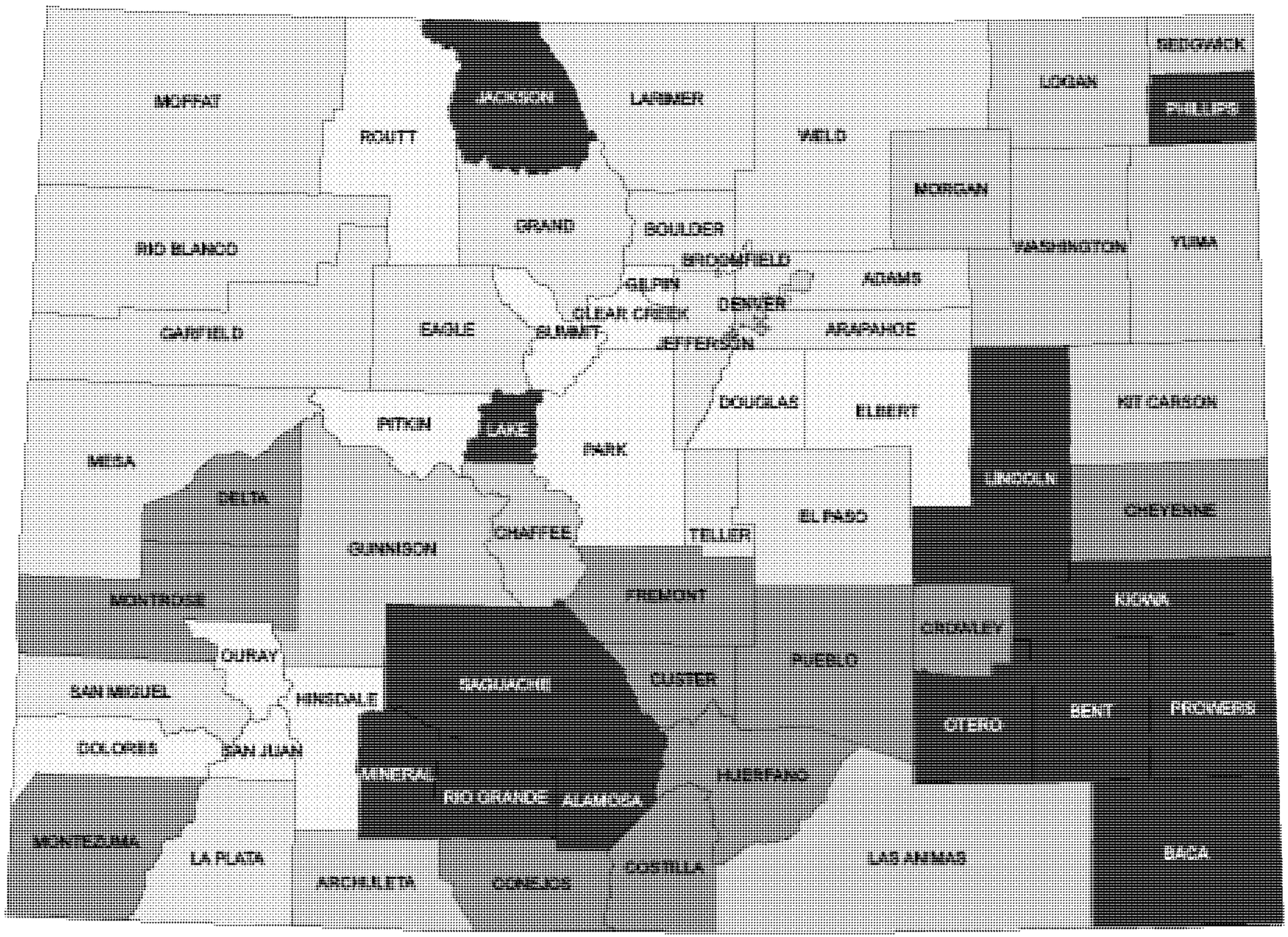
4. Individual Family Service Plan. Number of children birth through 3 years of age with an Individual Family Service Plan divided by the total number of children birth through 3 years of age. Data provided by the Colorado Department of Human Services (October 1, 2009). Regional data provided for all counties except Adams, Denver, Larimer, Mesa, Pueblo, and Weld. See map below.

5. Children with Mental Health/Behavioral Issues. Number of children 1 through 14 years of age with mental health/behavioral issues divided by the number of children 1 through 14 years of age whose parents responded to this survey question (excludes unknowns and refusals). Health statistics regional data provided by the Colorado Child Health Survey, Health Statistics Section, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (2008 – 2010). See map below.

6. Children in Foster Care. The percent of children under the age of 5 that were in at least one day of foster care placement during the year (Fiscal Year 2010-2011). This number includes kinship care. Data provided by the Division of Child Welfare Services, Colorado Department of Human Services. See map below.

7. Eligible but not Enrolled in Health Insurance. Uninsured children (ages 0-8) eligible but not enrolled in CHP+ or Medicaid and newly eligible for CHP+, Colorado, 2009. Colorado Health Institute's analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. See map below

Children in Low-Income Families

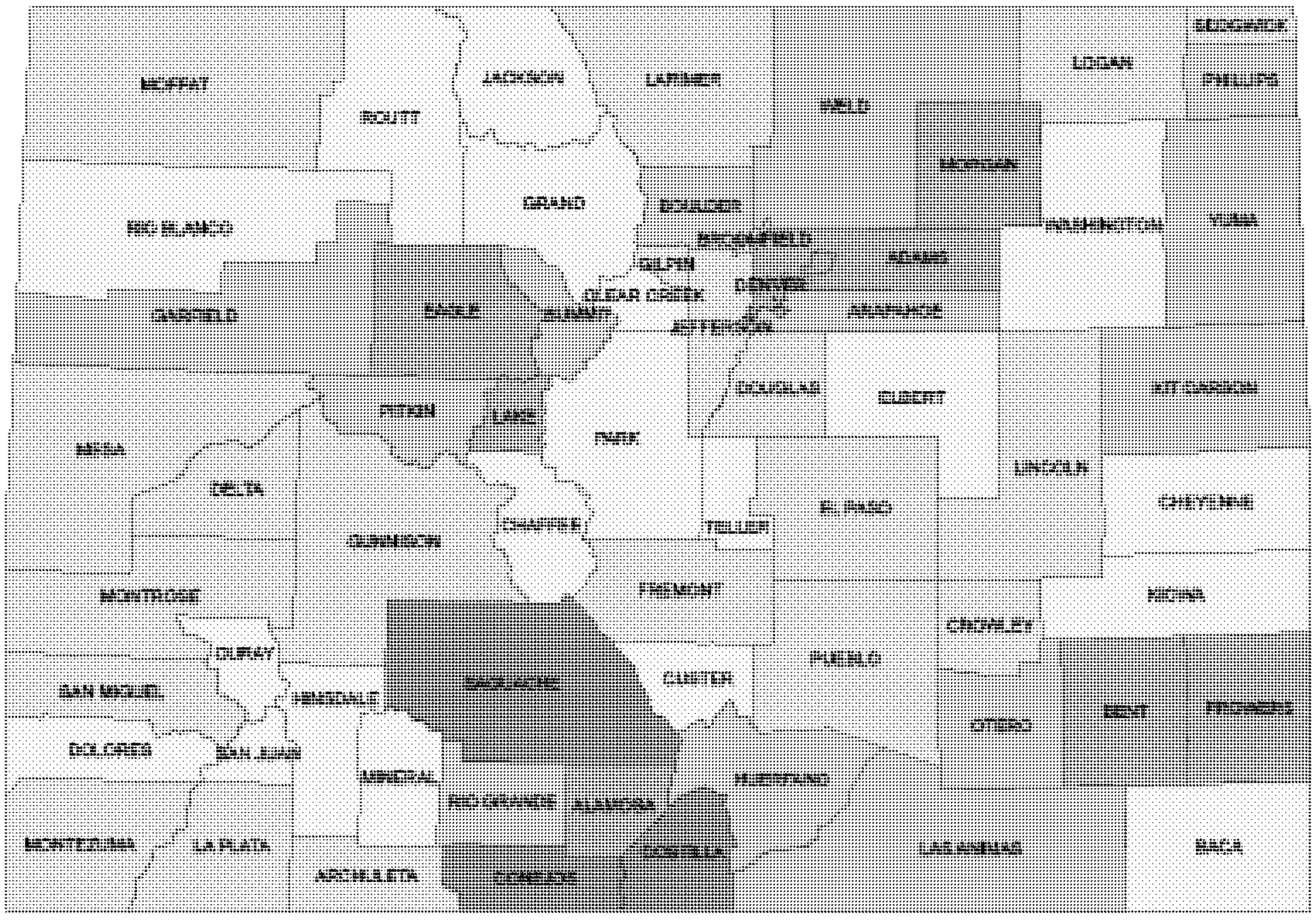


Percent of Children Under 6 in Low-Income Families

- 0% - 23%
- 24% - 43%
- 44% - 55%
- 56% - 65%
- 66% - 85%

The percentage of children ages birth through 5 years who lived in low-income families in 2010, as estimated by the 2010 American Community Survey. "Low-income" is defined as annual household income that is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, or about $44,000 for a family of four in 2010.

Speaks Language Other than English at Home

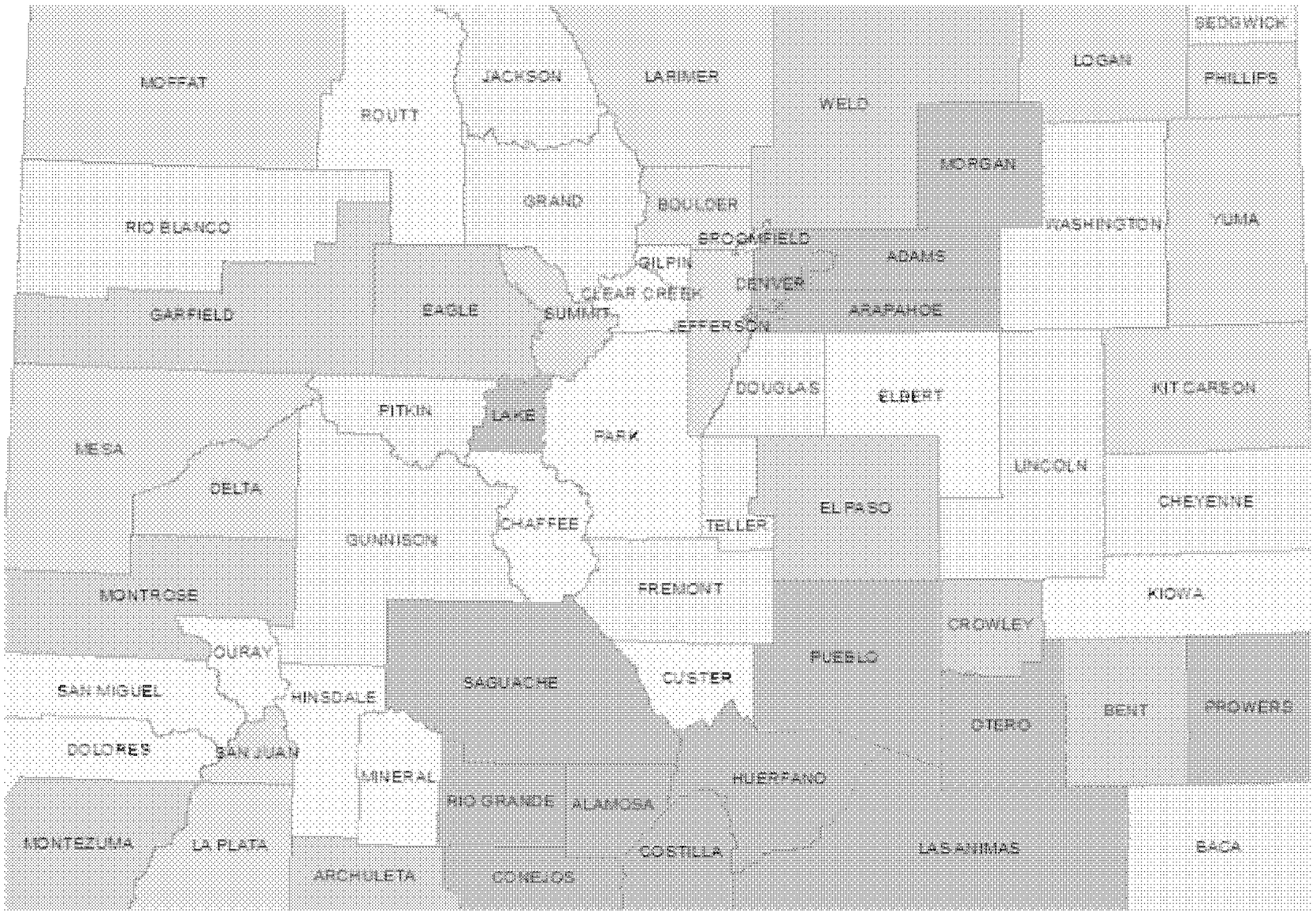


Percent of persons 5 years and older who sometimes or always speak another language other than English at home

1% - 7%
8% - 14%
15% - 22%
23% - 30%
31% - 54%

Number of persons 5 years and older who sometimes or always speak another language other than English at home divided by the total population surveyed. Five –year estimates obtained from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (2005 – 2009).

Minority Children

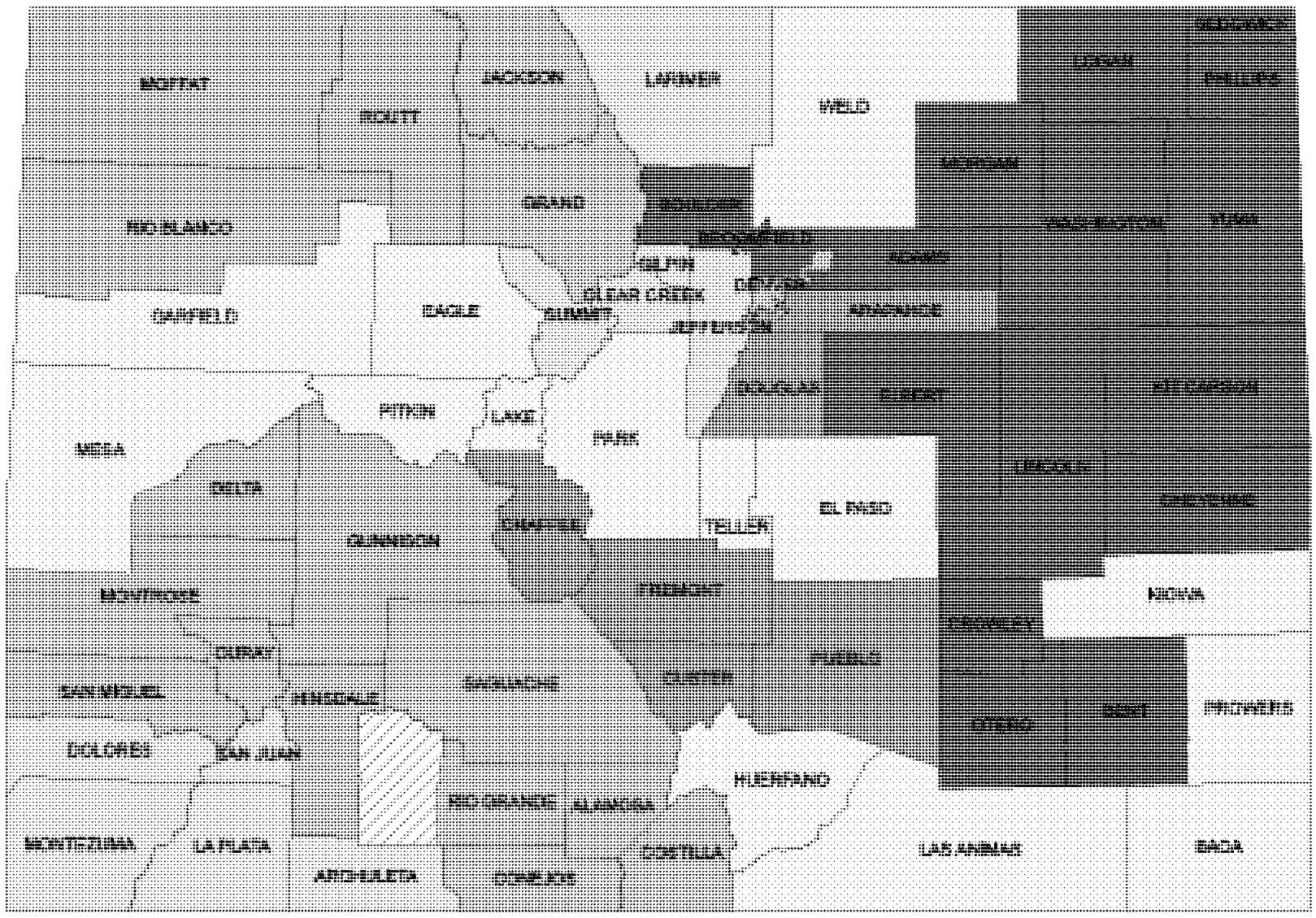


The percent of minoirty children under age 5

7% - 17%
18% - 25%
26% - 36%
37% - 48%
49% - 85%

The percentage of children ages birth through 4 years who were identified as belonging to racial or ethnic groups other than non-Hispanic white on the 2010 U.S. Census.

Individual Family Service Plan

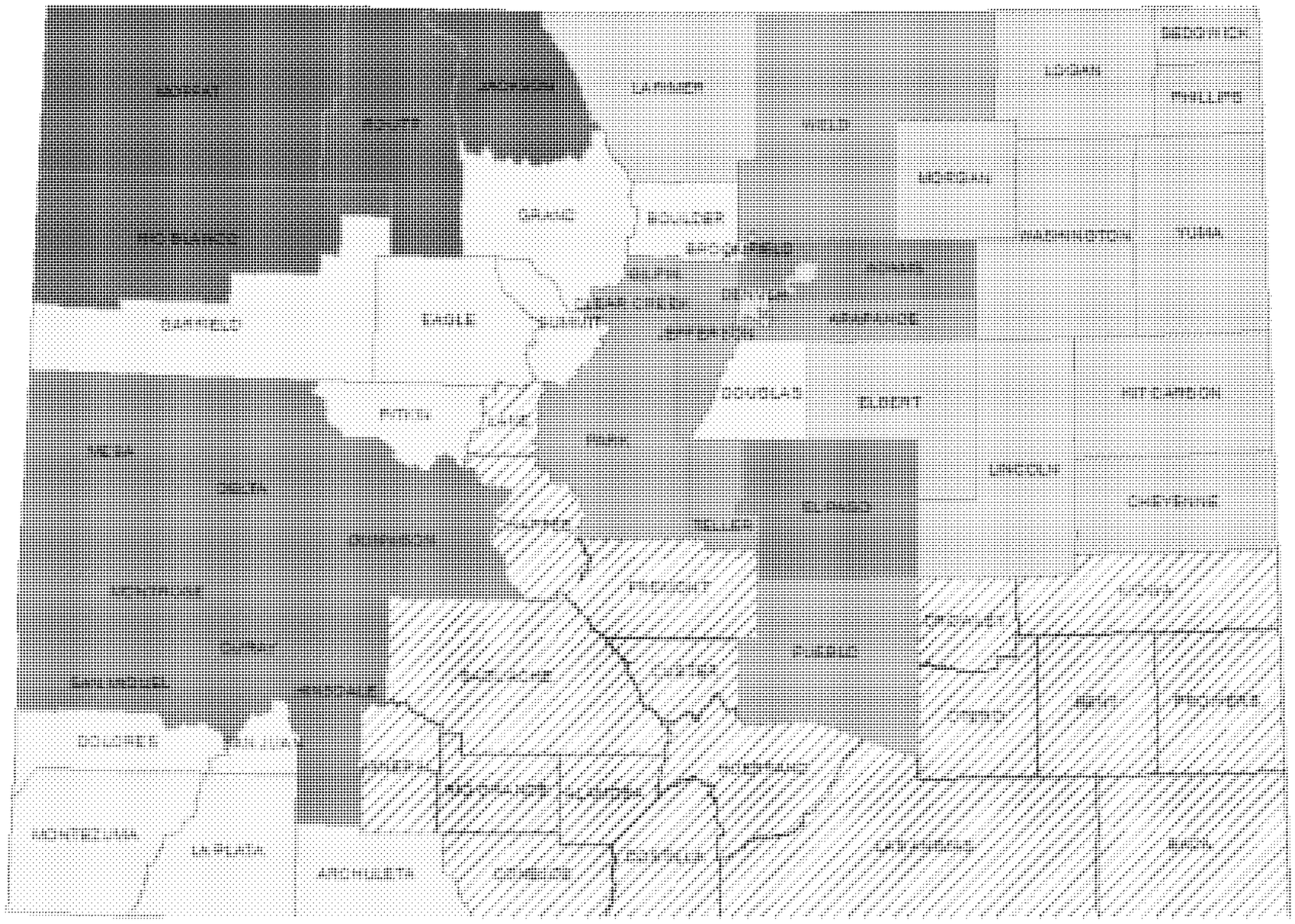


Percent of children birth through 3 years of age with an Individual Family Service Plan

1.8% - 1.9%	2.6% - 2.7%
2% - 2.1%	2.8% - 3.2%
2.2% - 2.5%	No data

Number of children birth through 3 years of age with an Individual Family Service Plan divided by the total number of children birth through 3 years of age. Data provided by the Colorado Department of Human Services (October 1, 2009).

Children with Mental Health/Behavioral Issues

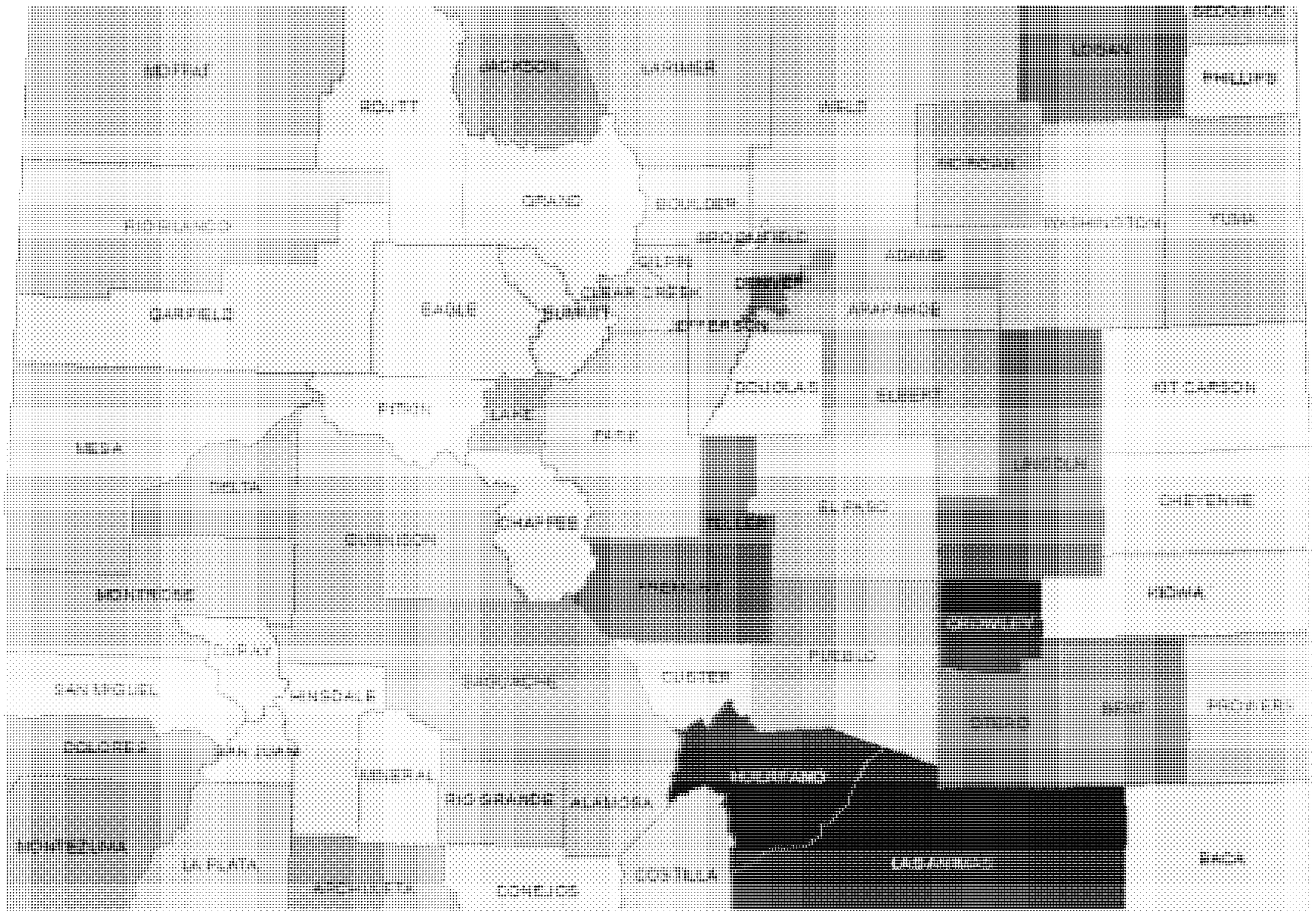


Percent of children 1 through 14 years of age with mental health/behavioral issues

- 14% - 18%
- 19% - 21%
- 22% - 25%
- 26% - 29%
- 30% - 34%
- No data

Number of children 1 through 14 years of age with mental health/behavioral issues divided by the number of children 1 through 14 years of age whose parents responded to this survey question (excludes unknowns and refusals). Health statistics regional data provided by the Colorado Child Health Survey, Health Statistics Section, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (2008 – 2010).

Children in Foster Care

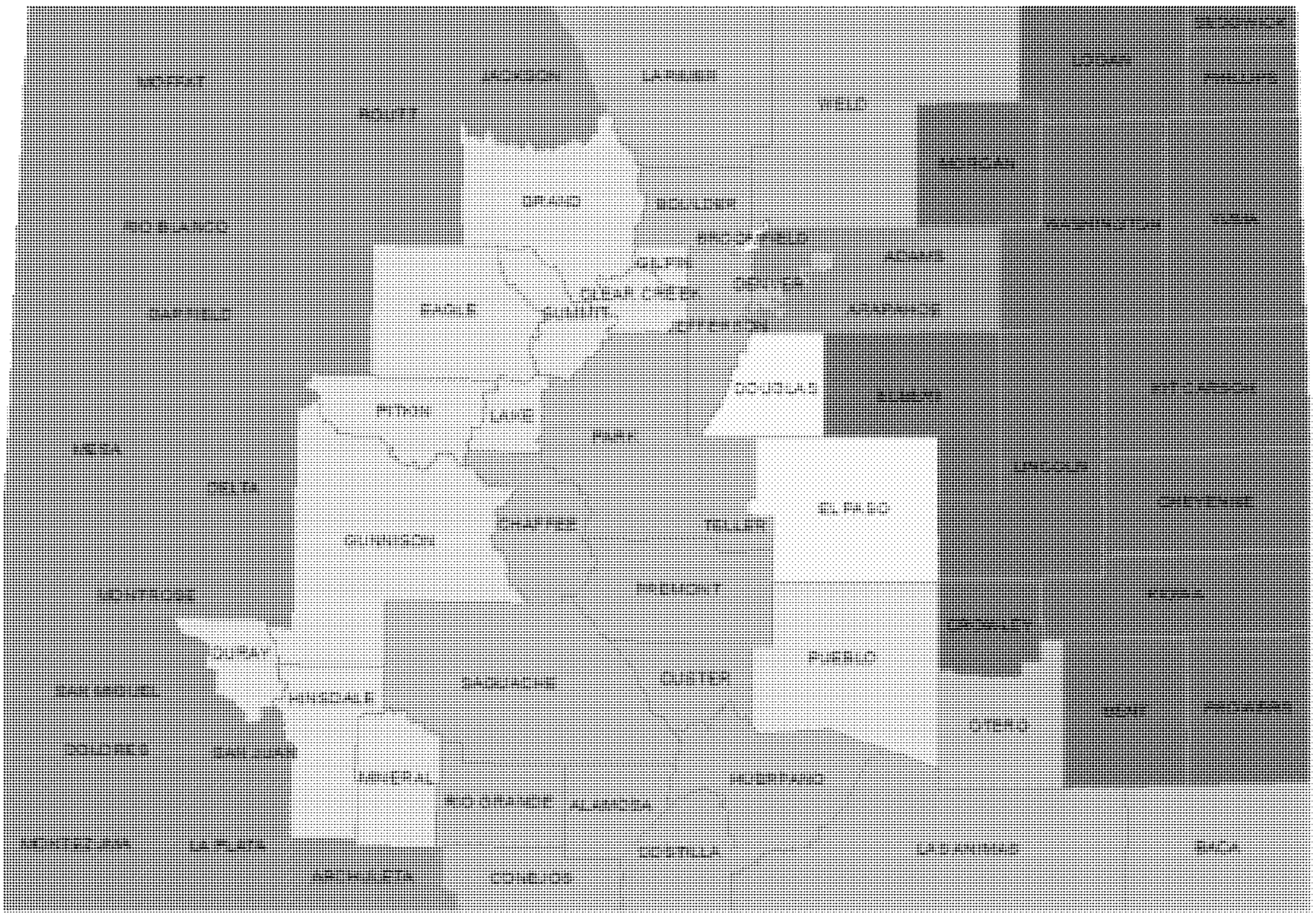


The percent of children under the age of 5in foster care

- 0% - 0.4%
- 0.41% - 1.1%
- 1.11% - 1.7%
- 1.71% - 2.5%
- 2.51% - 4.4%

The percent of children under the age of 5 that were in at least one day of foster care placement during the year (Fiscal Year 2010-2011). This number includes kinship care. Data provided by the Division of Child Welfare Services, Colorado Department of Human Services

Eligible but not Enrolled in Health Insurance



Uninsured children (ages 0-8) eligible but not enrolled in CHP+ or Medicaid

1.4% - 2.1%
2.2% - 3.6%
3.7% - 6.7%
6.8% - 10.8%
10.9% - 12%

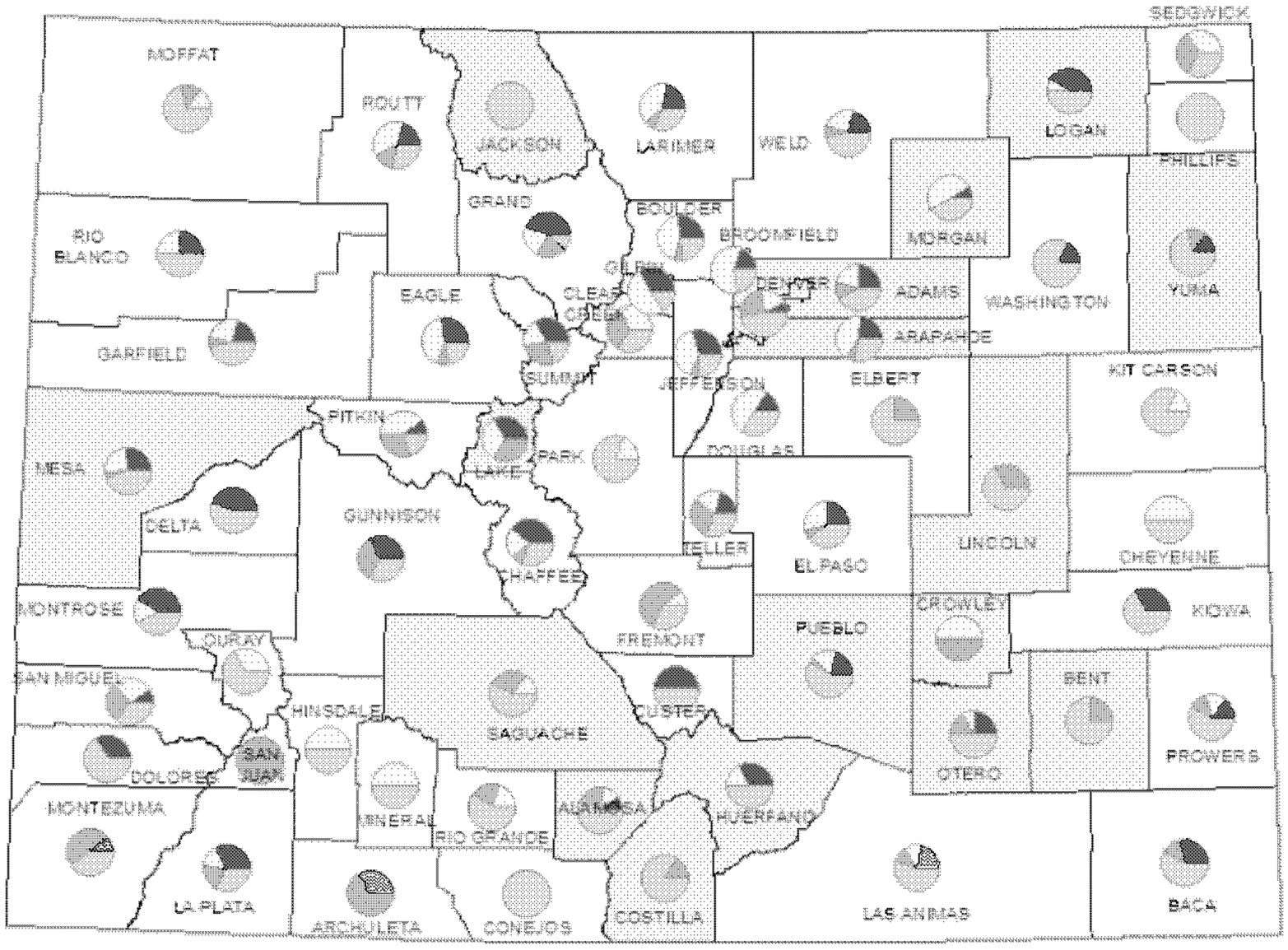
Uninsured children (ages 0-8) eligible but not enrolled in CHP+ or Medicaid and newly eligible for CHP+, Colorado, 2009. Colorado Health Institute's analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

High Needs Programs Methodology

Maps were prepared to illustrate licensed programs that serve children receiving child care subsidy but do not participate in any of the state quality initiatives. The data supporting these maps will be used to further determine methods for selecting High Needs Programs as indicated in Table A-A.

1. Child Care Centers Serving Children Receiving Child Care Subsidy and participating in Quality Initiatives. Includes all child care centers, both centers and family child care homes, licensed by the state of Colorado. These are by those that serve at least one child receiving a child care subsidy (CCCAP) and those that do not. This is further subdivided by those programs participating in Quality Initiatives. These initiatives include: the School Readiness Quality Improvement Program, Expanding Infant Toddler Quality, Head Start, Colorado Preschool Program, Denver Preschool Program. Maps were also prepared to illustrate the percentage of programs that serve children receiving child care subsidy.
2. Family Child Care Homes Serving Children Receiving Child Care Subsidy. This illustrated the mix of family child care homes, per county, that do or do not serve at least one child receiving a child care subsidy (CCCAP).
3. Percentage of Family Child Care Homes Participating in Quality Initiatives. Licensed child care homes participating in Quality Initiatives as a percent of total licensed child care homes in each county.

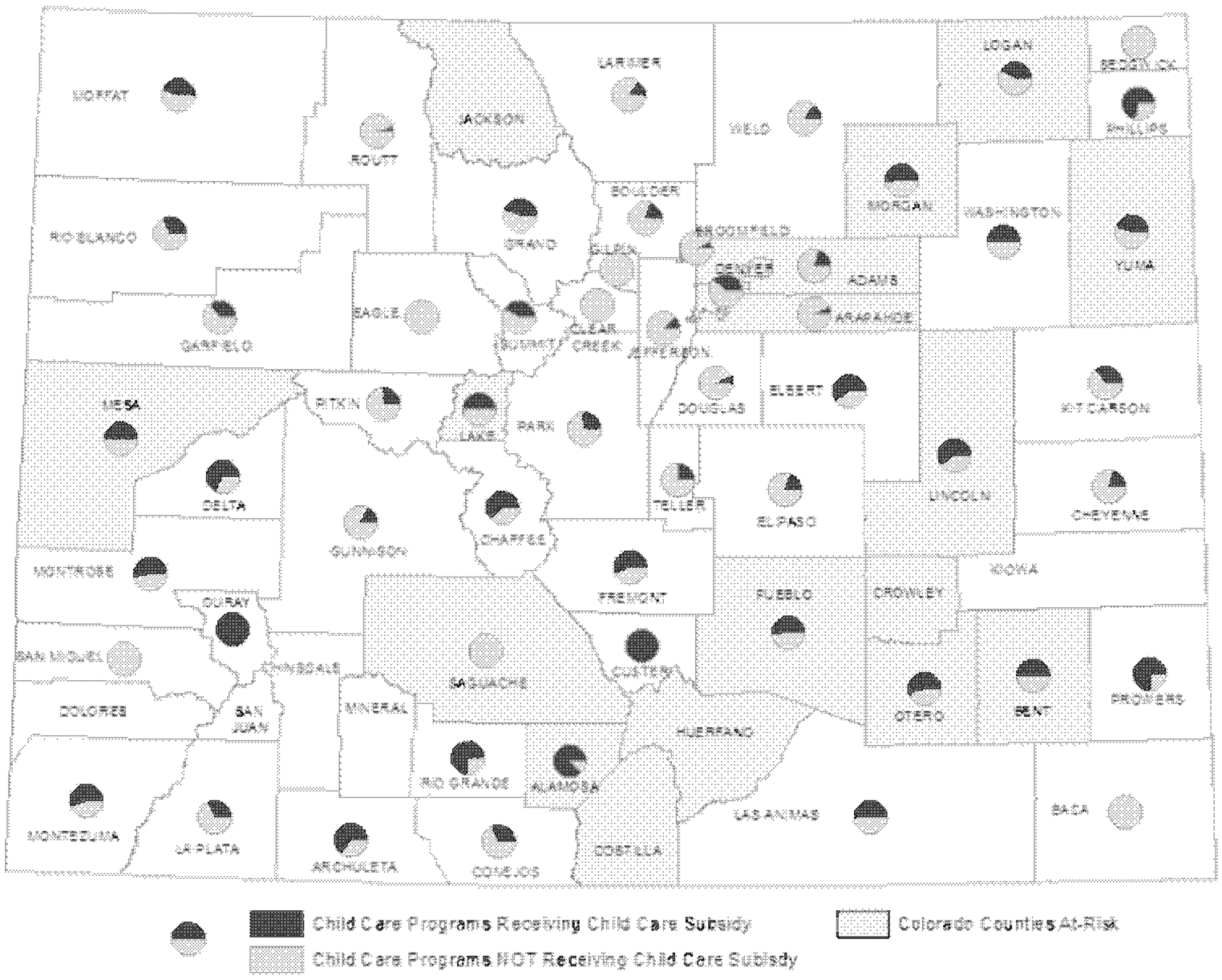
Child Care Centers Serving Children Receiving Child Care Subsidy And Participating in Quality Initiatives



Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)

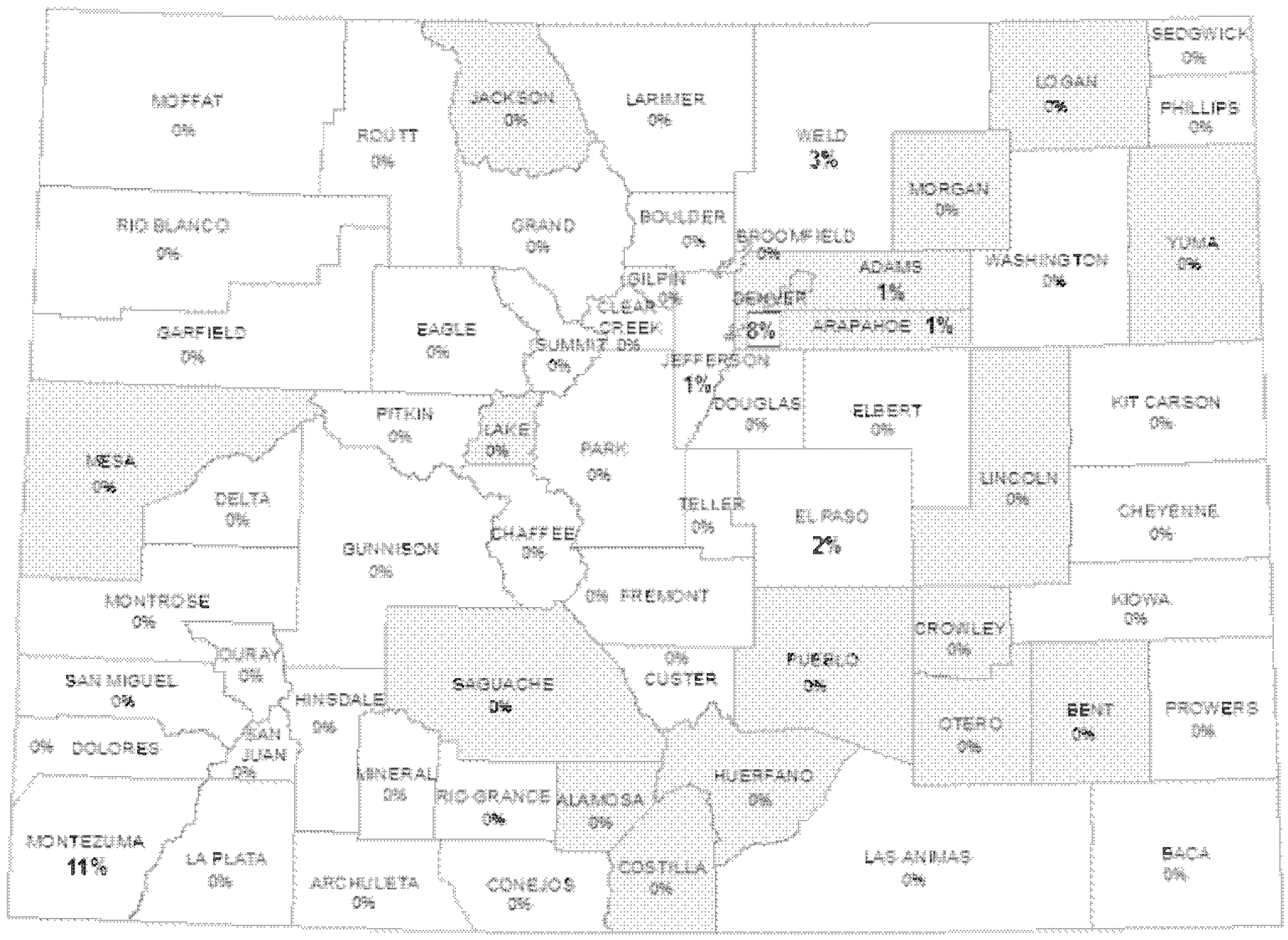
Source: Colorado Department of Education

Family Child Care Homes Serving Children Receiving Child Care Subsidy



Source: Colorado Department of Education

Percentage of Family Child Care Homes Participating in Quality Initiatives



The percentage of family child care homes receiving public quality funding is labeled in each county.

Colorado Counties At-Risk

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Appendix G
Overview of Early Childhood Funding Streams

Program Name	Current Location	New Location	Description
Colorado Children's Trust Fund	CDHE	DHS	Provides leadership and support to promote the establishment, implementation and expansion of state and local programs that reduce the occurrence of child abuse and neglect in Colorado.
Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment	HCPF	DHS	EPSDT is a health care benefit package for all Medicaid enrolled children ages 20 and under and all pregnant women.
Family Resource Centers	CDPHE	DHS	Family resource centers provide a safe, accessible place for families to connect with comprehensive, coordinated services that help strengthen families and promote self-reliant behavior.
Head Start State Collaboration Director position	Office of the Lt. Governor	DHS	The Head Start Collaboration director collaborates with various individuals and organizations to draw on the expertise of Head Start and a wide variety of early childhood providers to further the development of an Early Childhood Care and Education system that better meets the needs of young children and their families. The director is committed to collaboration as a means of improving program-to-program relationships, quality, access, integration of funding, and the scope of service delivery systems for all young children and their families.
Nurse Home Visitor Program	CDPHE	DHS	Nurse Family Partnership's maternal health program introduces vulnerable first-time parents to caring maternal and child health nurses. This program allows nurses to deliver the support first-time mothers need to have a healthy pregnancy, become knowledgeable, and responsible parents, and provide their babies with the best possible start in life.
Tony Grampsas Youth Services	CDPHE	DHS	The Tony Grampsas Youth Services program provides funding to community-based organizations that serve children, youth and their families with evidence-based programming. The statutory goals of the Tony Grampsas Youth Services program are to reduce youth crime and violence and reduce child abuse and neglect.
Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program	CDPHE	DHS	Supports the implementation and expansion of evidence-based home visiting models for pregnant women and families with children from birth to age 5. In Colorado, evidence-based models include Nurse Family Partnership, PAT, HIPPY, Healthy Steps and Early Head Start.
Child Care Quality Initiative	DHS	DHS	Under Federal Child Care Development Fund, the state is required to spend 9.3% on child care quality initiatives addressing affordability, quality and accessibility of child

s			care.
Colorado Child Care Assistance Program	DHS	DHS	Provides child care assistance to low income working parents. Counties set eligibility based on the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and eligibility ranges from 130% FPL up to 85% of the state's median income.
Mental Health Consultation	DHS	DHS	Funds Master's-level clinicians to deliver services through early care and education programs to staff, parents and children.
Part C/ Early Intervention Services	DHS	DHS	Serves children at-risk for developmental delays from birth to 36 months.
Promoting Safe and Stable Communities	DHS	DHS	Provides a variety of family preservation and family support services to families in times of need or crisis.

*Most programs serve at-risk children and families.

Appendix H
Early Childhood Leadership Commission
Membership List

Early Childhood Leadership Commission Members

Chairs:

Business : Hamill, Pat - Oakwood Homes, Chairman and CEO

Private, Nonprofit: Haynes, Anna Jo - Mile High Montessori, President Emeritus

Public: Reggie Bicha- Department of Human Services, Executive Director

Full Commission Roster:

Anderson, Gregory – University of Denver, Dean of the Morgridge School of Education

Anton, Greg – Anton Collins Mitchell, Partner

Brantley, Charlotte – Clayton Early Learning, President and CEO

Busse, Brad – RBC Daniels, President and COO

Curry, Larry – The Curry Center, Counselor

Ferrill, Dave – Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Field Representative, Global Business Development Division

Forster, Charlie – Collegiate Peaks Bank, President and CEO

Hamill, Pat – Oakwood Homes, Chairman and CEO (Chair)

Haynes, Anna Jo – Mile High Montessori, President Emeritus (Chair)

Helburn, Suzanne – University of CO. Denver, Professor Emeriti of Economics

Holguin, Elsa – Rose Community Foundation, Senior Program Officer

Jones, Joel – Durango Chamber of Commerce, Past President of Ft. Lewis College, Past School Board Member Durango

Kerr, Rep. Jim – Colorado State House of Representatives, Representative

Lindquist, Cynthia – Metro State College, Chair of Early Childhood Ed., Special Ed,, Reading and Educational Technology

Lynn, Jim- Office of Information Technology, Agency Services Director

Martinez, Fernando – San Luis Valley Community Mental Health Center, Executive Director

Newell, Sen. Linda – Colorado State Senate, Senator

Pineda-Reyes, Fernando – Parent/family leader

Poast, Kim – Deputy Director, Colorado Department of Higher Education

Price, Diane – Early Connections, President and CEO

Price, Sherry – Mesa Developmental Services, Director, Children and Family Services

Robinson, Gina – CO. Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing, Program Administrator

Romero, Steve – Morgan County Dept. of Human Services, Director

Sirko, Diana – CO Dept. of Education, Deputy Commissioner

Solano, Rep. Judy – Colorado State House of Representatives, Representative

Spence, Sen. Nancy – Colorado State Senate, Senator

Suppes, David – Denver Public Schools, Chief Operating Officer

Tate, Valencia "Faye" – Colorado Workforce Development Council, Member

Trierweiler, Karen – CO. Dept. of Public Health and Environment, Director, Center for Healthy Families and Communities

Tritten, Heather – Head Start and Office of Lt. Governor, State Head Start Collaboration Director

Watney, Chris – Colorado Children's Campaign, President and CEO

Wolk, Larry, M.D. – The Rocky Mt. Youth Clinics, President and CEO

Appendix I
Memoranda of Understanding between State and Participating State Agencies

Please note that these are scanned from original copies, which are available per request.

PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between The Colorado Department of Human Services ("Lead Agency") and The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;

2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
   (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
   (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
   (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
   (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;

4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;

5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and

6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement within 90 days of grant award;

2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);

4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");

5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;

6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;

7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;

2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;

3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;

4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and

6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Reggie Bicha — 10-14-11
Signature — Date

Reggie Bicha — Executive Director
Print Name — Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

— 9/12/11
Signature — Date

Christopher E. Urbina — Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer
Print Name — Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	• Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: Office of the Executive Director	Executive support for the grant governance model and agreement to comply and support the overall program structure.
(B)(1)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from the participating parties programs will support the implementation of the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(2)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from the participating parties will support increasing participation rates within the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(3)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from the participating parties will support increasing high need family participation within the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(4)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from the participating parties will support the implementation of continuous improvement for the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(5)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from the participating parties will support the validation process of the next generation QRIS system with a specific focus on validating QRIS quality tiers with kindergarten readiness.
(C)(1)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care	Representatives from the participating parties are sitting on the state committee

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
	Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	to develop the Early Learning and Development Guidelines and will support embedding these Guidelines, as appropriate, within the programs and services of each participating party.
(C)(2)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from the participating parties will lead and coordinate the development of community-based, comprehensive developmental screening efforts.
(D)(1)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from the participating parties will support the development of a statewide workforce framework.
(D)(2)	• Maternal and Child Health: Early Childhood Initiatives and Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs • Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program • Community Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention • Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program • Child and Adult Food Care Program • Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Representatives from participating parties will support the development and expansion of professional development programs.

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)* Date 10-14-11

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)* Date 10/12/11

PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between The Colorado Department of Human Services ("Lead Agency") and The Colorado Department of Education ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

II. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;

2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
(a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
(b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
(c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
(d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;

4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;

5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and

6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement within 90 days of grant award;

2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);

4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");

5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;

6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;

7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;

2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;

3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;

4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and

6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.

3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.

4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Signature — Date: 10-14-11

Print Name: Reggie Bicha — Title: Executive Director

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

Signature — Date: 10/13/11

Print Name: Robert K. Hammond, Commissioner of Education — Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	• Colorado Commissioner of Education	Executive support for the grant governance model and agreement to comply and support the overall program structure.
(B)(1)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from the participating parties programs will support the implementation of the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(2)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from the participating parties will support increasing participation rates within the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(3)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from the participating parties will support increasing high need family participation within the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(4)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from the participating parties will support the implementation of continuous improvement for the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(5)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from the participating parties will support the validation process of the next generation QRIS system with a specific focus on validating QRIS quality tiers with kindergarten readiness.
(C)(1)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from the participating parties are sitting on the state committee to develop the Early Learning and Development Guidelines and will support embedding these Guidelines, as appropriate, within the programs and services of each participating party
(C)(2)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from each participating party will lead the development of a statewide comprehensive assessment system with a focus on Results Matter.
(D)(1)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find	Representatives from each participating party will directly support the

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
	• Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	development of a statewide workforce framework.
(D)(2)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from each participating party will support the development and expansion of professional development programs.
(E)(2)	• Early Childhood Initiatives • Child Find • Colorado Preschool Program • Early Childhood Councils • Expanding Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Initiative • IDEA Preschool Special Education Services • Results Matter	Representatives from each participating party lead the development and implementation of the statewide kindergarten readiness.

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)* Date 10-14-11

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)* Date 10-12-11

PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between The Colorado Department of Human Services ("Lead Agency") and The Governor's Office ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

III. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency, which includes Colorado's State Advisory Council and the Office of Head Start State Collaboration, hereby certifies and represents that it:

1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;

2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
   (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
   (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
   (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
   (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;

4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;

5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and

6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement within 90 days of grant award;

2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);

4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");

5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;

6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;

7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;

2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;

3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;

4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and

6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Reggie Bicha — 10-14-11
Signature — Date

Reggie Bicha — Executive Director
Print Name — Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

Lisa Carpenter — 10/12/11
Signature — Date

Lisa Carpenter — Deputy for Strategic Operations
Print Name — Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will provide support for the grant governance model and agreement to comply and support the overall program structure. The current State Advisory Council will serve as the public-private advisory council outlined in the grant through its term of June 2013.
(B)(1)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the implementation of the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(2)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the implementation of the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(3)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the implementation of the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(4)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the implementation of the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(B)(5)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the implementation of the next generation QRIS system embedded with licensing.
(C)(1)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the implementation of the new Early Learning and Development Guidelines.
(C)(2)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the development of a statewide comprehensive assessment system to coordinate developmental screening efforts.
(D)(1)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the development of a statewide workforce framework.
(D)(2)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the development and expansion of professional development programs.
(E)(2)	• Colorado Governor's Office	The Governor's Office will support the implementation of a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment.

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)* Date 10-24-11

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)* Date 10/12/11

PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between The Colorado Department of Human Services ("Lead Agency") and The Colorado Department of Higher Education

("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

IV. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;

2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
(a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
(b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
(c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
(d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;

4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;

5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and

6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement within 90 days of grant award;

2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);

4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");

5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;

6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;

7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;

2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;

3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;

4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and

6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.

3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.

4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Reggie Bicha — 10-14-11

Signature — Date

Reggie Bicha — Executive Director

Print Name — Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

10/13/11

Signature — Date

Joseph Garcia — Executive Director

Print Name — Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	• Colorado Department of Higher Education	Executive support for the grant governance model and agreement to comply and support the overall program structure.
(C)(1)	• Colorado Department of Higher Education	Representatives from the participating party will support embedding the new Early Learning and Development Guidelines within the programs and services of the participating party
(C)(2)	• Colorado Department of Higher Education	Representatives from each participating party will lead the development of a statewide comprehensive assessment system to coordinate developmental screening efforts.
(D)(1)	• Colorado Department of Higher Education	Representatives from each participating party will directly be supporting in the development of a statewide workforce framework.
(D)(2)	• Colorado Department of Higher Education	Representatives from each participating party will support the development and expansion of professional development programs.

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)* Date 10-14-11

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)* Date 10/13/11

PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between The Colorado Department of Human Services ("Lead Agency") and The Colorado Governor's Office of Information Technology ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

V. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;

2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
(a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
(b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
(c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
(d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;

4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;

5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and

6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement within 90 days of grant award;

2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);

4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");

5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;

6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;

7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;

2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;

3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;

4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and

6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

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IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Reggie Bicha — 10-14-11
Signature — Date

Reggie Bicha — Executive Director
Print Name — Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

10/13/11
Signature — Date

Kristin Russell — Secretary of Technology & State CIO
Print Name — Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	• Colorado Governor's Office of Information Technology: Office of the State Chief Information Officer	Executive support for the grant governance model and agreement to comply and support the overall program structure.
(B)(1)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the integration of this QRIS with other systems.
(B)(2)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the integration of this QRIS with other systems.
(B)(3)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the integration of this QRIS with other systems.
(B)(4)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the integration of this QRIS with other systems.
(B)(5)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the integration of this QRIS with other systems.
(C)(2)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will support information system contract oversight for the design and development of a early identification screening system. Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the design and development of a comprehensive assessment system as well as integration of this system with other systems.
(D)(1)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the design and development of a learning management system as well as integration of this system with other systems.
(D)(2)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the design and development of a learning management system as well as integration of this system with other EC systems.
(E)(1)	• OIT Agency Services	Representatives from OIT will provide information system contract oversight for the design and implementation of system integration capabilities between the Kindergarten Readiness assessment system and other EC systems.

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)* — Date 10-14-11

Signature *(Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)* — Date 10/13/11

Appendix J
Letters of Support

Letters of Support Index

Type of Agency	Name	Organization
Business	Brad Busse	CME Group / RBC Capital Markets
Business	Charles Forster	Collegiate Peaks Bank
Business	John Ikard et al	Colorado Concerns
Business	C. Tim Taylor	Colorado Succeeds
Business	Kelly Brough	Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce
Business	James Mejia	Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Denver
Business	Mary Atchison et al	Executives Partnering to Invest in Children
Business	Patrick Hamill	Oakwood Homes
Business	Rosann Ward	Public Education Business Coalition
Congressional Delegation	Jared Polis et al	Member of US Congress
Congressional Delegation	Mark Udall	US Senator
Congressional Delegation	Michael Bennet	US Senator
EC Leader	Barbara Sawyer	Self-Employed
EC Leader	Barbara Smith	University of Colorado Denver
EC Leader	Claudia Zandel	Blue Ribbon Policy Council for Mental Health
EC Leader	Charlotte Brantley	Clayton Early Learning
EC Leader	Diane Price	Early Connections Learning Centers
EC Leader	Eileen Piper	Denver Preschool Program
EC Leader	Lisa Merlino	Invest in Kids
EC Leader	James Brennan et al	Colorado Interagency Coordinating Council
EC Leader	Jordana Ash et al	Colorado Association for Infant Mental Health
EC Leader	Jordana Ash	Kid Connects
EC Leader	Lindsey Neil	STAND for Children
EC Leader	Megan Wilson	Reach Out And Read
EC Leader	Melissa Kelley	Colorado Parent & Child Foundation
EC Leader	Richard Garcia	Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition
EC Leader	Tina House	State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education
Education	Brenda Smith	American Federation of Teachers, Colorado
Education	Bruce Caughey	Colorado Association of School Educators
Education	Tom Boasberg	Denver Public Schools
Foundation	Andy Love	Colorado Space Coalition

Type of Agency	Name	Organization
Foundation	Barbara O'Brien	The Piton Foundation
Foundation	Beverly Buck	Aloha Foundation
Foundation	Merle Chambers et al	Chambers Family Fund
Foundation	Chrsitine Benero et al	Mile High United Way
Foundation	Ned Calonge	The Colorado Trust
Foundation	Barbara Danbom	Daniels Fund
Foundation	David Miller	The Denver Foundation
Foundation	Elliot Holokauahi Pulham	Space Foundation
Foundation	Thomas Gougeon	The Gates Family Foundation
Foundation	Helayne Jones	Colorado Legacy Foundation
Foundation	Jean McSpadden	Vail Valley Foundation
Foundation	Beverly Ingle et al	Colorado Education Association
Foundation	Cydney Marsico	The Marsico Foundation
Foundation	Sheila Bugdanowitz	Rose Community Foundation
Foundation	Sue Renner	Early Learning Ventures
Foundation	Tery Minger	The Piton Foundation
Head Start	Al Martinez	Head Start
Head Start	Char Schank	Head Start
Head Start	Cathy McCarty et al	Clayton Early Learning
Head Start	Evelyn Sickel	Head Start
Head Start	Isabel Arellano	Adams County Head Start
Head Start	Jean Simms	UTE Mountain Child Development Center
Head Start	Judith Ham	Cerebral Palsy of Colorado
Head Start	Judy Lopez	Rocky Mountain Head Start
Head Start	Kate Bartlett	Head Start
Head Start	Lionel Espinoza	Family Star Montessori
Head Start	Dwayne Newman et al	Monte Vista School District
Head Start	Noreen Landis-Tyson	Community Partnership for Child Development
Head Start	Jamie Swartz	Otero Community College
Head Start	Pamela Harris	Mile High Montessori
Head Start	Sheila Groneman	Summit County Head Start
Head Start	Sherri Almond	Eagle County Early Head Start
Head Start	Theresa Clements	Thompson School District
Higher Education	Cynthia Linquist	Metropolitan State College of Denver
Higher Education	Virginia Maloney	Marsico Institute
Higher Education	Gregory Anderson	University of Denver - Mordridge College of Education
Higher Education	Lynn Gangone	University Of Denver - Women's College

Type of Agency	Name	Organization
Intermediaries	Jennifer West et al	Alliance for Kids
Intermediaries	Gretchen Davidson	Arapahoe Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Judy Rusker	Bent, Otero & Crowley Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Bobbie Watson	Early Childhood Council of Boulder
Intermediaries	Cathy James	Bright Futures
Intermediaries	Shanna Torkelson	Broomfield Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Melissa St. John	Chaffee Country Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Deana Hunt	Child Care Connections
Intermediaries	Kathleen DeVries	Red Rocks Community College
Intermediaries	Tami Havener	Family Development Center of Steamboat Springs
Intermediaries	Cindy Bernal	Pueblo Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Cindy Smith	Children Youth and Families of Boulder
Intermediaries	Tricia Kelly-Lynch	Colorado Association of Family Child Care
Intermediaries	Linda Adams	Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children
Intermediaries	Chris Watney	Colorado Children's Campaign
Intermediaries	Kathryn Hammerbeck	Early Childhood Education Association of Colorado
Intermediaries	Janet Flaugher	Colorado Head Start Association
Intermediaries	Emily Bustos	Denver Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Executive Committee	Douglas County Early Childhood Coalition
Intermediaries	Angela Rothermel et al	Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County
Intermediaries	Kathryn Hammerbeck et al	Colorado Early Childhood Summit
Intermediaries	Sheryl Shushan et al	Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance
Intermediaries	Pamela Walker	Echo & Family Center Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Cathryn Reiber	Elbert County Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Taunia Shipman	Grand Beginnings
Intermediaries	Margaret Wacker	Gunnison-Hinsdale Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Jennifer Sanchez McDonald	Huerfano-Las Animas Counties Early Childhood Advisory Council
Intermediaries	Anne Fitzpatrick	Rural Resport Region Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Tamara Volz	Early Childhood Council of La Plata County
Intermediaries	Beverly Wood Thurber	Early Childhood Council of Larimer County
Intermediaries	Kathy Reinhart	Early Childhood Council of Logan Phillips Sedgwick Counties
Intermediaries	Holly Jacobson	Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families
Intermediaries	Vangi McCoy	Montelores Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Chris Walters et al	Morgan County Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Mary Gross	Morgan County Family Center
Intermediaries	Cleo Rodriguez	National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start
Intermediaries	Barbara West	Connections 4 Kids

Type of Agency	Name	Organization
Intermediaries	Jeannine Truswell	United Way of Weld County
Intermediaries	Cindy Bernal	Pueblo Early Childhood Council/Children First CCR&R
Intermediaries	Heather O'Mara et al	Qualistar
Intermediaries	Stephanie Martin	First Impressions of Routt County
Intermediaries	Alison Casias	Early Childhood Options
Intermediaries	Kari Harp et al	Early Childhood Council of the San Luis Valley
Intermediaries	Nicol Houghland	Park Early Childhood Council
Intermediaries	Patricia Bolton	Child Care Resource and Referral
Intermediaries	Charity Brockman	Child Care Resource & Referral of Mesa County
Intermediaries	Patricia Brewster-Willeke et al	Rural Communities Resource Center
Legislator	Bob Bacon	Senator
Legislator	Brandon Shaffer	Senator
Legislator	Rollie Heath	Senator
Legislator	Judy Solano	State Representative
Legislator	Nancy Todd	State Representative
Legislator	Sal Pace	State Representative
Legislator	Mary Hodge et al	Senator
Legislator	Jeanne Nicholson	Senator
Legislator	Linda Newell	Senator
Legislator	Nancy Spence	Senator
Legislator	Sue Shafer	State Representative
State Government	Barbara Ramsey	Dept of Human Services
State Government	Bob Schaffer	Colorado State Board of Education
State Government	Joseph Garcia et al	Liutenant Governor of Colorado
State Government	Reggie Bicha et al	Early Childhood Leadership Commission
State Government	Eileen Forlenza	Colorado Family Leadership Training Institute
State Government	Nathaniel Easley et al	Education Leadership Council
State Government	Sherri Hammons	Government Data Advisory Board
State Government	Heather Tritten	Director of Head Start
State Government	Kristen Russell	Governor's Office of Information & Technology
VIP	Bill Ritter Jr.	Former Colorado Governor
VIP	Richard Lamm	Former Colorado Governor
VIP	Bill Owens	Former Colorado Governor
VIP	John Hickenlooper	Current Colorado Covernor
VIP	Roy Romer	Former Colorado Governor
VIP	Joseph Garcia	Current Lieutenant Governor of Colorado
VIP	Robert Hammond	Commissioner of Education - CDE

Type of Agency	Name	Organization
Other	Amy Slothower	Get Smart Schools
Other	Bruce Atchison	Colorado Early Learning Partnership
Other	Catherine Garcia	Action 22 of Southern Colorado
Other	Diana Buza	Pinon Project Family Resource Center
Other	Heidi Baskfield	Children's Hospital of Colorado
Other	Kathy Moan	Joint Initiaitves for Youth & Family
Other	Lisa Davis	Denver Botanic Gardens
Other	J. Timothy Waters	Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning
Other	Staff	Denver Museum of Nature and Science
Other	Douglas Price	Rocky Mountain PBS
Other	Sean Van Berschot	Teach for America Colorado

RBC Capital Markets®

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Brad R. Busse
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Co-Head, CME Group
Telephone: 303-778-5520
Fax: 303-282-6758
brad.busse@rbccm.com
www.rbccm.com

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

It was a pleasure to meet you last March when I was part of the Colorado delegation that you met with to discuss early childhood literacy issues and how Colorado could play a leadership role in what we hope will be a nationwide movement. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the State of Colorado. From my experience with Colorado's business leaders as well as with our state's most passionate early childhood advocates, I have seen the significant impact that collaborative work guided by the Colorado Early Childhood Framework can have on statewide progress. This framework motivated the proposed early childhood governance structure now moving through the legislative process, which I endorsed as a member of the Colorado Early Childhood Leadership Commission. This reform will streamline bureaucracy and optimize access to and improve the quality of early childhood programs.

Mr. Secretary, my work with the Colorado Early Childhood Leadership Commission, Mile High United Way, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC), and the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver has clearly demonstrated to me how innovative, accountable policy action can provide tools to our children for lifelong learning. Therefore, I am confident that the Early Learning Challenge grant would aid Colorado in its already vigorous pursuit of full kindergarten readiness.

I also have a business perspective as Co-Head of the Communications, Media & Entertainment Group at RBC Capital Markets, which provides investment banking services to businesses that provide a broad array of communications services. My experience has repeatedly shown me that the best investment any business can make in its future is an investment in the workforce of tomorrow. Specifically, communications services mean little if employees are unable to communicate effectively. Therefore, I strongly believe that an Early Challenge Fund award would build on Colorado's vibrant reform agenda to improve the quality of education and instruction throughout the state and would have immediate effects on the school-readiness of Colorado's children. Further, its long-term impacts would create a legacy of significant benefits to businesses that seek to hire Colorado's brightest minds.

I applaud the Obama Administration's bold vision for early childhood initiatives. Its Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge program provides a prime opportunity for Colorado to continue its own upward progress on behalf of our state's youngest learners. Further, the leadership and commitment of the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services to improve early learning and development throughout the nation inspires progress in every classroom and every state assembly.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Brad Busse

(b)(6)

Managing Director and Co-Head,
Communications, Media, and Entertainment, U.S.

COLLEGIATE PEAKS BANK

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

It's with great enthusiasm that I express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application ("RTT-ELC") for the State of Colorado. As a life-long resident, businessman, and volunteer in rural communities in Colorado, I am confident in expressing the rural community's excitement for the transformative early learning and education reform opportunities the federal RTT-ELC grant will provide, and for assuring ALL children of Colorado are prepared for kindergarten, and ultimately a full and successful life.

As a member of the Colorado Early Childhood Leadership Commission, I believe an RTT-ELC Colorado grant award would dovetail nicely with the significant ground-breaking efforts underway in Colorado to bring quality early childhood programming to every corner of our State and to all children, especially those with high needs. As a citizen and businessman, I see a freshness of approach which is evidenced by the groundbreaking State structural change in governance and a flattened vertical organization structure for program delivery. The change of structure alone will assure more effective communication and creation of a common early childhood goal. A more effective use of financial resources, a quicker implementation of programs, and the leveraging of people and financial resources of our communities, businesses and philanthropic interest will result.

As a lifelong resident of Colorado and a community banker of 40+years, I've experienced through my years on Hospital, College Foundation and Economic Development boards the power of the engagement of businesses, people and communities at a grassroots level. Presently, as a member of the Trustees Council of the El Pomar Foundation I know there is a strong interest in early childhood health and education initiatives, particularly in the area of school readiness and expanded kindergarten programs. Engagement of the El Pomar Foundation is one example of the opportunity for leveraging resources to achieve success of early childhood school readiness initiative. As I watch and provide personal input regarding the re-design of the early childhood structure, the priorities being placed on professional childcare provider education, and quality rating information systems, and the enhanced role the community based Early Childhood Councils will play in reaching all children across our State, I'm confident the Colorado plan for early learning and kindergarten readiness will succeed.

I applaud the U. S. Department of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Charles J. Forster, President
Collegiate Peaks Bank

105 Centennial Plaza ▯ P.O. Box 3009 ▯ Buena Vista, Colorado 81211 ▯ (719) 395-2472

COLORADOCONCERN
STRATEGIC. UNITED. COMMITTED. FOR A STRONG BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT.

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The Board of Directors of Colorado Concern is writing to express their unanimous and strong support for Colorado's Race to the top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC"). We are excited about the opportunity this grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms.

Colorado Concern is an exclusive alliance of top executives across the State that have joined together to work towards solutions to their mutual business challenges. It has proven to be among the most effective organization in Colorado committed to addressing current complex business and economic development issues. We know Colorado is at a crossroads and Coloradans must decide which path the state should take – one of greatness or one of mediocrity. We believe Colorado is well-positioned to be a leader in the United States and worldwide for an outstanding business climate, education system, and quality of life. We feel the state early learning plan outlined in this grant is a launch-pad for our path to greatness.

Possibly the most crucial element in building a strong, healthy state, is ensuring a vibrant business climate. We recognize that properly preparing the workforce of tomorrow is crucial to attracting and retaining top notch businesses, which is why we have taken on education as one of our top initiatives for the past two years and will do so well into the future. As part of our commitment to education, we established Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC) to ensure an appropriate focus on early childhood issues and school readiness.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local

entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado. All the work ensures optimal child development and school readiness – outcomes that are essential to the health of our state.

Colorado Concern will continue to provide support to the state's early childhood agenda. In partnership with EPIC, we will continue to raise awareness concerning the critical importance of early learning and provide support and influence for major early childhood initiatives.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Kind regards

(b)(6)

Patrick H. Hamill
Co-Chairman

John Ikard
Chairman

Colorado Succeeds
1201 East Colfax
Suite 201
Denver, CO 80218

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Colorado Succeeds, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Colorado Succeeds is the business voice for education in Colorado, demanding effective performance from the education system with dedication to creating a climate for reform in Colorado. We believe that rigorous early learning prepares students for college and career readiness, which will enable them to compete in a competitive global economy.

Colorado Succeeds represents businesses in every county in the state. As Colorado's voice for education reform, we are committed to working with policy makers to provide a statewide approach of results-driven early education with an emphasis on accountability and transparency.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

C. Tim Taylor
President, Colorado Succeeds

DENVER METRO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, we are excited about the opportunity to will push the reform needle for Colorado to implement ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education. The grant will permit Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway, that will prepare each and every child for the entire range of educational opportunity. In addition, these funds will assist children with special needs across the state who require better access to high-quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. The proposal also provides the opportunity for early learning professionals to have access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our future workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially appreciate the proposed governance model that ensures accountability, yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce is the longest continuously operating organization in the state of Colorado. We represent more than 3,000 employers and about 300,000 employees. Our mission is Colorado's business leadership dedicated to economic vitality and quality of life- and that quality of life includes the educational system our children deserve and need to be successful in today's global economy.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
(b)(6)

Kelly J. Brough
President and CEO
Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce

HISPANIC
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF METRO DENVER

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Denver, established in 1978, is Denver's first minority chamber of commerce as well as the largest. During the Hispanic Chamber's 33-year history, it has led the way for minority business development and its mission is to promote and advance the growth of Hispanic business. The Hispanic Chamber sees these grant opportunities as a way for community organizations like ours to look towards a more successful educational future for our children.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

James Mejía
President and CEO
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Denver

Mary Atchison
Executive Director

CEO Roundtable

Daniel Ritchie, EPIC Founding Chair
Chairman and CEO
Denver Center for the Performing Arts

Brad Busse, Chair
President
RBC Daniels

Greg Anton
Partner
Anton Collins Mitchell LLP

Geta Asfaw
President
Addis & Company/Ababa & Company

Katherine Gold
President
Gold Bug, Inc.

Barbara Grogan
Founder/Past CEO
Western Industrial Contractors, Inc.

Patrick H. Hamill
Chairman and CEO
Oakwood Homes

David Merage
Chairman and CEO
Consolidated Investment Group

Doug Price
President and CEO
Rocky Mountain PBS

Founding Partners

Colorado Children's Campaign

Colorado Concern

David and Laura Merage Foundation

Foundation for Educational Excellence

Mile High United Way

Telluride Foundation

Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation

Executives Partnering to Invest In Children

September 30, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

EPIC is a coalition of business leaders committed to making early childhood care, education, health, and parenting among the highest priorities of Colorado's public and private investments. We work to harness the political and financial capital of Colorado's business sector to ensure that our youngest citizens get the best start possible.

EPIC supports the outcomes outlined in Colorado's Early Learning Challenge grant proposal and we are poised to lend our support and influence to accomplish them. Members of EPIC have been at the forefront in the development of these outcomes. We believe that the implementation of a unified governance model for early childhood funding and services will create efficiencies, and the other proposed grant outcomes will make Colorado extremely effective in ensuring that all children, but particularly those with the highest needs, will have access to the highest possible quality early care and education.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human

Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Daniel Ritchie, EPIC Founding Chair
Chairman and CEO
Denver Center for the Performing Arts

Brad Busse, EPIC Chair
President
RBC Daniels

(b)(6)

Greg Anton
Partner
Anton Collins Mitchell LLP

Geta Asfaw
President
Addis & Company/Ababa & Company

(b)(6)

Katherine Gold
President
Gold Bug, Inc.

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Barbara Grogan
Founder/Past CEO
Western Industrial Contractors, Inc.

(b)(6)

Patrick H. Hamill
President and CEO
Oakwood Homes

David Merage
Principal
Consolidated Investment Group

(b)(6)

Doug Price
President and CEO
Rocky Mountain PBS

OAKWOOD
HOMES
The Smart Choice

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express strong support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Oakwood Homes and the Foundation for Educational Excellence, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. As we race into the 21st century, it is more important than ever as a developer and homebuilder to strive not only to build affordable quality homes, but also to play an active role in establishing great communities that create a sense of sustainable purpose. Study after study shows a direct correlation between world-class early learning and K-12 instruction and sustainable, high quality neighborhoods that produce students prepared for the rigors of active citizenship and long-term success.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado. This grant opportunity will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

In 1995 we founded the Foundation for Educational Excellence, which supports the development of quality early childhood educational programs that prepare children (birth to five) with the critical capacities/skills to learn. We partner with school districts, parents, community leaders and area businesses in the development of innovative learning environments that recognize children acquire knowledge in different ways. We sponsor and support efforts to fully align K-12 and Higher Education efforts that begin to create a more market-centered, consumer-focused, and performance-driven education delivery system that prepares students for the rigors of the new century and we work to establish community involvement among educators, parents, students, and civic leaders that promote schools as a centerpiece of community development and revitalization.

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*

- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Kind regards,

(b)(6)

Patrick H. Hamill
President & CEO

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Public Education & Business Coalition (PEBC), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

PEBC has for the past 28 years provided customized professional development support to K-12 teachers and school and district leaders in order to sustain research-based best instructional practices across the content areas. We understand that effective teachers in the early grades are crucial to the healthy development of a child's academic career. So, we are in full support of the scope of work proposed in Colorado's Early Learning Challenge application.

To support the state's efforts in their early learning transformational reform goals, PEBC will:

- will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Rosann B. Ward
President

October 5, 2011

Secretary Arne Duncan
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I am writing to express my strong support for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. As you know, our national and economic security depend on our ability to provide every American child with a world-class education, and this begins with giving all children access to high-quality early learning. My experience as a Superintendent taught me that the best ideas for education come from the people working closest to students, and the RTT-ELC grants are an excellent example of how the federal government can best support innovative state and local education reforms in Colorado.

I fully support Colorado's RTT-ELC proposal which not only addresses the need for world class early learning standards, but provides educators access to data, tools and professional development to improve instruction and drive student achievement. Colorado's proposal gives local entities the flexibility to respond to the unique needs of their communities, while also providing a common accountability system across the state to ensure that all programs are being run at the highest of levels.

With innovative local approaches like the Denver Preschool Program (DPP), and state investments in Head Start, Colorado is uniquely positioned to implement comprehensive new approaches to early learning. The DPP program in particular highlights Colorado's ability to implement new approaches to early learning with the potential to be scaled up. The DPP provides tuition credits that incentivize enrollment in the highest-quality early learning programs. With the first class of DPP now in 3rd grade in Denver Public Schools (DPS) this investment is already showing dramatic results. According to Colorado Department of Education data, 56 percent of DPS 3rd graders are reading at grade level – a 5 percent increase from last year. This is the biggest single year gain in the history of DPS, and the highest proficiency rate for 3rd graders since state assessments were initiated in the 1990s.

RTT-ELC funds will help Colorado continue to implement innovative and successful approaches to ensure all of Colorado's children, especially low-income children, access to the high-quality early childhood education programs and services they need to be prepared to excel in the 21st Century.

I applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for continuing to develop opportunities for states to pave the way for improving early learning and development throughout our nation. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Michael F Bennet

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

MARK UDALL
COLORADO

SUITE SH-317
RENATE HART OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-5941

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 12, 2011

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am pleased to write this letter on behalf of the State of Colorado. The State of Colorado is working to secure federal funding through the *Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge* (CFDA: 84:412) project grant administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

With the funds received through this grant, the State of Colorado plans to increase access and quality of early learning settings for children. In addition, they plan to focus on professional development programs and data systems development. These activities will be conducted across Colorado over the next four years. Colorado's strategy is designed to invest in quality enhancement efforts that seek to prepare Colorado's children for kindergarten and beyond. Additionally, specific partners or programs that they select to work with will be designed to match the grant requirements.

Colorado has a long history of efforts to advance education and increase opportunity for all Coloradans. It is Colorado's unique entrepreneurial spirit and independent thinking that has led to several innovative approaches to improve our education system over the years. By continuing to invest in reform today, Colorado is supporting future generations and increasing opportunities for tomorrow.

I ask that you give the grant application submitted by the State of Colorado every appropriate consideration consistent with all applicable laws and regulations. Thank you for your attention, and please notify my office of any funds awarded.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Udall
United States Senator

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

We write to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As members of the Colorado delegation of the U.S. House of Representatives, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. The grant would allow Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare every child in Colorado for Kindergarten, future educational success and ultimately productive careers and lives. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high-quality early childhood education programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's education reform agenda aimed at improving student outcomes by calling for the adoption of world-class early learning program standards and assessments; and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to provide accountability and continuously improve the quality of our early learning and development workforce and programs. We also support the proposed state governance model that would bolster early learning accountability while allowing local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The proposal complements federal efforts to improve early childhood education through potential changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; investments in Head Start and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and other long-term strategies to promote economic and social stability. We are enthused about the opportunity of this grant to strengthen our public and private community and state partnerships in this important area.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for establishing a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado and the nation. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Jared Polis
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

September 30, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing to express my support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As someone who has been working in the early education community for over 30 years, I am very excited about the opportunities RTT-WLC grant provides the State of Colorado to make significant progress in the early learning and education reforms already being discussed across the state.

I have worked as a family child care provider and am currently the Director of Special Projects for a national non-profit association dedicated specifically to the family child care community. I am delighted that the State of Colorado has chosen to include family child care in a meaningful way as it continues development of a strong early childhood system. 35-40% of this country's preschool-aged children - the percentage for children under two is even larger - are cared for in family child care programs. Colorado's intentional inclusion of family child care is a significant commitment to ensuring that all of Colorado's children enjoy quality early childhood experiences.

The RTT-ELC proposal has been written as a deliberate support of the reform efforts that are already underway in Colorado to ensure that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and to provide early learning professionals with access to the tools and supports that will allow them to continue to improve the quality of care available to young children and their families in the state.

I will continue to work with both the Professional Development Task Force and the Second Generation Design Team in supporting the efforts to make Colorado a model state for young children and their families and to ensure that high quality early care and education is available in a variety of environments across the state. I am especially excited about working with a state governance model that recognizes the importance of a localized focus while it allows for state accountability.

Congratulations to the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that will improve early learning and development through Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Private Consultant
5900 Dudley Street
Arvada, CO 80004
303-423-6503

University of Colorado Denver

School of Education & Human Development
Downtown Campus

Center for Evidence-Based Practices in Early Learning
1380 Lawrence St, Suite 637
Denver, Colorado 80204
Phone: 303-315-4939, Fax: 303-315-4944
Barbara.smith@ucdenver.edu

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Center for Evidence-Based Practices in Early Learning (CEBPEL), I am excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on improving outcomes for ALL children. For over 15 years, this center has focused on promoting systems, programs and practices that result in positive outcomes for young children with disabilities and other high needs in Colorado as well as nation-wide. This grant will allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These efforts will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond, including children with high needs that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

CEBPEL houses the state-funded Pyramid Plus: Colorado Center on Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion. Through this effort, personnel and families are provided evidence-based practices that promote social, emotional and behavioral competence as well as the effective inclusion of children with disabilities into typical settings. Research findings clearly indicate that social emotional and behavioral skills are as, or more, important to kindergarten success than cognitive skills. Findings also show that children with disabilities achieve better if they are fully included in high quality EC programs. The Pyramid Plus Center uses the latest implementation science to certify local trainers and coaches in these EBPs so that they can work directly and intensively with personnel and families in their communities as they implement and sustain these effective practices. Data to date indicate the Pyramid Plus Center is having a positive effect on programs, practices and outcomes state-wide.

We will help meet the goals of the Colorado RTT-ELC by: helping to ensure that early learning development standards reflect these important foundations; we participating in the expansion of QRIS as well as continue our efforts to engage and partner with families; providing professional development initiatives; and supporting the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.
Sincerely,

Barbara J. Smith

Barbara J. Smith, Ph.D.
Research Professor and Director

STATE OF COLORADO

cdhs

Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

OFFICE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
Lisa M. Clements, Ph.D., Director

DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
Charles H. Smith, Ph.D., Director
3824 West Princeton Circle
Denver, Colorado 80236
Phone 303-866-7400
Fax 303-866-7428

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Reggie Bicha
Executive Director

October 7, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the *Blue Ribbon Policy Council For Early Childhood Mental Health*, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on groundbreaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The Blue Ribbon Policy Council for Early Childhood Mental Health is a council supported by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health. This council is comprised of a number of different agencies and organizations representing state departments, higher education, advocacy groups, foundations and community providers.

The Council completed a strategic plan in 2008 and is currently in the process of updating that plan. social and emotional development is an essential part of improving quality in child care. The Blue Ribbon Policy Council strategic plan can help support development of quality standards . The Council will help achieve grant outcomes by recommending the use of social and emotional screening tools, and by connecting early care and education providers to resources and support for children with social and emotional challenges. We will work to ensure that social and emotional development is addressed in every aspect of the grant activities.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. .

Sincerely,

Early Childhood Mental Health Programs

October 12, 2011
Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am very pleased to submit this letter in support of Colorado's application for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. For the past several years, local and state Colorado leaders in education, health, mental health, business, family engagement and policy have collaboratively engaged in substantive work to ensure that all our children are prepared for success in school, with particular focus on our highest need children. Our state faces many challenges in geography, growing diversity within our population, rapid expansion of children living in poverty, and the percentage of our children that struggle to experience success in their academic careers. The Colorado application for this grant builds upon our collaborative efforts and demonstrates a sense of urgency and innovation in addressing these challenges in ways that ensure statewide accountability while also supporting solutions that leverage local creativity and resources.

As one of the first 10 *Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood* designated by the Office of Head Start within U.S. DHHS, and as the operator of the fifth in the growing nationwide network of *Educare Schools*, Clayton Early Learning is deeply engaged in this work. We directly train teachers, work with higher education to create systemic improvements in teacher preparation, support local programs in measuring classroom quality and teaching effectiveness, ensure the validity and reliability of our existing QRIS in partnership with Qualistar Colorado and the Department of Human Services, conduct child outcome evaluations of programs such as the Denver Preschool Program, offer resources and training for schools on effective parent engagement strategies (see separate letter from our CPIRC Director), and offer our Educare School as a demonstration site of high quality, data-driven early childhood care and education. I see great promise of significant and rapid progress in many of these areas incorporated into the Colorado application. I am particularly excited by the focus on moving Colorado's already strong QRIS to a new level that will engage 100% of our early childhood programs and the significant focus on our workforce to ensure our early childhood professionals are fully prepared to support all children's school readiness. In addition, our application sharpens our focus on assessment of children's progress and use of that data to routinely inform and improve practices statewide.

I appreciate your consideration of the Colorado application. Young children across our nation will benefit from improved quality of early learning environments as a result of this historic grant opportunity.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Charlotte M. Brantley
President and CEO
September 30, 2011

Mr. Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

earlyconnections
LEARNING CENTERS
Linking children, families, schools and community since 1897.

Dear Mr. Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application for the State of Colorado. On behalf of Early Connections Learning Centers in Colorado Springs, Colorado, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Early Connections Learning Centers is a 114-year-old early learning program serving limited income children and families in centers and homes in the Colorado Springs community. We believe all children should have access to high quality comprehensive programs. We believe a well-integrated system will allow our state to better serve all children and afford them the opportunity to be successful in school and in life. We believe partnerships and collaborations are an important part of any good quality program. Early Connections is just one example of how a local organization can create sustainable supports by working with Head Start, the Colorado Preschool Program, and public-private partnerships. The RTT-ELC will allow our state to replicate successful models like ours throughout the state.

As a member of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and a leader in my own community, I am committed to ensuring full support to assist in providing input in defining and implementing the early learning development standards, full participation in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS), supporting and promoting the kindergarten readiness assessment, embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community, and full commitment to implementation of the state governance model that allows for accountability through a localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Diane L. Price
President & CEO
Early Connections Learning Centers

Assuring Better Child Health & Development Project

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Colorado's Assuring Better Child Health & Development (ABCD) Project, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The vision of the ABCD project is that children in Colorado meet their maximum developmental potential. Because early identification and referral has been demonstrated to improve developmental trajectories early in the child's life and capitalizing on the momentum of the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations on developmental screening, ABCD has worked intensively to make the necessary policy and practice improvements to change the use of validated screening tools as part of well-child care from a "best practice" to a "standard of practice." The federal RTT-ELC grant would allow the ABCD team to provide increased training and technical assistance around the significance of early identification and referral to health care and early learning workforce in Colorado.

The federal RTT-ELC grant will allow the ABCD project to enhance our participation in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards, we will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment, we will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community and we will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Eileen Bennett
Colorado State Coordinator ABCD

DENVER PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the State of Colorado's application to the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund. These critical funds will help to strengthen and accelerate early education and care initiatives already underway in Colorado through bolstered infrastructure, visibility, and accountability. Every child deserves to enter kindergarten fully prepared to succeed. These funds will help Colorado to ensure every child receives that right.

The Denver Preschool Program was created through a ballot measure approved by the Denver voters. In recognition of their commitment to the importance of early education, voters approved that funding be allocated to every four-year-old in Denver so that they might attend the preschool of their choice. The Denver Preschool Program administers those dollars, as well as partners with our community preschool providers in developing quality programming across the entire city. Our organization is a tangible reflection of our city's commitment to and recognition of the importance of early education, and the advantage that preschool provides in preparing children for academic success.
The Denver Preschool Program will support the successful implementation of Colorado's plan presented in the Early Learning Challenge Fund application in every aspect that is congruent with our mission. In particular, we will:

- Continue to evaluate the progress of both past and present participants in our program, with keen attention given to grade-level reading performance.
- Work closely with the state QRIS system to share lessons learned as we implement a provider rating system that utilizes both an environmental rating assessment as well as an assessment of teacher-child interactions.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Eileen Piper
CEO, Denver Preschool Program

September 23, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Invest in Kids (IIK) we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts that will prepare every child to arrive at kindergarten ready to learn and succeed.

IIK focuses on high quality programs that benefit very young children because we know the importance of those years in the development of their social, emotional and intellectual skills. We focus exclusively on evidence based programs with proven outcomes for the communities we serve. IIK sits as an intermediary between program developers and community practitioners to ensure the highest quality programming for Colorado's vulnerable young children. We know the most important investment we can make is in proven, preventative programs.

IIK is an invested partner in this process. Specifically, IIK will:

- Support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- Embrace strategies that support and engage families in our programs and in the larger community.
- Conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Lisa Merlino
Executive Director, Invest in Kids

Colorado Interagency Coordinating Council
Colorado Part C Program

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado Interagency Coordinating Council (CICC), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The CICC, as the advisory council to the Part C program, has had a long-term role in ensuring accountability at the state and local level and supporting family engagement and leadership. In addition, within the scope of the RTT-ELC work, the CICC will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards, examining how quality rating standards can be applied to early intervention services, work collaboratively to identify effective workforce development strategies, and embrace strategies that support and engage families in the early intervention program and in the larger early childhood community.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Respectfully

(b)(6)

James Brennan
Parent and CICC Co-Chair

DeeAnn Westfall
Parent and CICC Co-Chair

Colorado Association for Infant Mental Health

October 9, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express strong support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado Association for Infant Mental Health (CoAIMH), we are excited that the federal RTT-ELC grant will provide many opportunities to move the State of Colorado forward with ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. The RTT-ELC will allow Colorado to continue to make significant investments in both quality efforts and meaningful collaborations to ensure that every child in Colorado is prepared to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. With great intentionality, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better, streamlined access to high quality programs and services- a particular focus of the work of CoAIMH.

CoAIMH is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote education and research related to infant mental health and facilitate networking and cooperation among those concerned with the optimal development of infants and infant-caregiver relationships. We also strive to advocate for use of scientifically-based programs of care, intervention, and prevention of mental impairment in infancy and support local and state policies that promote family and infant mental health.

We believe that early learning opportunities must take into account the social and emotional developmental needs of very young children and as an organization, we strive to educate our colleagues regarding the importance of addressing family and young children's mental health concerns with effective, proven interventions. We are poised to assist in the development of early leaning standards which reflect social and emotional development. Additionally, CoAIMH will lend its expertise in creating professional development trainings, based on current research findings, to those on the front lines with children and families.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing professionals with access to the necessary information to improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. The proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado reflects a system that benefits all Coloradans.

Many thanks to the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that seeks to improve early learning and development throughout Colorado. We greatly appreciate your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Stacey Bromberg, PhD
President, CoAIMH

Jordana Ash, LCSW, IMH-E(IV)®
President-Elect, CoAIMH

KID CONNECTS

integrated health & mental health consultation

October 9, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

It is with great enthusiasm that I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the state of Colorado. This opportunity will enable Colorado to make significant progress on many efforts that are already underway on behalf of very young children, their families and caregivers in our state. On behalf of Kid Connects: Integrated Health and Mental Health Consultation, we support this request and see the federal RTT-ELC grant as a way forward for the State of Colorado on many important fronts, bringing early learning and educational reforms to those who will benefit most. We are especially pleased to see that these funds will help Colorado assist those children with high needs who require better access to high quality programs and services. It allows Colorado to make significant investments to a quality enhancement system that will prepare all Colorado children for success in kindergarten, later schooling, and life.

Kid Connects is a nationally recognized early childhood mental health consultation program, selected for this recognition by having data demonstrating our outcomes and effectiveness. We pioneered early work on understanding expulsions from child care and reducing the risk of expulsion through our mental health consultation program. Kid Connects has been on the front lines with early learning professionals and parents, working to improve the capacity of caregivers to understand young children's cognitive, developmental, and social emotional needs and to develop skills to support all children in meeting their potential. We applaud the RTT-ELC for its emphasis on data to inform practice and its focus on parent engagement as a vital component of the approach.

As a manualized and state replicated model for early childhood mental health consultation, Kid Connects is uniquely positioned to partner with the RTT-ELC. We will lend our expertise and assist our state in meeting its planned outcomes by sharing proven strategies for effective parent and caregiver engagement. In addition, we will offer professional development trainings and parent workshops aligned with this initiative and designed to ensure early learning professionals have necessary materials and resources for authentic improvements.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's early childhood system agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. This comprehensive approach, with a governance structure that sets strong accountability and yet allows for local delivery, is well-suited for Colorado.

Kid Connects appreciates the foresight of the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a courageous opportunity for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Jordana Ash, LCSW, IMH-E(IV)®, Kid Connects Director

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

October 12, 2011

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of Stand for Children Colorado, I am writing to express support for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC). This grant will allow Colorado to make significant investments in high-quality early education programs that are necessary to prepare children in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist high-needs children who require better access to programs and services that can give them an equal chance at success.

Stand for Children's mission is to ensure that all children, regardless of their background, graduate from high school prepared for, and with access to, a college education. Our organization has been actively involved in reforming education in Colorado and I believe that the RTT-ELC proposal will greatly enhance our achievements so far. We especially support the opportunity to adopt more rigorous standards and assessments for early learning programs and ensure that early learning professionals can access data and tools to improve the quality of the programs in which they work.

Stand for Children Colorado can help achieve the outcomes of this grant by continuing our advocacy efforts in support of early intervention. We are currently promoting the kindergarten readiness assessment due to be implemented in 2013 and will actively monitor Colorado's implementation of P-20 alignment toward postsecondary/workforce readiness.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity to pave the way for improving early learning and development throughout our state. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Best,

Lindsay Neil
Colorado Executive Director
Stand for Children

October 7, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Reach Out and Read Colorado, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Reach Out and Read prepares Colorado's youngest children to succeed in school by partnering with doctors to prescribe books and encourage families to read together. Doctors, nurse practitioners, and other medical professionals incorporate Reach Out and Read's evidence-based model into regular pediatric checkups, by advising parents about the importance of reading aloud and giving developmentally-appropriate books to children. The program begins at the 6-month checkup and continues through age 5, with a special emphasis on children growing up in low-income communities. Families served by Reach Out and Read read together more often, and their children enter kindergarten with larger vocabularies and stronger language skills, better prepared to achieve their potential.

Reach Out and Read Colorado has unprecedented access to young children and families and bridges early education and healthcare. Our unique model allows us to support this effort by

- We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
Megan Wilson
Executive Director

COLORADO
RENT & CHILD
FOUNDATION

1775 Sherman Street
Suite 2075
Denver, Colorado 80203
303.860.6000
www.cpcfonline.org

September 29, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and programs of the Colorado Parent & Child Foundation, it is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for the State of Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund application. If selected, the RTT-ELC grant would significantly move the State of Colorado forward in further transforming the state's early childhood system to improve program quality, close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers, incorporate early learning systems into the statewide longitudinal data system, and improve outcomes for high needs children to be ready for kindergarten.

Colorado has a rich history of collaboration and cross-sector, cross-agency cooperation to improve outcomes for young children. Building on these efforts as well as incorporating new systems for greater quality, access, and equity, positions the state well for achieving success through the Early Learning Challenge opportunity. As the statewide organization advancing the evidence-based Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) and Parents as Teachers (PAT) early childhood home visitation models, the Colorado Parent & Child Foundation is committed to inspiring parents as their child's first and most important teacher. It is our belief that ALL systems and settings affecting young children in the early years prior to kindergarten entry must work together to ensure optimal outcomes for high needs children.

The Colorado Parent & Child Foundation stands ready to help achieve the specific grant outcomes of the state's Early Learning Challenge proposal, specifically:

- Providing training and technical assistance to the early learning development workforce, particularly those that work with parents through the context of evidence-based home visitation;
- Embracing and implementing proven strategies across the state that build the capacity of families to be effective supporters of their children's early learning; and
- Providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.

In closing, the Colorado Parent & Child Foundation commends the U.S. Departments of Education and Health & Human Services for its thoughtful vision towards integrating and aligning resources and policies to improve early learning and development for our most vulnerable children. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's proposal.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Melissa L. Kelley
Executive Director

COLORADO STATEWIDE PARENT COALITION

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

October 4, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

This letter is in support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. The Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition board of directors and members are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. These funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. Colorado has made significant strides in early learning education reforms and this grant will allow Colorado to add significant investments into our quality enhancement efforts.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition's work has been focused on one of the neediest populations in our state. The Latino community and specifically the English language learner students are steadily falling behind their peers. Our work is educating and providing information and skills based training to the parents of our ELL students so that they can maintain and enhance the efforts of our teachers. Through our efforts:

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

The CSPC is very encouraged and applauds the effort of the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Richard Garcia
Executive Director

(b)(6)

State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education
201 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the State Advisory Council for Parent involvement in Education (SACPIE), we are exited about the opportunity to apply for the federal RTT-ELC grant to impact the State of Colorado and move us forward in improving quality outcomes in early learning and close the achievement gap for children with high needs. Our goal is to help ensure that Colorado's children enter kindergarten with the skills they need to be successful in school and life. It will allow Colorado to expand on and make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs, especially those who are most at risk or who do not attend an educational setting before kindergarten, across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal strongly supports Colorado's innovative reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet responds to the unique needs of local communities across Colorado.

The State Advisory Council envisions reduced dropout rates and reduced gaps in academic achievement among student groups especially when many of these gaps can be prevented in early identification, programs and services for young children with high needs and through engagement with their families The grant opportunity would ensure that all of Colorado's children enter kindergarten ready and excited to learn. The Advisory Council will:

- assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- disseminate strategies that support and engage families in our programs and in the larger community.
- conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development that promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment initiatives

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Tina House, SACPIE Chair

American Federation of Teachers, Colorado
801 S. Perry St.
Castle Rock, CO 80104

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of AFT Colorado, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

At AFT Colorado, we are actively engaged in making the education system in Colorado better. Making sure that children come to kindergarten willing and ready to learn is key to a successful system.
AFT Colorado and our education professionals are ready to engage in this grant process to ensure its success.

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Brenda Smith
President, AFT Colorado

CASE
Colorado Association of School Executives

4101 South Bannock Street ▲ Englewood, CO 80110-4606
Phone 303.762.8762 ▲ Fax 303.762.8697 ▲ www.co-case.org

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education Duncan,

Colorado has issued an important Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) and I would like to offer our organization's support for this important effort. On behalf of the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to children in Colorado with potentially transformative early learning and education reforms. We know that the investment in early childhood education yields results that will help Colorado prepare every child to succeed in school. These funds are especially critical for students who do not have significant support at home due to situations (including poverty, apathy and other difficult circumstances) that are no fault of the children themselves.

This grant would allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality educational programming and enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. Our top goal is to prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten success, which will serve them well as they continue to matriculate through the grades. It is especially important to note that these funds will provide a disproportionate, positive impact on children with high needs and disadvantaged background. Our goal, simply, is to provide better access to quality programs and services in early childhood education.

This grant proposal supports Colorado's efforts that are already underway. It would provide outstanding early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. Importantly it would also ensure that early learning professionals would have access to key data and tools. In the end these investments in our early childhood workforce will yield measurable results to children who need it most. We also support the governance model that will allow locally developed solutions to meet the needs of children across Colorado.

CASE is Colorado's preeminent organization for public school leaders and we have more than 2,000 members that come from each of the state's 178 school districts. We serve school leaders, such as superintendents, principals, curriculum developers, technology experts and more. Because we have so many members who work in schools and districts across Colorado, this is an incredibly important topic for us. Getting students ready to learn in K-12 education is a top priority.

We can help in many ways to help achieve the grant's goals, and can provide direct assistance to ensure our members are plugged into the critical aspects of improving early childhood opportunities in Colorado. For example:

- *CASE members will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards. Our members are experts in how children learn, and we can help in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QIRS);*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community. We already conduct many workshops and conferences and can assist in providing resources to support professional development opportunities for educators;*
- *CASE members support a state accountability structure that has a localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your serious consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Bruce Caughey
Executive Director

Denver Public Schools
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
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FAX 720-423-3318
TTY 720-423-3741
WEB www.dpsk12.org

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the State of Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC"). As the former CEO of a large urban school district, you deeply appreciate the critical role that early childhood education plays in closing the achievement gaps and giving all children a solid foundation for learning and success in school. And we at the Denver Public Schools greatly appreciate your leadership in raising the prominence of this issue and offering opportunities for increased investments in our earliest learners.

The State of Colorado and the Denver Public Schools have been leaders in education reform—not only in creating innovative programs that improve service to our families, but also in establishing strong accountability measures to ensure that service is meeting our high standards. We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts—many of which are already under way in our state—that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten and help get them off to a great start on their education.

Denver Public Schools also serves the highest percentage of high-needs children in Colorado, and we see this as a great chance to give those kids better access to high-quality programs and services. And please be assured that our district will provide its full support in achieving all of the outcomes outlined in the grant proposal.

Thank you for creating a bold program that has so much potential to carve out a clear path to educational success for early learners across our country. And thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Best,

Tom Boasberg

Tom Boasberg
Superintendent

COLORADO SPACE COALITION
A MILE CLOSER TO SPACE

October 11, 2011

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the Colorado Space Coalition (CSC), I write in support of the State of Colorado's application for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant (RTT-ELC).

The CSC's membership represents more than 40 aerospace industry stakeholders, including the region's major aerospace and defense contractors. Together with the CSC's small and mid-size company members, these partners represent the full supply chain in the military, civil, and commercial space markets. Our goal is to further grow Colorado as a center of excellence for space, and the best place for aerospace companies to locate and thrive.

A key factor in the continued success of both Colorado – and the nation's – aerospace and other technology industries is the support of educational efforts that address workforce shortages and replenish engineers, scientists and other skilled workers. The CSC is excited about the opportunity to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides. It allows Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. One of the aerospace industry's most pressing issues is the need for a diverse and robust pipeline of future employees to maintain competitiveness in the global marketplace. We view such an investment in early education as a fundamental building block for increasing student performance and opportunities for post-secondary education success, and therefore access to careers in technology fields.

We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability, yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado. The CSC applauds the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Major General, USAF (Ret.)
Colorado Space Coalition Co-Chair

THE PITON FOUNDATION

THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DIVISION OF
THE GARY-WILLIAMS COMPANY

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

As the former Lt. Governor of Colorado from 2007-2011, Senior Fellow for The Piton Foundation and member of the Lt. Governor Garcia's Literacy Action Plan committee, I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. I am excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten, as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities.

In addition to The Piton Foundation, I strongly believe in the efforts taking place in Colorado to improve early learning development standards, expand the Quality Information Rating System, and the adoption and implementation of a kindergarten readiness assessment. The Piton Foundation is an eager partner in the efforts for early learning in Colorado and will embrace strategies that support and engage families and the larger community.

I applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Honorable Barbara O' Brien
Former Lt. Governor of Colorado 2007-2011
Senior Fellow, The Piton Foundation

Aloha Foundation
400 South Monaco Parkway
Denver CO 80224

October 1, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. The Aloha Foundation (Colorado) is excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare all Colorado children for kindergarten and future educational success. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda in two ways. It ensures that the state adopts world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. It also provides early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of workforce and early learning and development programs.

Aloha is a small family foundation; it focuses on integration of systems that impact young children and their families. The foundation's mission begins with "stewardship" and thus Colorado's RTTT-ELC application will go a long way to strengthening the education and child development systems that nurture our youngest citizens. The Aloha Foundation especially supports the proposed governance model, which ensures accountability, yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Beverly R. Buck, JD MPA
Trustee, Aloha Foundation

Chambers Family Fund

44 Cook Street, Suite 240
Denver, Colorado 80206
303.839.4620 main line
www.chambersfund.org

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of Chambers Family Fund, we are excited about the opportunity that the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) grant provides to move Colorado forward on early learning and education reforms. The RTT-ELC will allow Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, continuing 15 years of private funding investments in our state. We want every child in Colorado, especially those with high needs, to be prepared for kindergarten and future school achievement. These funds will make a difference in Colorado.

Chambers Family Fund improves early care and education by collaborating with organizations that are leaders in changing systems, educating the public and advocating for children and their future. We invest in systems change by funding the State of Colorado's reform agenda and believe that high quality early care and education provides crucial long-term benefits for young children, their families and our communities. There are opportunities for increasing the quality and quantity of early childhood education in Colorado because our state leaders understand the long term benefits of enriched early education and know the implications of a lack of early, high quality care and education are serious and costly. We believe our state governance model supports local initiatives and innovation. For these reasons, we will continue our strategic grantmaking to engage families and communities in the early education of children.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt excellent early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. Early learning professionals need access to the necessary data and tools to continue the improvement of quality early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

We are grateful that the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services is focusing on early care and education and providing Colorado with the opportunity to make Colorado the best state for early learning that will lead to later school success. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Merle C. Chambers
President

Letty Bass
Executive Director

Mile High United Way
Give. Advocate. Volunteer.
www.UnitedWayDenver.org

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

We are writing to express unequivocally our support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Mile High United Way, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on groundbreaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability, yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

As the first United Way in the country, for more than 124 years, Mile High United Way has been a catalyst for social change. Today we work with hundreds of businesses, local nonprofit partners, government agencies and policy-makers to unite people, ideas and resources to advance the common good.

For the past decade, Mile High United Way has focused its investments in the issues of school readiness: ensuring that Children Enter School Ready to Succeed. We know that Colorado's children must enter school ready to succeed. Studies have shown that more than 80 percent of brain development occurs by age five—before many children even set foot in a classroom. Mile High United Way's *Early Learning and Development* focus area under the School Readiness Initiative helps children enter school with the skills and supports needed to succeed.

Mile High United Way has a long history of working to improve the quality of early care and education programs in the Denver metro area. In 1997, Mile High United Way joined with a coalition of business, philanthropic, religious and other community leaders to enhance the development of Colorado's young children and to support their parents. From that coalition, a new agency, Educare Colorado, now known as Qualistar Colorado, was created to implement a Quality Rating System to measure quality in all licensed centers and home early care and education settings for children from birth to kindergarten. Programs receive a rating on four-star scale; a Quality Performance Profile, outlining the strengths and challenges facing their program; a detailed action plan and timeline for improvement; and a coach to help realize quality improvements. In the 2007 fiscal year, Mile High United Way invested $3.5 million in a partnership with Qualistar Colorado to help Mile High United Way's funded childcare centers implement Quality Improvement Plans. This investment, part of $7.5 million invested in early childhood education that year, resulted in 85 percent of Mile High United Way's funded childcare providers achieving a quality rating of three or four stars. In addition to providing parents with a valuable resource, these objective ratings verifying quality enabled the centers to qualify for higher reimbursement rates from the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program and Denver Preschool Program.

Because of the critical importance of high quality, accessible, and sustainable early care and education, and of ensuring that parents and families are adequately supported, Mile High United Way is committed to continuing to invest and leverage resources to create an environment that fulfills the needs of children so that they enter school equipped to learn and ready to succeed. In partnership with the offices of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the state legislature, the Colorado Department of Education, the network of 14 Colorado United Ways, local organizations, communities, families, parents, and teachers, Mile High United Way is working on improving early grade literacy rates in Colorado.

Mile High United Way was recently awarded a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund program to implement a statewide effort aimed at improving the proportion of students reading at grade level by the end of third grade, which research demonstrates is a critical benchmark and is predictive of future educational and career outcomes. For these grade-level reading efforts to succeed, they must be augmented by increasing the number of quality, affordable early care and education programs available to Colorado families, consistent with the goals of the RTT-ELC program.

Mile High United Way has partnered with the David and Laura Merage Foundation to meet this vital need. Early Learning Ventures is a shared-services model that helps early care and education providers—the vast majority of which are small or home-based businesses—address the sector's challenges and inefficiencies so that they can focus on what they do best: providing care for children. By taking advantage of economies of scale, using innovative technology, and providing professional development opportunities and sharing of best practices, Early Learning Ventures is committed to improving the quality and decreasing the cost of early care and education programs, particularly for children in low-income communities. All providers wishing to participate in the program and take advantage of its cost savings and quality improvements are required to be rated

by objective, independent evaluators like Qualistar Colorado, ensuring that parents have the information they need to make decisions about their children's care and education.

A successful Colorado application to RTT-ELC would dramatically strengthen these efforts. The early care and education sector in Colorado is tasked with preparing 350,000 children under the age of five for success in school and in life. As Mile High United Way has demonstrated with its
nationally lauded partnership with the City and County of Denver and nonprofit service providers to end homelessness, the biggest problems are best approached collaboratively.
This application would bolster and leverage the work already begun to ensure that providers are equipped to stay on the cutting edge of curriculum, evaluation, and use of technology to impact as many children as possible.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Christine Benero
President & CEO
Mile High United Way

Peter Beaupre
Chair, Board of Trustees
Mile High United Way

THE COLORADO TRUST

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DENVER, CO 80203-1604
WWW.COLORADOTRUST.ORG

PHONE 303-837-1200
TOLL FREE 888-847-9140
FAX 303-839-9034

ACHIEVING ACCESS TO HEALTH FOR ALL COLORADANS

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the State of Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC). The RTT-ELC grant will allow Colorado to make significant investments in the quality enhancement efforts that are essential to ensuring that children are prepared for kindergarten and success later in life. In addition, these funds will help Colorado's most vulnerable children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services. The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs.

The Colorado Trust is a statewide grant making foundation dedicated to achieving access to health for all Coloradans. Over the years The Trust has made substantial investments to support early childhood learning and development across the state. From 1999 to 2008 The Trust dedicated $10,009,263 in grant support to Qualistar Early Learning. This Trust initiative resulted in the creation of the state's early learning quality rating system (QRS) and an evaluation by the RAND Corporation which confirmed the validity of the Qualistar QRS as a measure of child care quality.

The Trust views child health as an essential component of school readiness and early elementary success. In 2008 the foundation launched a five-year, $6.1 million Early Childhood Health Integration funding strategy. The goal of this current investment is to support Colorado's network of Early Childhood Councils to better integrate health systems and health care providers into their local systems-building efforts as a means to improve children's access to health coverage and health care throughout the state.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Ned Calonge, MD
President and CEO

DANIELS FUND

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

The purpose of this letter is to share the Daniels Fund's commitment to funding Early Childhood Education in Colorado and to convey our confidence in the Colorado proposal for the Race to the Top / Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant. The Daniels Fund's focus in Early Childhood Education is a strong fit with the reform agenda laid out in the RTT-ELC. We fund teacher / professional development, facility quality, and parental engagement with the specific goal of improving the quality of the early childhood education system to ensure school readiness.

Colorado's RTT-ELC proposal supports a reform agenda by ensuring that the state adopts world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early-learning development programs.

The Daniels Fund was founded by the late Bill Daniels in the year 2000 with the mission of partnering with individuals, organizations, and communities to recognize inherent value, develop abilities, and provide opportunities in order to fulfill our collective potential. Since inception, the Daniels Fund has made over 450 grants totaling $18 million to improve the quality of the early childhood education system in Colorado.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Barbara Danbom
Senior Vice President

THE DENVER FOUNDATION

September 30, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the State of Colorado. The Denver Foundation is excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist vulnerable children across the state who need better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We also support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Denver Foundation, Colorado's oldest and largest community foundation, has a long history of supporting the most vulnerable in our community – including very young children and their families. For over ten years, our Community Grants Program has funded high-quality home visitation programs, strong early learning centers serving low income children, and nonprofits that work in variety of ways to equip parents with the tools to support early learning and help all children enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed. We believe that, for low-income children and children of color, high quality early education, kindergarten readiness, and family engagement and support are important components of closing the achievement gap – and Colorado's RTT-ELC proposal presents the opportunity for key advancements in these areas.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

David Miller
President and CEO

SPACE FOUNDATION

September 30, 2011
Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

The Space Foundation is pleased to offer a letter of support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. Grant funds from RTT-ELC will allow the State of Colorado to move forward on critical education reforms that impact early learners. The Space Foundation is excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. Preparing each and every child in Colorado for academic excellence is critical. RTT-ELC funds will help Colorado assist children from variable demographics across the state and will allow better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. In addition, RTT-ELC funds will provide early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Space Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 organization headquartered in Colorado Springs with a global reach. The only organization to represent the entire space community, the Space Foundation is committed to STEM education reform through cross-curricular, hands on, experiential learning for prek-2 grade educators. Early learners are essential to the future of the economic stability of the United Sates as technological advances are creating an increasingly competitive global community.

The Space Foundation seeks to elevate early learning as a viable vehicle for future student academic success. Over the course of the last decade, the Space Foundation has carefully developed education programs focusing on *Space Across the Curriculum* courses that are graduate degree certified courses for in-service and pre-service educators. *Space Across the Curriculum* courses offer Pre-K-2 educators the opportunity to engage and encourage early learners through the captivating and imaginative world of space.

The Space Foundation applauds the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for recognizing the impact of early education and creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Elliot Holokauahi Pulham
Chief Executive Office

GATES FAMILY FOUNDATION

3575 Cherry Creek North Drive, Suite 100
Denver, Colorado 80209-3600
303.722.1881 phone
303.316.3038 fax

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

The Gates Family Foundation supports the State of Colorado's application for Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge ("RTT-ELC") funding. The Foundation staff is excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant will provide to the State of Colorado. If awarded, the RTT-ELC funding will help Colorado further enhance the quality improvement efforts that are already underway. At its core, Colorado's comprehensive strategy is designed to provide children with high needs better access to high quality programs and services, and as a result to better prepare our state's children for kindergarten.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Gates Family Foundation invests in Colorado-based projects and organizations primarily through capital grants which have meaningful impact and enhance the quality of life for those visiting, working and living in the state. The Foundation seeks to promote self-sufficiency, excellence and innovation in education, healthy lifestyles, community enrichment, connection to nature and stewardship of the state's natural inheritance.

Historically, the Gates Family Foundation has demonstrated a funding interest in increasing access to quality early childhood education and in promoting child readiness for elementary school; however, the Foundation has traditionally limited its funding to capital support for licensed childhood education centers, with particular but not exclusive interest in rural areas of the state. In the future, we anticipate an increased emphasis by the Foundation on increasing capacity to get more school children to a universal level of academic proficiency. The shift in direction is guided by the Foundation's trustees and is reflected in our current strategic planning process. While we are not currently able to share the specifics of this new direction, the intention is to explore approaches that will include and go beyond capital grant making. Essentially, the Gates Family Foundation is interested in those efforts that will ultimately nurture and advance an educated and engaged global citizenry. We believe that to truly help today's children better participate in the economic opportunities and social life of Colorado's tomorrow, the Gates Family

Foundation must engage in and support those efforts that increase access to early learning and advance early childhood standards.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

President
Gates Family Foundation

Investing in innovation in public schools

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the Colorado Legacy Foundation, I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on groundbreaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Colorado Legacy Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) that serves as a critical friend and partner to the Colorado Department of Education in the effective implementation of good public policy. We identify promising practices, invest in innovative work, recommend policy, evaluate results, and share our findings with all Colorado school districts and schools. We believe that every school should have an effective leader, every classroom should have an effective teacher, and every child should be healthy and ready to learn. Further, we believe the support for this work should begin with early childhood.

The work of the Colorado Legacy Foundation aligns with and supports the goals of Colorado's RTT-ELC proposal in the following ways:

- Our Educator Effectiveness program works to improve the quality of Colorado's teacher preparation, recruitment, retention and evaluation, including support for high quality educators at early learning levels;
- Our Integration Project focuses on effective implementation of recent legislation regarding standards, assessments, and principal and teacher evaluations in thoughtful and collaborative ways, informing statewide strategies for an aligned and effective P20 system, beginning with School Readiness;

- Our Health and Wellness program supports the proven link between health and academics, as well as the role of family and community in fostering sustainable state and local school wellness efforts; and
- Our Expanded Learning Opportunities initiative promotes a customized learning system that adapts to the changing world and leverages 21st Century opportunities, including high quality community partnerships, effective blended learning environments and extended learning time for all students.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Helayne Jones
President & CEO
Colorado Legacy Foundation

VAIL VALLEY FOUNDATION

To enhance and sustain the spirit of the Vail Valley by providing leadership in athletic, cultural and educational endeavors.

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In Memoriam
President Gerald R. Ford

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Elaine Kelton

Education Initiatives

1989, 1999 & 2015 FIS World Alpine Ski Championships

1994 & 2001 UCI World Mountain Bike Championships

American Ski Classic

FIS Alpine World Cup

Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater

Quiznos Pro Challenge

Teva Mountain Games

Vail International Dance Festival

Vilar Performing Arts Center

P.O. Box 309
Vail, Colorado 81658
970-777-2015
Fax 970-949-9265
www.vvf.org

A Colorado 501 (c) (3) Nonprofit Corporation

VIA EMAIL

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Vail Valley Foundation, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Vail Valley Foundation brings together the unmatched spirit of the people to enrich and improve lives. Through the Foundation's education initiatives, our efforts are focused on one goal – to give every child access to education-based programs. The Vail Valley Foundation can help achieve the grant outcomes and/or with any particular call-outs:

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Jean B. McSpadden
Director of Education

Affiliated with the National Education Association

October 12, 2011

Mr. Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the 40,000 members of the Colorado Education Association, we are writing to express our support for Colorado's application for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. We believe Colorado's proposal will make great strides in increasing children's school readiness and closing the achievement gap among current elementary school students.

Our Association is dedicated to ensuring that every child has the opportunity for a quality public education and is prepared for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. Our members know that the first step in a quality education is making certain that children are valued, healthy, and thriving and that they have early learning opportunities before they enroll in kindergarten. The Early Learning Challenge Grant would give Colorado the financial support to complete the alignment of our excellent early learning programs and to implement statewide coordination that will result in better preparation for all children, particularly those with high needs.

We applaud those who are working on this proposal. It is an ambitious, yet achievable agenda that builds on all the other recent education initiatives we are implementing in Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Beverly Ingle
President

Tony Salazar
Executive Director

Colorado Education Association
1500 Grant Street, Denver Colorado 80203
303-837-1500 800-332-5939 coloradoea.org

CYDNEY AND TOM
MARSICO
FAMILY FOUNDATIONS

5251 DTC Parkway
Suite 1081
Greenwood Village
Colorado 80111
P 303 779 1279
F 303 779 1284

6 October 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the State of Colorado. On behalf of the Cydney and Tom Marsico Family Foundation, we are excited about the opportunity this grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. This opportunity allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Cydney and Tom Marsico Family Foundation is dedicated to improving educational outcomes for Colorado's very young. Through our Foundation and the efforts of the Marsico Institute for Early Learning and Literacy at the University of Denver, we are determined to increase access to quality early childhood education programs. We also support the education reform efforts of the state as well as the continued involvement of many Colorado foundations and community organizations.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration.

(b)(6)

Cydney Marsico
President and CEO
Cydney and Tom Marsico Family Foundation

ROSE
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

600 South Cherry Street, Suite 1200
Denver, Colorado 80246-1712
tel: 303.398.7400 fax: 303.398.7430
rcfdenver.org

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Rose Community Foundation, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts - many of which are already underway in our state - that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Rose Community Foundation helps make the Greater Denver community a more vibrant and healthy place to live. We concentrate our resources in five key program areas: Aging, Child and Family Development, Education, Health and Jewish Life. We make grants in seven Colorado counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson. In 2010, we granted $12.7 million to nonprofit organizations, schools and other agencies that better our community. Besides providing financial support, we also provide a flexible vehicle for donors to contribute to charitable causes.

Rose Community Foundation invests resources in developing and improving early childhood care outside the home, including advocacy initiatives aimed at increasing public awareness of, and access to high-quality child care. We also support parent education programs that help parents raise children who are physically and emotionally healthy, and mentally prepared to learn.

Rose Community Foundation investments span from support of quality rating systems with multi-year support to Qualistar Colorado to public awareness campaigns to direct involvement in the Colorado Early Childhood Leadership Commission. The RTT-ELC grant provides an excellent public-private partnership that will help us in implementing early learning development standards, expanding the Quality Information Rating System, promote Kindergarten readiness, enhance professional development workforce training, and continue to support and engage families.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Sheila Bugdanowitz
President and CEO

Building Paths. Leading With Action.

October 2, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Early Learning Ventures, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The ELV Alliance model is an innovative shared services model that promotes business efficiencies and quality among early care and education providers (called "affiliates".) ELV works with stable non-profits (called "Alliances"), providing each with a web-based IT platform to manage all files, record keeping, and Child and Adult Care Food Program and Colorado Division of Child Care Licensure requirements, which allows the Alliance to help manage the administrative operations of their affiliates. ELV provides the tools and supports that make managing a financially stable, high quality child care business attainable and allows their affiliates to do what they do best—care for children.

Early Learning Ventures plans to provide statewide support for:

- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*

- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment through our Early Learning Ventures Alliance members.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus through our statewide partnerships with Early Childhood Councils as well as the Early Learning Ventures Alliances at large non-profit child care centers.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Sue Renner
Executive Director

THE PITON FOUNDATION

THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DIVISION OF
THE GARY-WILLIAMS COMPANY

October 7, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of The Piton Foundation, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten, as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities.

The Piton Foundation is a private, operating foundation funded by the Gary-Williams Company to develop and implement programs to improve education, expand economic opportunities for families and strengthen lower-income communities. The Piton Foundation has a strong history in supporting efforts for improved early learning opportunities and systems building. Additionally, we have recently designated a 41-square mile geographic area, a Children's Corridor, in which we hope to see greater impact for success in education and health outcomes for children. One of our goals is that all young children in the Corridor are kindergarten ready.

We believe strongly in the efforts taking place in Colorado to improve early learning development standards, expand the Quality Information Rating System, and the adoption and implementation of a kindergarten readiness assessment. The Piton Foundation is an eager partner in the efforts for early learning in Colorado and will embrace strategies that support and engage families and the larger community.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Terry Minger
President, The Piton Foundation

September 30, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Denver's Great Kids Head Start, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in Colorado, that will prepare each and every child for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Denver's Great Kids Head Start currently provides comprehensive early childhood services to 1,153 children and their families through six delegate agencies. Strategically based within the Denver Mayor's Office for Education and Children, we are uniquely able to integrate Head Start services with broader early childhood efforts in our City. This allows our program to prepare young children for Kindergarten and parents to strengthen their roles and their child's primary educator.

Our program can contribute to the overall success of Colorado's efforts through participation in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System in all 62 Head Start classrooms. Equally important will be our continued efforts to support and engage our families in parenting classes and other strength-based initiatives that we implement. Our program is already supporting professional development as we meet the requirements of the Head Start Act of 2007. We currently exceed the national mandate for teacher credentialing as stated in the Act.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Al Martinez, Ph.D.
Head Start Director

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing in support of the Race to the Top Early Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the State of Colorado. On behalf of the Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start program located on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to move forward in its efforts for quality childcare and kindergarten readiness for its children. In addition, these funds will help Colorado serve children with high needs access quality programs.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

We are a Head Start program under the Region XI, AI/AN branch and serve not only Native American children, but all children in our small community. We have worked closely with the State of Colorado in implementing its Colorado Preschool Project program and feel Colorado cares about the education of its youth. By being a part of this initiative our Program will have access to training opportunities to increase our teacher's skill level, training on assessments to get accurate information on children and ideas to support and engage families in our program.

Our Program will help achieve the outcomes of this grant by:

- Providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning standards.
- Embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- Conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- Supporting the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for understanding the importance of early learning opportunities and for creating an opportunity that will improve early learning and development through Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Char Schank, Director

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of *Clayton Early Learning*, I am writing to express our enthusiasm to support the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. This grant opportunity will allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will prepare each child in Colorado for kindergarten and success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports the reform efforts that adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. It also provides early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of the workforce and child development programs.

Clayton Early Learning provides exemplary Early Head Start and Head start comprehensive services in the Clayton Educare School to more than 400 children and their families. Our children's success demonstrates the societal and economic value of investing in the earliest years in order to prevent the need for costly interventions later. Clayton advances the field of early childhood education through its Institute. The Institute facilitates quality improvement in programs in Denver and across Colorado, focusing on creation and evaluation of best practice models and annually offering training, education, and coaching to hundreds of early childhood educators.

Through Clayton's current innovative partnerships with higher education, public service media, other researchers, public schools, advocacy organizations and federal/state and private funders, this grant will enhance our continued efforts to better understand the linkages among program quality, teacher preparation and child/family outcomes.

We fully support the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating an opportunity to strengthen the improvement of early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Cathy McCarty
Vice President Clayton Educare

Charmaine Lewis
Senior Director of Clayton Educare

Early Childhood Education Program
Cherry Creek School District #5

October 5,, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of <insert your organization or community name>, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Early Childhood Education Program in Cherry Creek School District (CCSD) is blending of students funded by Head Start, Colorado Preschool Program, Special Education, and Tuition. Regardless of the funding source the focus of the early learning program is to provide every child with access to a learning environment that supports social/emotional skills, joy in learning, and academic foundations. The opportunity for our very diverse community to expand and strengthen the program in our community would be very valuable for the 1750 young children we currently serve and even more so for the average of 300 plus who wait for the opportunity through two of the program's funding sources.

The program leadership and teachers would welcome the opportunity to work with our community, region, and the leaders in the state of Colorado to achieve the outcomes of the grant. Our program has several areas of focus that we would be especially interested in assisting:

- supporting and engaging families in our program and in the larger community
- conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce
- assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of appropriate early learning development standards

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Respectfully,

Evelyn Sickel
Coordinator of Special Education-ECE
Head Start Director
Early Childhood Education
11777 E Wesley Ave
Aurora, Colorado 80014

Donald M. Cassata, Ph.D.
HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR

Isebel Arellano
ADMINISTRATOR

ADAMS COUNTY
COLORADO

Head Start
7111 East 56th Avenue
Commerce City, CO 80022
PHONE 303.286.4141
FAX 303.286.4130
www.adcogov.org

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

Adams County Head Start strongly supports the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the state of Colorado. We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides for the State of Colorado in the area of early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten and future academic success. These funds will support Colorado in providing better access to high quality programs for our most vulnerable children with high needs across the state.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs.

ACHS serves 545 children three to five year olds from low income homes and children with disabilities in centers throughout Adams County. We are committed to supporting the most vulnerable children and families in our communities, county and state. The vision of ACHS is that every child enrolled in Head Start will enter kindergarten with the competencies necessary to succeed in school and caregivers will be empowered to be their child's most important teacher. ACHS supports efforts to increase community partnerships, improve the quality of child care and early childhood education and enhance coordination efforts across agencies, communities and the state. ACHS will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community. The Head Start model has consistently demonstrated success in parent engagement and support. We look forward to providing support to families and in preparing children for academic success by promoting kindergarten readiness.

We applaud the U.S. Department of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Administrator, Adams County Head Start

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Ute Mountain Ute Child Development Center, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Jean Simms
Director

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

CP OF COLORADO™
Education. Employment. Support.™

RE: Cerebral Palsy of Colorado, Inc. (CP) Endorsement

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of CP's Creative Options for Early Education Program, we want to express our enthusiastic support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten and success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards/assessments for children and early learning programs. Additionally, it would provide professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability, yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of Colorado communities.

As an ongoing, seamless, and inclusive Birth to 5 program that has served over 700 high risk, low income children annually for over 10 years, *Creative Options for Early Education* provides prevention and early intervention services with a focus on education, health, developmental milestones, social emotional supports and related activities/supports for families. In recent years, a growing body of research has offered new and powerful insight into the importance of early learning and its relationship to school and success in later life.

Creative Options for Early Education can help achieve the grant outcomes as follows:

- Assisting in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards. Participating in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- Supporting and promoting the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- Embracing strategies that support/engage families in our program and community.
- Providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for the opportunity and for consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Judith I. Ham, President and CEO

RMSER

Rocky Mountain Service Employment Redevelopment

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of *Rocky Mountain SER Head Start*, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our State, preparing each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the State that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

As a program offering early childhood services to the most vulnerable children across the State, Rocky Mtn. SER fully understands the need to support children's learning and developmental progress.

We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community. This is particularly true for those children who are dual language learners.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
Judy Lopez, Head Start Director

Impossibile visualizzare l'immagine. La memoria del computer potrebbe essere insu ciente per aprire l'immagine oppure l'immagine potrebbe essere danneggiata. Riavviare il computer e aprire di nuovo il file. Se viene visualizzata di nuovo la x rossa, potrebbe essere necessario eliminare l'immagine e inserirla di nuovo.

The Center

Early Childhood Programs
Lake County School District R-1

315 West 6th Street
Leadville, CO 80461
Phone 719 486-6928
Fax 719-486-9992

Head Start, Colorado Preschool Program, Tuition-Based Preschool and School Age Programs, Services for Children with Special Needs

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of The Center Early Childhood Programs, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Center serves 130 children ages 3-5 and receives funding from Head Start, the Colorado Preschool Program, private foundations and from tuition-paying families. We serve a diverse group of families, many of whom have extensive needs. We know that The Center makes a tangible difference in Lake County by providing high quality early childhood education, health and other services to some of the state's neediest children.

We believe that Lake County and The Center can help Colorado achieve its vision for early learning. We support and are enthusiastic about participating in the definition and implementation of early learning development standards; the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System; and the promotion of the Kindergarten readiness assessment.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kate Bartlett; Head Start Director

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Family Star Montessori School, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Family Star was founded in 1988 by a passionate group of inner-city Denver parents and educators determined to stop the decline of their community and provide their young children with a healthy future. Over the past 20 years, Family Star has become a thriving early childhood education organization serving Denver's Northeast and Northwest low-income community with innovative programming. We are home to one of the rare center-based Early Head Start (EHS) programs in the United States that is firmly grounded in the Montessori method. Family Star's programs are designed to empower children and their families to achieve a lifetime of learning and lead strong, healthy, contributive lives. We promote the age-appropriate development of children and support families as they acquire the skills to become involved and active participants in their child's education and in their community.

The academic achievement gap for students living in poverty is well-known. Low-income children consistently fall behind their peers in test scores, graduation rates, college enrollment, and other measures of academic success. Our programs close the education gap and prepare students to enter school ready to learn.

Family Star Sr. Leadership has been actively involved in the ongoing discussions while the RTT-ELC application was being developed. Going forward, Family Star Montessori School will continue to participate in discussions on implementation. Additionally, Family Star is committed to achieving child and family outcomes and will assist in the following areas:

- *providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*

- *embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*

- *conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely

Lionel Espinoza
Director of operations

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Monte Vista School District and Marsh School, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

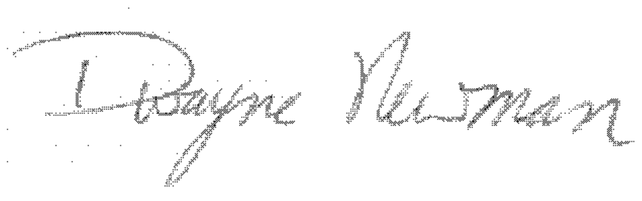
Marsh School currently serves the preschool through first grade students in the Monte Vista School District. We seek to serve early learners with researched-based practices designed to specifically support their development of self-regulation, language and cognition. We know that this will positively impact our students' success prior to graduation and on into their adult lives. We believe that this work can break the generational cycle of poverty in our community.

To help achieve the grant outcomes our first, and most immediate, steps include:

- Adopting and implementing a comprehensive early learning curriculum that meets the NAEYC early learning development standards.
- Participating in the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- Participating in the pilot of Phase I of the Kindergarten readiness assessment.

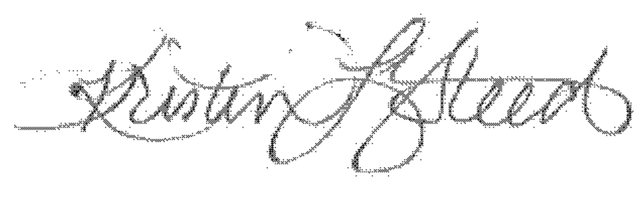
We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,



Dwayne Newman
Monte Vista School District, Superintendent

Sincerely,



Kristin Steed
Marsh School, Principal

mmunity Partnership
Child Development

October 1, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learnir and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of whic are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

CPCD is a private non-profit serving more than 1,900 children birth to five in El Paso County. We are the county's Head Sta and Early Head Start grantee, and serve almost 700 children in the state-funded Colorado Preschool Program through contractual partnerships with six school districts. As such, CPCD can help achieve the following grant outcomes:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Noreen Landis-Tyson
President/CEO

September 21th, 2011

Otero Junior College
Child Development Services
Early Head Start/Head Start/Migrant & Seasonal Head Start
1802 Colorado Avenue
LaJunta, Colorado 81050

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Otero Junior College Child Development Services, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Otero Junior College Child Development Services is an Early Head Start, Head Start, and Migrant Head Start program that operates in ten counties in Southern Colorado. These counties are rural poverty impacted communities. Most of these counties are in the top ten in Colorado for high unemployment rates. Our program serves over 1,000 women, infants, toddlers, and preschool children per year. Without our program children and families would not receive the support and education necessary to ensure school readiness for all children. It would be beneficial to all of these rural communities to be able to offer early education to all children.

Otero Junior College Child Development Services will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment as well as embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
Jamie Swartz

Mile High montessori
EARLY LEARNING CENTERS
United Way
A Mile High United Way Community Partner

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of Mile High Montessori Early Learning Centers (MHM), I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC"). MHM has been and continues to be a leader in early childhood innovation in Colorado. The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant will facilitate the continuation, expansion and implementation of the many inventive reforms that are currently underway in Colorado.

MHM has been providing comprehensive early care and education services to low income children in metro Denver since 1970, serving over 40,000 children during the past 40 years. Currently, MHM operates six core early learning centers utilizing the Montessori approach partnered with the Head Start program and offering a full-day, year-round comprehensive early learning program for children ages 2 months to 5 years living in poverty. In addition MHM operates two drop-in facilities in partnership with Department of Human Services and the court system. Recent MHM data collected from the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment shows that overall 85% of MHM students meet or exceed developmental standards. These results validate the necessity and success of a quality early childhood program.

The RTT-ELC proposal will concentrate on quality enhancement efforts designed to ensure that all Colorado preschoolers enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed. If funded, this initiative will create a solid framework for statewide accountability, establish comprehensive standards and assessments to measure child outcomes, construct model competencies and professional development opportunities for early childhood workers and actively engage parents in their children's educations from the very start.

MHM is actively supporting this grant by participating on the high quality/accountable programs assurance area and on the steering committee. Additionally, MHM staff is involved in the development of both the Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines, a statewide set of early learning and developmental guidelines for children birth to 8 years along a continuum of development, P3 Early Learning Professional Development Plan and the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, a statewide tiered quality rating system linked to licensing. I strongly believe that these initiatives will assure a holistic approach to supporting children's learning and development throughout the state.

In closing, the pursuit of quality early childhood experiences for all young children is a laudable and attainable goal. The benefits of such an endeavor are numerous and will certainly enrich our state far into the future. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's request.

Very truly yours,

Pamela K. Harris

Pamela K. Harris, PhD
President & CEO

Summit County Early/Head Start

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

As the Director of Summit County Head Start and a member of the local Early Childhood Council steering committee, I am writing to express support and commitment for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC).

As a local program serving a high need disadvantaged low-income child population Summit County Head Start recognizes the importance of providing high quality comprehensive services high need children need to begin school on equal footing with their middle- and upper-class-peers. We also know that success is more likely when the entire family is engaged and empowered to succeed. Thus, we embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the community.

We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to continue building a system that will increase the quality of all early learning and development programs for Colorado's most vulnerable children helping to ensure that they are preparing for success in school as well as later in life. The RTT-ELC proposal also supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs.

Summit County Head Start is highly committed to support as well as prepared to participate in the breakthrough work of Colorado's application. We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards and will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment at both the local and state level. Colorado's plan will dramatically improve the quality of early learning and development programs serving high need children.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Sheila Groneman
Director, Summit County Head Start

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
(970) 328-8840
FAX: (855) 848-8826
www.eaglecounty.us

EAGLE COUNTY, COLORADO

Economic Services
Children, Family & Adult Services
Public Health
Finance and Operations

October 14, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

This letter is in support of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Eagle County Early Head Start, we are excited about the opportunity to move Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. These funds will allow Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Eagle County Early Head Start provides a comprehensive home visitation program to support forty-five low income infants, toddlers, and their families. Children and families receive effective support from a highly trained team of home visitors and support staff. Creating effective partnerships with families is core to everything we do--from the qualities we seek in staff and the procedures we develop, to the transition process out of the program. Eagle County also works closely with the Eagle County Head Start Program to align systems and practices, and even shares two contracted staff to provide health and nutrition services.

As a RTT-ELC grantee, Eagle County Early Head Start will:

- Assist in developing and implementing early learning development standards.
- Embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- Support the state governance model that assures accountability but retains a localized focus.

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education

We applaud our federal partners for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Sherri Almond, Director
Eagle County Early Head Start

THOMPSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Thompson School District Integrated Early Childhood Program

800 South Taft Avenue • Loveland, CO 80537 • Office (970) 613-5031 • Fax (970)

Theresa Clements
Early Childhood Administrator

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of Thompson School District R2-J in Loveland, Colorado, I am writing to express our support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to continue to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond the kindergarten year. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state who require increased access to high quality early learning programs and services.

The Thompson School District Integrated Early Childhood Program provides preschool programming for three and four year old children and their families. We serve children in a blended preschool program that includes funding from Head Start, Colorado Preschool Program, Special Education, and tuition. The moral purpose of our organization is to close the achievement gap and we know the first step towards closing this gap includes high quality programming for all children birth to five and their families. The Colorado RTT-ELC proposal supports our local efforts of working with children and families to build strong foundational skills. This strong foundation will ensure each and every child in our community is ready for not only kindergarten but also lifelong success. Over 90% of the children in our program have numerous identified at-risk factors. We know first-hand the supports that children with high needs must have in order to be ready for kindergarten. This proposal will help to meet the needs of all young children and it aligns with our district Vision 2020 strategic plan goals. Three of our five Vision 2020 goals directly support the programs and outcomes outlined in the RTT-ELC proposal:

> **Robust Learning**: All students in the Thompson School district will graduate from high school career and college-path ready with the knowledge and skills to be lifelong learners and successful citizens.
>
> **Equity in Access**: All students will have access to robust teaching, learning, and high expectations.
>
> **Culture of Excellence**: All students and staff will succeed at the highest level through a commitment to continuous improvement.

The above district goals align with and show our support for many of the programs and outcomes in the RTT-ELC proposal. For Thompson School District our support of RTT-ELC will be evidenced by the following:

- Defining and implementing high quality and robust early learning standards
- Promoting and implementing the Kindergarten readiness assessment community-wide
- Engaging families and promoting the belief that parents are their child's first and most important teacher
- Conducting district and community-wide workshops to support professional development initiatives
- Using data to measure child and program outcomes and respond to needs with quality improvement plans

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thompson Schools is proud to be partner with the RTT-ELC Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Theresa Clements

Theresa Clements
Early Childhood Administrator
Thompson School District R2-J

METROPOLITAN STATE COLLEGE of DENVER

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of Metropolitan State College of Denver (Metro State) I would like to express my support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ECL") for the state of Colorado. As an educator at an institute of higher education, I take our responsibility to train and prepare leaders in the field of early childhood very seriously. I recognize the need for partnership between public and private institutions and interagency cooperation and collaboration.

I believe the Race to the Top funding will allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will help prepare each child in Colorado for kindergarten and beyond. I understand these funds will help Colorado continue the focus on giving children with significant needs better access to high quality programs and services. Metro State is committed to advancing the collaboration of the agencies in Colorado that work to improve the quality of life for the state's youngest population.

Thank you for your consideration of the RTT-ECL application. As an institution we fully support this effort.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Dr. Cynthia Lindquist
Chair of Special Education, Early Childhood Education, Reading and Educational Technology
(303)-556-4974
clindqu1@mscd.edu

MARSICO INSTITUTE
For Early Learning And Literacy

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The Marsico Institute for Early Learning and Literacy at the University of Denver strongly supports the proposal Colorado is submitting to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant program. As a research and policy institute, we have been very involved with Colorado's efforts to build a high quality, comprehensive, and aligned early childhood system in our state. Our deep involvement in these activities, along with our research in the area of professional development, have given us insight into what our state needs in order to provide top quality services to our youngest children.

We are pleased to see that Colorado's proposal reflects the years of collaborative work that many individuals, public agencies, and organizations have done to develop a strategic vision and plan for early childhood. As researchers, we are heartened to see that Colorado's proposal reflects our state's commitment to implementing research based practices for improving outcomes for children with high needs. The proposal also reflects Colorado's willingness to innovate to find new solutions for the complex problems involved in improving service delivery and integrating P-3 systems.

As Chair of Colorado's P-3 Professional Development Advisory Group, I would like to particularly endorse the activities being proposed in the Quality Workforce Assurance Area. The proposed activities are directly drawn from a plan developed last year by a group of diverse stakeholders in the early childhood community. These stakeholders represented early childhood programs, school districts, higher education institutions, state agencies, and professional associations. This ambitious plan was endorsed by the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, and implementation has now begun. Funding from the Early Learning Challenge Fund would enable us to accelerate the achievement of the plan's goals, which would lead to a more effective workforce to serve our highest need young children. The Advisory Group is committed to partnering with Colorado's new Office of Early Childhood to facilitate implementation of the professional development activities proposed in this grant application.

The Marsico Institute looks forward to continuing to support our state's leaders as they strengthen our early childhood state system through providing research briefs and expert opinion. Thank you for giving Colorado's proposal your most serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Virginia Maloney, Ph.D.
Director

October 4, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
Morgridge College of Education

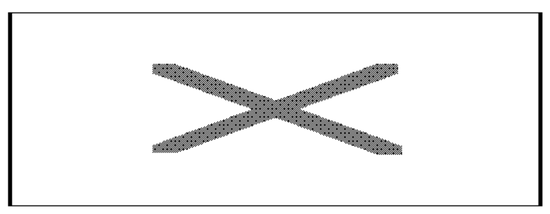
Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing on behalf of the Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. We believe that this grant opportunity can move the State of Colorado forward on implementation of ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments in enhancing the quality of early education efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will help ensure the success of each and every child in Colorado in kindergarten and beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist high-needs children across the state with better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The mission of the Morgridge College of Education is to be a force for positive change in the lives of individuals, organizations and communities through unleashing the power of learning. This begins at an early age, and involves families and caregivers, communities, and educational institutions working together to support the success of all children from birth through becoming a thriving member of society. Our extensive work in early childhood success, including our "P-20" philosophy, stems from a solid base of research and best practice about the importance of early learning for individuals, communities, and society at large. Our faculty, researchers, and students have been actively involved with Colorado's early learning efforts on many fronts, including our child, family, and school psychology programs; our Marsico Institute for Early Learning and Literacy; the Fisher Early Learning Center; support for Department of Education initiatives and the state's Early Childhood Leadership Council; and our first-of-its-kind Buell Early Childhood Leadership Program which has developed more than 100 leaders for early childhood settings across the state. We hope and expect to continue to be a key partner in the state's work to ensure high quality early learning supports for all children and their families.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.



Gregory M. Anderson, Dean
Morgridge College of Education
University of Denver

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
The Women's College

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The Women's College of the University of Denver's ABLE for Women--The Center for Women's Entrepreneurship, has been in conversation with Early Childhood Education colleagues at the University of Denver as well as the governor's office. We believe that there is the need to build entrepreneurial capacity for women in the area of Early Childhood Education providers. The Women's College supports the efforts of the state of Colorado in seeking federal assistance in Early Childhood Education and intends to partner with the state to build quality, well run Early Childhood Education centers. We look forward to moving forward with this partnership in the ensuing years.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Gangone

Lynn M. Gangone, Ed.D.
Dean

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of the Alliance for Kids, El Paso County's Early Childhood Council we are writing to express support for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC"). The RTT-ELC grant provides Colorado the opportunity to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway through its reform agenda. This will prepare each child in Colorado for kindergarten, as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will assist children with high needs across the state that requires better access to high quality programs and services.

The mission of the Alliance for Kids is to serve as a vehicle that brings together organizations and individuals to work collaboratively on a seamless system of care for young children (prenatal-8 years) and their families. Through its 50 members the Alliance impacts the local early childhood system by addressing the four domains outlined in the CO Early Childhood Framework: Early Learning; Family Support and Parent Education; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; and Health. The Alliance presently has several projects that will assist and enhance the efforts the RTT-ELC.

The School Readiness Quality Improvement Project works with several childcare sites to implement Qualistar Colorado's quality rating system, to prepare children for kindergarten. The Alliance will support the efforts of the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS) system in our community to ensure that all children have access to quality childcare.

Several members, as well as participating sites in the School Readiness Quality Improvement Project, are implementing Results Matter assessment program. We welcome the expansion of Results Matter and will promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.

The Office of Professional Development supports Early Care and Education professionals through college scholarships, which facilitates the development of a qualified workforce of child care professionals in El Paso County. We will include the opportunity for additional workshops and serve as a resource to support ongoing professional development for the workforce.

The Alliance for Kids supports the state governance model that allows for accountability but will strengthen the impact of local services and systems by emphasizing the role of early childhood councils in linking the state governance structure to local community needs.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Jennifer West, Co-Chair
Alliance for Kids

Noreen Landis-Tyson, Co-Chair
Alliance for Kids

Kristi Glasper, Coordinator
Alliance for Kids

Membership List

Terry	Barnett	Early Connections Learning Centers
Debbie	Butkus	School District 11
Terri	Carroll	Junior Academy Children's Centers
Carmen	Collins	School District 11
Vicki	Fox	Pikes Peak Library District
Jane	Germano	Young Scholars Academy
Jacqueline	Gooden	Tree Top Early Learning Center
Kathryn	Hammerbeck	Princeton Academy
Pamela	Haugard	Community Member
Jonni	Hulse	Department of Health and Environment
Deana	Hunt	Child Care Connections
Noreen	Landis Tyson	Community Partnership for Child Development
Becky	Miller	Early Connections Learning Center
Kathy	Moan	Joint Initiatives for Youth and Families
Cindy	Morgan	Early Connections Learning Center
Cynthia	Neale Downing	Pikes Peak Community College Child Development Centers
Diane	Price	Early Connections Learning Centers
Melanie	Rush	Creative Play Adventure Club
Juli	Saiz	Department of Human Services
Ginger	Stringer	The Resource Exchange
Mary	Sullivan	Pikes Peak Community College
Jade	Suter	Alliance for Kids Office of Professional Development
Danielle	Zarate	Goodwill Industries
Linda	Meredith	Community Partnership for Child Development
Michelle	Bender	Pikes Peak Community College
Leanne	Cabral	Child Care Connections
Melissa	Caron	Independent Contractor/Parent
Kathy	Dinges	Lewis Palmer School District
Gregory	Doan	Family Connections
Colleen	Head	Resource Exchange
Lynda	LaCoste	Colorado Springs School District #11
Susan	Mahoney	UCCS Child Development Center
Kelly	O'Brien	Colorado Springs Child Development Center
Matt	Payne	Peak Vista Community Health Center
Dorena	Pease	Department of Human Services
Ann	Stager	Department of Health and Environment
Josie	Watters	Early Connections Learning Centers
Jennifer	West	Alliance for Drug Endangered Children
Jennifer	Winters	Young Scholars Academy
Kristi	Glasper	Alliance for Kids
Jessica	Collette	Peak Vista Community Health Centers
Kate	Hatten	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
Randy	Hylton	Peak Vista Community Health Center
Debbie	Cain	Peak Vista Community Health Center
Amber	Cote	Pikes Peak United Way
Carrie	Cramm	Pikes Peak United Way

Jason	DeaBueno	Aspen Pointe
Sharon	Medina	Healthy Communities
Sarah	Sherwin	Senate Bill 94
Mary	Utsler	El Paso County Health Department

ARAPAHOE COUNTY
Early Childhood Council

October 7, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express our organization's support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado.
We believe that the RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs to receive comprehensive services, training, coaching, parent education and access to social-emotional/mental health support as well as to provide new programs and support to children and families currently un-served, directly supporting the healthy development of very young children in Colorado.

The Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council (ACECC) has over 10 years of demonstrated success in helping children and families thrive. We are thoughtfully building a comprehensive early childhood system which encompasses early care and education best practices, health, safety, mental health and family support service to care providers, children and families in our community. Our strong collaborations and organizational governance maintains continuing assessment of system needs and gaps in services, targeting underserved communities within our county.

ACECC is deeply invested in early care and learning. We are committed to working with the State Departments of Education and Human Services to support a statewide framework of quality and accountability, while effectively supporting children and families in the communities where they live. Specifically, Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council can help achieve the RTT-ELC grant outcomes in the following ways:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards and aligned assessments.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We will support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

Based on our ability, experience, and current initiatives, we believe we are in a prime position to accelerate programs. ACECC has the means and intent to continue to develop implementation of programs so they may be replicated and coordinated across Early Childhood Councils in Colorado.

We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

Gretchen Davidson
Executive Director

Bent, Otero & Crowley
Early Childhood Council
315 East 6th Street
Ordway. CO 81063
719-267-3640

October 10, 20111

Ame Ducan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary of Education,

We are writing to support the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the state of Colorado. Our Council is a member of the Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance (ECCLA); we coordinate many early childhood initiatives in our fifth five of sixty four counties in Colorado. We are excited about the opportunity to work with our stat partners to move Colorado forward on ground on ground breaking, transformative early learning and education reform. RIT-ELC funds will allow more of Colorado's children with high needs to access high quality programs and services and better prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten success.

Our three counties especially support the entities to respond to the individual needs of the families and children that we serve in the three counties and will also support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability of this model.

Our local Early Childhood Council is committed to working with the state ECCLA along with the State Department of Education and Human Services to help achieve the RTT-ELC grant in the following ways. We will…..

- Assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards
- Participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System
- Support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment
- Embrace strategies that support and engage families in our three county communities
- Continue efforts to maximize resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- Support the state governance model that allows for accountability with localized focus.

(b)(6)

On Behalf of Bent, Otero and Crowley County Early Childhood Council

Early Childhood Council of Boulder County

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of The Early Childhood Council of Boulder County, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

Unbeknownst to many people, children in the Boulder Valley schools (which includes our two school districts of Boulder Valley and Stain Vrain Valley) have the largest achievement gap of any school districts along the front range of Colorado. ECCBC and our community partners have been working for over 10 years to "move the needle" on this indicator, and we feel that the RTT-ELC funds would help sustain and accelerate our efforts.

Specifically, ECCBC will:

- *participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS) through the continuation of our School Readiness Project*
- *launch a Shared Services Project in Boulder County to improve the quality of EC programs*
- *embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community by working with EC providers in our community to enhance their parent engagement and family support programs*
- *expand our ongoing Professional Development Program which provides resources to support professional development initiatives for Boulder County's early learning development workforce.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Respectfully,

(b)(6)

Bobbie Watson
Executive Director

Bright Futures
For Early Childhood and Families

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Bright Futures for Early Childhood and Families, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

Bright Futures for Early Childhood and Families in one of Colorado's early childhood councils. We serve four counties in western Colorado, Montrose, Delta, San Miguel and Ouray. All of these counties are considerate rural counties. It is hard for these counties to receive the same services provided to urban counties in Colorado. All the directors of the 30 councils meet in Denver once every other month in our systems approach to early childhood issues in early care and education, health, and mental health. It is through this systems approach that Bright Futures has been able to partner with neighboring councils on the western slope to serve the needs of children and families birth to 8 years of age. With the funds provided through this grant, Bright Futures can receive the necessary support to advance early childhood standards and aligned assessments, develop a quality rating information system, strengthen capacity of early childhood workforce and support and engage families. Bright Futures will be able to partner with neighboring councils to bring programs and workshops to the Western Slope of Colorado that improve quality in early learning and close the achievement gap for children with high needs. As a team we will have the ability and financial means to help ensure Colorado's children enter kindergarten with the skills they need to be successful.

Bright Futures applauds the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Cathy James
Executive Director, Bright Futures

BROOMFIELD

Early Childhood Council

In partnership with our fiscal host, Bal Swan Children's Center

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

Please accept this letter of support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. The Broomfield Early Childhood Council (BECC) is excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on innovative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare every child for success in kindergarten and beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs are adopted, by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of workforce, early learning, and development programs. BECC supports the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of children, families, and providers in communities across Colorado.

The Broomfield Early Childhood council is made up of numerous community partners with strong investments in all domains of early childhood. BECC partners include; Broomfield Health & Human services; Public Health; WIC; Child Care Innovations Resource and Referral; local school districts; public, private, and non-profit childcare centers; family home providers; local private and non-profit agencies and businesses; parents; public library; dental and health providers. It is the goal of the BECC to create an integrated system of care that promotes the health and well being of young children, families, and providers.

The Broomfield Early Childhood Council is committed to improving the lives and meeting the early childhood needs of the community through collaboration and creativity. BECC is dedicated to both the local system of early childhood and supporting the statewide efforts of early childhood. BECC looks forward to supporting the RTT-ELC grant outcomes in the following ways:

- Assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- Embrace strategies that support and engage families in council programs and the larger community.
- Conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Shanna Torkelson, LCSW

haffee County
EARLY
ildhood Council

beginning. **Our future.**

ctober 10, 2011

ne Duncan, Secretary of Education
S. Department of Education
)0 Maryland Ave.
'ashington, D.C. 20202

ear Secretary of Education:

ım writing to express strong support for the Colorado Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge
)plication ("RTT-ELC"). Full funding of this application will lead to significant and lasting
ıprovements in school readiness for our state's children, especially those with high needs.

)lorado's Early Childhood Councils cover 98% of our state's population and provide the proven
fective and efficient infrastructure needed to implement sustainable cross sector evidence based
)proaches to improving child outcomes. Councils bring together parents and professionals from the
ırly care, health, mental health, and parent information and family support domains to assess and
ldress factors keeping children from arriving at kindergarten ready to learn. We conducted a
)mprehensive professional development assessment in 2009 and began implementing a
)mprehensive quality improvement plan that same year.

; an example, for the first time in the history of our county's licensed home child care providers
)mpleted a quality rating system. Now, 60% of our providers are rated, showing significant final
tings after the year-long coaching and training program.

'e have many successes. Since the Chaffee County Early Childhood Council was founded in
ecember of 2007, we have increased early identification of young children (birth to three) with
)ecial needs by 300% annually. These children are getting the support they need to start pre-school
ady to learn and succeed. Our ability to implement additional sustainable proven programs for high
eeds children is limited only be our lack of resources. With funding from the Colorado RTT-ELC,
)lorado is poised to make significant strides.

'ith the help of the RTT-ELC grant, our 35 member organizations look forward to expanding
ıplementation of the early learning development standards and expanding the QRIS in our
)mmunity.

ıank you for your time and consideration.
ncerely,

(b)(6)

elissa St. John
hair, Chaffee County Early Childhood Council

Child Care Connections

A child care resource and referral agency

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of the Board of Directors, clients and staff of Child Care Connections (CCC), I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. This opportunity will allow the State of Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Since 1989, Child Care Connections (CCC) has worked to promote and support alliances and training for quality child care and family services in Elbert, El Paso, and Teller Counties within the State of Colorado. Child Care Connections is part of Qualistar Colorado, a statewide network of agencies, which provide high quality child care resource and referral services.

As part of the larger system for Early Care and Education, Child Care Connections will commit to helping the State of Colorado achieve the grant outcomes in the following ways:

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
Deana Hunt
Executive Director
DeanaH@childcareconnections.net

RED ROCKS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado Community College Departments of Early Childhood Education, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten and beyond as well as to assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda in many ways, but as a community based educational body, we especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of distinct communities across Colorado.

As the primary provider of education for the Colorado Early Childhood Workforce the community college Early Childhood Education departments are uniquely positioned to make a positive impact on early learning outcomes in the State of Colorado. Research clearly shows the years from birth to age five are critical to later school success as well as to long-term life outcomes and one of the critical factors is the education and training of early care and education staff. The RTT-ELC grant could help us to achieve our statewide education and training goals. The creation of an integrated statewide approach to Early Childhood Education and Training would not only inform our course of studies, but would also allow us to create systems of measurement in order to continually improve and update our work with the Early Childhood Education Workforce, particularly in the area of working with children with high needs.

The Colorado Community College Departments of Early Childhood Education can help achieve many of the goals of this grant. Some of the outcomes we can achieve with this support include:

- We will provide support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards and will work to align systems of education and training at all levels of professional development.
- We will assure that our graduates are ready for both the workforce and for future higher education so that all children in the State of Colorado will have high quality educational experiences.
- We will work with other stakeholders to train and put into place a well-coordinated organization of coaches and mentors across the state who work closely with the faculty providing coursework for early educators.
- We will implement and expand opportunities for early educators to take in-depth coursework in community-specific areas of high need for young children.
- We will implement and support a data collection system to measure outcomes for both our students in the Early Childhood Education Workforce and the children in their programs.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Kathleen DeVries
Early Childhood Education State Discipline Chair

Family Development Center

Tami M. Havener, Executive Director
2875 Village Drive• P.O. Box 773982
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

Phone 970.879.5973
Fax 970.879.7467
thavener@familydevelopmentcenter.org

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Family Development Center of Steamboat Springs, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Our center provides comprehensive early childhood care and education services for over 400 children across 4 counties in Northwest Colorado. Programming includes an NAEYC accredited early learning center, home visitation including the Parents as Teachers model, and training and technical assistance for child care providers, plus many other services. We are actively involved with all of the following points in our local community at varying levels of intensity.

We look forward to assisting with:

- Implementation of early learning development standards.
- The expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- Promoting and implementing the Kindergarten readiness authentic assessment.
- The continuation of supporting and engaging families in our program and in the larger community.
- Conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for NW Colorado's early learning workforce.
- Supporting the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus through our early childhood council.

We believe we can fully participate and help to lead these efforts in our community. Our community's children and families will be stronger and more ready for school success following the implementation of these strategies. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

(b)(6)

Executive Director

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Pueblo Early Childhood Council (PECC) and Children First the Child Care Resource & Referral Agency for eleven counties in southeastern Colorado, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services. PECC & Children First CCR&R have collaborative partnerships with local and state entities. PECC as well as the Children First CCR&R are comprised of numerous partners from a diverse cross section within our community, including, both our local school districts, CO Bluesky, our early intervention agency, well over 40 early care and education programs, which include both child care centers and family child care homes, local department of human services, court appointed special advocates, city/county health department, domestic violence shelters, home visitation programs, family support programs, child psychologists, both local hospitals, boys & girls clubs, health clinics, mental health agencies, local judicial system, retired educators and business people, child care resource & referral agency community partners and Pueblo Community College who serves as our fiscal agent, both for PECC and Children First, just to name some of the organizations that are actively involved with our early childhood council efforts, and who strongly support this application.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments, which focus on quality services for children and early learning programs, by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Pueblo Early Childhood Council's goal is to make Pueblo a great place to raise a child by working to improve early childhood care and education for children and their families. PECC has been in existence since 1997 and is a strong force in early childhood in the community as well as in the state in promoting a high quality early care and education system.

Children First CCR&R has been in existence since 1995, provides comprehensive services to children, families, early care and education professionals as well as communities at large. Services provided by Children First are: free child care referrals to licensed child care programs; partner with business and community leaders as well as employers to raise the awareness of the importance of quality child care; provide mentoring for early care and education professionals interested in improving the level of quality care they provide; assist military families with access to high quality child care and fee assistance; speak out a the local, state and national level on behalf of children and family issues; collect and disseminates child care data that is utilized to support ongoing early care and education efforts and provides a picture of where the system is now and where the data shows we need to plan for ongoing efforts. Children First is a leader, with state and national collaboration, in bringing about accessible, affordable, quality early learning opportunities

When CO is awarded these early learning funds, the impact to young children and their families in our communities will support high quality services for all children living in the state of CO. We would be able to broaden, deepen and strengthen our current efforts as well as look at other needs we have not had the funds to currently address. It is our belief that it takes a Pueblo to build a child and that is the value system our early childhood council works with on all of our efforts.

PECC and Children First CCR&R will help achieve the outcomes stated in the grant in the following ways:

- *We will support and assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will actively participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS), by bringing the local perspective to this effort.*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment, working to assure all children are ready to enter kindergarten and capable of reaching their maximum potential.*
- *We will help to develop and embrace strategies that support and engage families we serve in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops, trainings and other formal and informal professional development opportunities, while providing resources we may have to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus, because CO is a local control state. Although, local control, does not keep us from working in a cohesive manner thru our CO Early Childhood System, it does provide us with a uniqueness to tailor our efforts so they are specific to our local communities, that align with statewide efforts.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado, and look forward to this opportunity to move our efforts forward in a positive manner that will benefit every child in our state. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Cindy Bernal,
Pueblo Early Childhood Council/Children First CCR&R Director
900 W. Orman Ave, AB 154D, Pueblo CO 81004
Cindy.Bernal@pueblocc.edu

Colorado Association of Family Child Care (CAFCC)
October 10th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado Association of Family Child Care (CAFCC), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

CAFCC is organized for the promotion of Licensed Family Child Care. We promote a positive professional image of Family Child Care according to current Colorado rules and regulations. We enjoy positive working relationships with the child care community at local, state, and national levels. CAFCC educates the community about the benefits of family child care; and why early learning matters. CAFCC is the professional voice of Colorado's 4000 licensed family child care providers. We support legislation that has a positive impact on child care and stay current with legislation, which may have an impact on child care.

CAFCC provides the Family Child Care perspective regarding policy and procedures with the Colorado Department of Human Services, Qualistar, The Governor's Advisory Committee for Child Care Licensing, the Early Childhood Summit, the Office of Professional Development, Local municipalities, the National Association for Family Child Care, the Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Colorado Legislative Coalition. We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards and will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment .We embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community .We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce. And finally we support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Tricia Kelly-Lynch
President
Colorado Association of Family Child Care

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and developmentally appropriate and authentic assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We also support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Colorado AEYC is the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The CAEYC mission is to provide leadership, advocacy and professional development for early childhood professionals and to promote high quality, developmentally appropriate, accessible early care and educational services for Colorado children from birth to age eight. Our vision is that every child in Colorado will have access to high quality early care and education.
CAEYC is actively involved in the many quality enhancement efforts that are already underway in Colorado that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten. CAEYC pledges to:

- Assist in the development to the definition and implementation of early learning development standards utilizing NAEYC and other resources;
- Continue to serve on the Design Team of the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) – The Next Generation;
- Assist in the development and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment that is developmentally appropriate and authentic;
- Continue to conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce; and
- Support the state governance model that allows for accountability but also includes a localized focus which will involve our organization's local state chapters

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application and for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado.

Sincerely,
Linda Adams, Executive Director
303.791.2772
caeyc@ColoradoAEYC.org
WWW.ColoradoAEYC.org

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education Duncan:

I am writing to express the Colorado Children's Campaign's support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway, that will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Colorado Children's Campaign is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization committed for over 25 years to creating hope and opportunity for all of Colorado's more than 1.2 million kids. Using the most accurate, compelling data and research on child well-being and backed by an extensive, statewide network of dedicated child advocates, the Children's Campaign champions policies and programs that improve child health, early childhood experiences, and K-12 education, help lift children out of poverty and provide all of Colorado's children the opportunity to reach their full potential.

In our role as Colorado's leading children's advocacy organization we anticipate engaging in implementing policy changes that will be necessary to implement the grant. In particular we will advocate to implement the proposed statewide governance system, the statewide kindergarten-readiness assessment and the early learning workforce competencies, as well as participate in the expansion of the Quality Rating and Improvement System.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
(b)(6)
Chris Watney
President and CEO

Early Childhood Education Association of Colorado
Shaping The Future
www.coloradoecea.org

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Early Childhood Education Association of Colorado (ECEA), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These reforms will help to prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state to have better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve their professional development.

The Early Childhood Education Association of Colorado is a membership association that supports private early childhood centers, preschools and school age programs. ECEA believes in high quality early learning programs that support parental choice and that meets the needs of Colorado's families and their children. The RTT-ELC provides much needed resources for these early education providers to improve quality.

ECEA will help to achieve the grant outcomes by promoting the kindergarten readiness assessment, by providing information on implementation of early learning development standards, and by conducting workshops and trainings to support professional development.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kathryn Hammerbeck
Executive Director

Colorado Head Start Association

President
Janet Flaugher, EdD; CDI Head Start serving Weld County

Vice Presidents
Alberto Torres; Catholic Charities Little Munchkins Head Start

Linda Meredith; Community Partnership for hild Development

leather Craiglow; Lake County Schools Head Start

Secretary
Shelley Smith Eagle County Schools Head Start

Treasurer
Amber Arens; CDI Head Start serving Weld County

September 26, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education Duncan,

I am writing on behalf of the Colorado Head Start Association to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the state of Colorado. CHSA is enthusiastic about the opportunity the federal RTT-ELC grant affords to broaden the State of Colorado's ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into heightening quality efforts already underway in our state that will prepare every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and in life. It will fulfill a critical need in Colorado to assist high-needs children throughout the state to benefit from better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda. It ensures that Colorado adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. It affords early learning professionals access to the data and tools to guarantee continuous improvement in the quality of both the workforce and early learning programs.

The Colorado Head Start Association promotes the efforts of Colorado Head Start and Early Head Start programs and encourages their committed involvement in Colorado's state-wide early childhood systems.

As a supporter of the Colorado RTT-ELC, the Colorado Head Start Association is committed to help achieve grant outcomes by encouraging support for the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System, and by assisting to disseminate strategies that support and engage families in our programs.

We heartily commend the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for originating this noble opportunity to pave the way for the improvement of early learning and development in Colorado. We appreciate your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Dr. Janet Flaugher, President
Colorado Head Start Association

Denver Early Childhood Council

Collaborating to prepare Denver's children for success in school.

September 30, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Denver Early Childhood Council and Denver's Child Care Resource and Referral we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state who require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs.

The DECC's mission is to support and align quality systems and services for young children that are responsive to the needs of families and neighborhoods. Our vision is that every young child in Denver enters school ready to succeed. We believe that our experience in coordinating the systems building in early care and education (ECE) sector, our commitment to collaboration, and our work with hundreds of Denver's ECE professionals will assist Colorado's RTT-ELC efforts in a meaningful way. Through our work as the early childhood council for the City and County of Denver, we know the importance of intervening proactively with high risk and low-income families with young children.

The Denver Early Childhood Council is a community-based collaborative, working to build a comprehensive early childhood system that connects children, families, and resources to quality services in early care and education, health, mental health and family support. We act as a hub for convening local and state partners that include Head Start, Early Head Start, Denver Public Schools, Colorado Preschool Program Advisory Council, the Denver Preschool Program, the School Readiness Advisory Council, Child Care Resource and Referral, Denver Public Library, Denver Health, and the Mental Health Center of Denver. We are committed to working with the State Departments of Education and Human Services and will:

- *assist in providing support to define and implement early learning development standards;*
- *participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS);*
- *support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment;*
- *embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community;*
- *conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce; and support the state governance model that allows for accountability but*

localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Emily Bustos
Executive Director

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

The Douglas County Early Childhood Coalition (DCECC) would like to express our support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the state of Colorado. We believe the federal RTT-ELC grant will provide Colorado with the opportunity to move forward on groundbreaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. The grant will also make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will prepare every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. Most significantly, though, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

As an early childhood council, DCECC's mission is to foster and promote a comprehensive, high quality and responsive system of early childhood supports for families with young children.
We accomplish this by working closely with community partners including the Douglas County School District, Douglas County Libraries, Tri-County Health Department, Douglas County Department of Human Services, Arapahoe Douglas Mental Health Network, business leaders, early childhood professionals, policy makers, parents and advocates. Through this collaboration, we "connect the dots" between initiatives, programs, services and policies to create a system that is seamless for children and families. If the grant is approved, DCECC is committed to working with the state of Colorado to achieve the following outcomes:

- Support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- Embrace strategies that support and engage families in early learning programs.
- Conduct workshops/provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- Support Colorado's proposed governance model that allows for accountability yet localized focus.

DCECC applauds the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)
Sandy Gregory
Executive Committee, Douglas County Early Childhood Coalition Council

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

September 30, 2011

Dear Secretary of Education Duncan:

We are writing to express the enthusiastic support of the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) for the State of Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC). This potential funding opportunity will enable the Colorado to move forward on many of the ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms that have been foundationally established over the last decade, and allow our state to make significant investments into early childhood education quality enhancement efforts, as well as improve Colorado's ability to assist children with high needs who require better access to high quality programs and services. The adoption of world-class early learning standards and assessments for programs, providing early learning professionals with access to the data and tools to continuously improve workforce and program quality, as well as the establishment of robust state and local partnerships to guide and foster this plan, will ensure that each and every child in Colorado is prepared for kindergarten and beyond.

ECPAC is one of Colorado's 30 local early childhood councils, a coalition of Adams County's public and private early childhood stakeholders and agencies committed to the vision that *all children are valued, healthy and thriving*. In partnership with the Offices of the Colorado Governor and Lieutenant Governor, as well as the Colorado Departments of Human Services, Education and Public Health & Environment, we are working together to improve coordination and enhance the capacity and quality of early childhood services for young children and their families in Adams County. ECPAC's diverse partners include Adams County school districts, health, mental health, human services and other nonprofit partners. ECPAC works closely and extensively with our local health department, human services department, Part C and Part B providers, local mental health agencies, regional Child Care Resource and Referral office, local ECE programs and professionals, and also serves as the Colorado Preschool Program Coordinating Council for multiple local school districts. ECPAC and its member agencies are committed to utilizing all the expertise, knowledge and resources at our disposal to support local early childhood systems, and to align and integrate local efforts with other related Colorado initiatives. ECPAC is especially supportive of the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local collaborations and organizations to respond to locally unique community needs in innovative and appropriate ways.

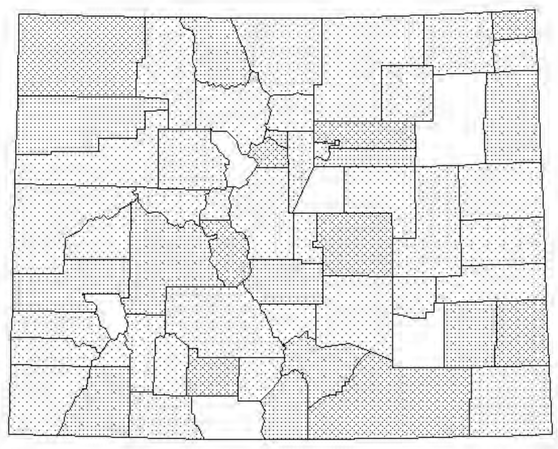
- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS).*
- *We will support and promote the CO Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We will support and work with the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's RTT-ELC application. The Adams County community is ready and eager to address solutions to the challenges facing families in our county, and the State of Colorado is an invaluable collaborative partner in this effort. We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. We support the State of Colorado's RTT-ELC efforts and applaud their commitment to working with local partners to build systems that ensure all children, youth and adults have access to the resources and supports they need to realize their potential.

Best regards,

Angela Rothermel, M.Ed.
Director
Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

Mathieu Aubuchon
Principal, Westminster Elementary School
Chairperson, Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County



Colorado Early Childhood Summit

A Coalition of Statewide Leaders in Early Childhood Care and Education

October 4, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado Early Childhood Summit, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These efforts will help to prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve their professional development.

The Colorado Early Childhood Summit is a coalition of statewide leaders from early childhood organizations. These organizations have a direct, on-going relationship with over 60,000 Coloradoans representing all 64 counties. The Summit members represent early learning professionals, administrators, resource and referral agencies, Head Start programs, Early Childhood Councils, parents and early childhood advocates.

The members of the Colorado Early Childhood Summit work cooperatively to advocate on early childhood issues. They are building partnerships that result in information sharing and collaboration leading to the improvement of services and systems for young children.

As a part of the mission of the Colorado Early Childhood Summit, the member organizations will share and disseminate information to their constituencies from the RTT-ELC grant assurance areas.

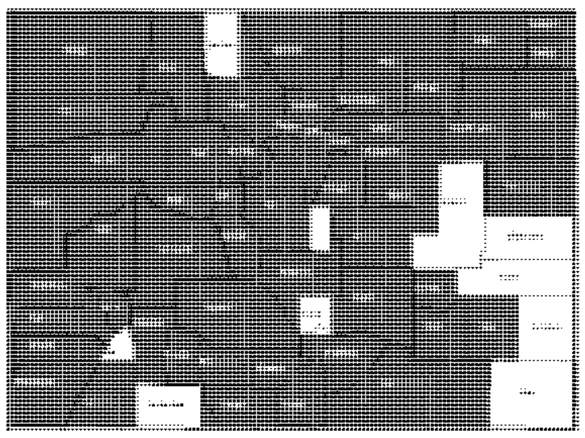
We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kathryn Hammerbeck
Co-Chair

Heather Tritten
Co-Chair



Early Childhood Councils Leadership Alliance

Adams
Arapahoe
Bent/Otero/Crowley
Boulder
Bright Futures
Broomfield
Chaffee
Connections 4 Kids
Denver
Douglas
Elbert
Fremont
Gunnison/Hinsdale
Huerfano/Las Animas
La Plata
Larimer
Logan/Phillips/Sedgwick
Mesa
Montelores
Morgan
Promises for Children
Pueblo
Routt
Rural Resort Region Northe
Rural Resort Region West
San Luis Valley
Teller/Park
The Alliance for Kids
Triad
Yuma/Kit Carson/Washingtc

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As members of a statewide system, the Early Childhood Councils Leadership Alliance (ECCLA), we coordinate many early childhood initiatives in 55 of 64 counties in Colorado. We are poised and excited about the opportunity to work with our state partners to move Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. RTT-ELC funds will allow more of Colorado's children with high needs to access high quality programs and services and better prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten success.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of children and families in communities across Colorado.

ECCLA is a statewide coalition dedicated to providing leadership, innovation, and local perspectives to ensure Colorado has a high quality early childhood system. We are committed to working with the State Departments of Education and Human Services to help achieve the RTT-ELC grant outcome in the following ways:

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our communities.
- We will continue efforts to maximize resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We will support the state governance model that allows for accountability with localized focus

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

On behalf of ECCLA,

Sheryl Shushan
ECCLA Co-chair

Stephanie Martin
ECCLA Co-chair

www.ececc.org

October 5th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Elbert County Early Childhood Council, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and d

evelopment programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Elbert County Early Childhood Council supports all children and families in Elbert County, prenatal through third grade. We value a high quality system of care and service across all public and private systems. We support families and strengthen community partnerships. These partnerships are vital to raising healthy children that are ready to learn.

The Elbert County Early Childhood Council dedicated to providing leadership, innovation, and local perspectives to ensure that Elbert County and Colorado has a high quality early childhood system. We are committed to working with the State Departments of Education and Human Services to help achieve the RTT-ELC grant outcome in the following ways:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*

- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
Cathryn Reiber
Coordinator
Elbert County Early Childhood Council

October 7, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express our organization's support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As part of the statewide system of Early Childhood Councils, and as the local hub for successful early childhood initiatives in Grand County, Colorado, we are poised and enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with our state partners to move Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of children and families in communities across Colorado.

Grand Beginnings (GB) is a local non-profit organization with a long history of bringing partners together to implement a high quality early learning system in our community. The Board of GB is responsible for governing the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, as well as serving as the advisory council to the East Grand School Board for the Colorado Preschool Program. GB oversees the local implementation of the Quality Rating and Improvement System, and we are actively engaged in supporting a strong early childhood workforce. Finally, GB partners with our regional counterpart, Early Childhood Options, to serve as the local Early Childhood Council. The Board of GB includes key stakeholders from public and private domains, including heath care, education, family support, community development and local business. A membership list is included with this letter.

GB is deeply invested in early care and learning. We are committed to working with the State Departments of Education and Human Services to support a statewide framework of quality and accountability, while effectively supporting children and families in the communities where they live. Specifically, GB and the Northeast Division of the Rural Resort Region Early Childhood Council can help achieve the RTT-ELC grant outcomes in the following ways:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards and aligned assessments.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*

- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*

- *We will support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Taunia Shipman, Chair

(b)(6)

Sheryl Shushan, Executive Director

Attachment: Membership List

Grand Beginnings Board and Council Members:

Taunia Shipman, Grand County Department of Social Services
Gail Van Bockern, Grand County Public Health
Cara McDonald, At-Large Community Member and Parent
Wendy Stefanski, Director of Winter Park Ski Resort Early Education Center
Amy Kaplanis, At-Large Community Member
Amy Miller, Director of Eternal Hills Christian Preschool
Jennifer Fanning, Director of Grand County Rural Health Network
Bethany Buege, Kindergarten Teacher, East Grand School District
Molly Rankin, Director Granby Play Days Preschool

Resource Participants:

Nikki Eggers, Manager, Child Care Resource and Referral Program
Deb Ruttenberg, Coordinator of the Grand County Collaborative Management Program
Roberta Hovermale, Early Intervention Colorado
Rhonda Hill, Early Childhood Coordinator, East Grand School District

Gunnison-Hinsdale Early Childhood Council

October 11th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Gunnison-Hinsdale Early Childhood Council, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement effort, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Gunnison and Hinsdale counties are frontier counties far away from Denver. The Early Childhood Council has identified improving access to quality early education as an important need in our community. We need more resources to improve quality of early education and to address children with high needs.

We will support and assist the state's agenda by:

- *embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *supporting the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Margaret Wacker
Gunnison Hindale Early Childhood Council Coordinator

225 N. Pine Street, Suite E
Gunnison, CO 81230

H.U.L.A.

Huerfano-Las Animas Counties
Early Childhood Advisory Council

Huerfano-Las Animas Counties (HuLA) Early Childhood Advisory Council
412 Benedicta Ave
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Huerfano-Las Animas Counties Early Childhood Advisory Council, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Huerfano-Las Animas Counties (HuLA) Early Childhood Advisory Council is a collaboration/partnership amongst many organization & agencies within Huerfano and Las Animas Counties within Colorado promoting early childhood social, physical/mental health and early education readiness for young children (0-8 years of age). Our mission is to support children & families in Huerfano & Las Animas counties through partnerships which promotes self-sufficiency for healthy kids, families and communications. Despite a high poverty rate in both counties, Huerfano County; 33.2% and Las Animas County; 22.9%, (Colorado's average is 14.6%); the HuLA Council will strive to give every child access to the tools to help them succeed.

HuLA Council will help achieve the grant outcomes by…

- *Providing support for the*
- *definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *Participating in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *Supporting and promoting Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.*
- *Embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*

- *Conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *Supporting the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S Department of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Sanchez McDonald
Huerfano-Las Animas Counties Early Childhood Advisory Council Coordinator
(719)845-0463
email: jsmcdonald@la-h-health.org

Rural Resort Region
EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL
Western Division

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Rural Resort Region Early Childhood Council, Western Division, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

In 2007 the Rural Resort Region Early Childhood Council Western Division (RRRECC) consisting of Eagle, Garfield, Lake and Pitkin was formed under new council legislation. Now one of 30 councils, we are working to build a better and brighter future for the children of Colorado. We continue to focus efforts on increasing the quality of child care in our four counties. Our region greatly values the collaboration that our geography and economics require in order to better serve our communities.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
(b)(6)
Anne Fitzpatrick
Rural Resort Region Early Childhood Council Coordinator

Early Childhood Council
of La Plata County

September 23, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of The Early Childhood Council of La Plata County (ECCLPC), I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. We are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms.

The ECCLPC is a coalition of community members and agencies working together to create a high quality comprehensive early childhood system to benefit all young children and their families. On behalf of the more than 30 agencies and partners of the Early Childhood Council, we strongly support the RTT-ELC proposal. Our coalition has provided professional and workforce development to early childhood professionals in southwest Colorado since 1998. In addition, we have worked on many of the goals & activities that support quality of both our workforce and early learning programs. We also support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability and allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Since our mission is to support families by increasing the availability, accessibility and reliability of affordable high quality comprehensive services for all young children and families, we can help achieve the following grant outcomes:

- Assistance & support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- Expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- Strategies that support and engage families and the larger community.
- Workshops and resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

Thank you for your consideration of the application and the opportunity to allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, prepare each child in Colorado for kindergarten and help us assist children with high needs across the state.

Sincerely,
(b)(6)
Tamara Volz, Director Early Childhood Council La Plata County

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The Early Childhood Council of Larimer County strongly supports the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. Colorado has a history of commitment to quality early childhood services, and the RTT-ELC will enhance the state's ability to continue to move this work forward, with the goal that all children in Colorado, including those with high needs, be prepared for kindergarten success. The proposed governance model ensures accountability while allowing customized response to unique community needs.

The Early Childhood Council of Larimer County (ECCLC) is one of a system of Early Childhood Councils across the state of Colorado focusing on strengthening the system of support services available to children in our communities. ECCLC is also the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. Working in tandem with our school districts, United Way, local child care providers and other community organizations, ECCLC has identified significant gaps in services for at risk children, which have resulted in lower levels of preparedness for school success. Our local School Readiness Task Force has been evaluating needs, and is excited to see the grant outcomes in Colorado's RTT-ELC grant application, since it will further enhance and support the work we are doing locally, and ensure that these efforts are coordinated across the state. The RTT–ELC outcomes reflect the needs that we have identified locally in our community:

- We currently have representation on the state level Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) Design Team, and we are committed to continuing to be involved in the design and the implementation of an enhanced QRIS system.
- Our local School Readiness Task Force has identified the need to better define and implement early learning development standards and to implement a Kindergarten readiness assessment, and will be an eager partner in implementing the state efforts.
- Professional Development is a significant focus of ECCLC's work, and we will continue to conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

The RTT-ELC presents an exciting opportunity for Colorado to continue to move forward with its innovative efforts to improve early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Beverly Wood Thurber, MSW, MPA
Executive Director

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Early Childhood Council of Logan Phillips Sedgwick Counties we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

ECCLPS supports the system building foundations for children and their families in Northeast Colorado. Being of a frontier community, the positive impact for our children especially those most needy that this Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant would achieve would greatly affect our community collaboration by:

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
(b)(6)

September 26, 2011

Mr. Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the **Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families**, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the **State of Colorado** forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of Colorado communities.

"1825 days… Between the day children are born and the day they go to kindergarten, there are 1,825 days their brains are soaking up information" (*Early Childhood Colorado*). Since 1999, the Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families has focused on these 1,825 days – the first five years of a child's life – supporting these young citizens and their families in mastering the skills that will lead them successfully into and through their adult years. In recent years, the Partnership has expanded efforts to provide services to children and their families from prenatal to 8 years. This expansion is a direct result of filling gaps in the local community where services are needed and requested.

The opportunity for Colorado to receive Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds will further compliment the many great early learning efforts outcomes occurring statewide. Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families can help achieve grant outcomes by:

- *Embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger Mesa County, Colorado community.*
- *Conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *Supporting the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized*
- *focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout the State of Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Program
Coordinator

Holly Jacobson, MA

October 4, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Montelores Early Childhood Council, we are excited about the opportunity and possibilities that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on cutting edge and much needed early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Montelores Early Childhood Council is a group of dedicated professionals that are working together to create an early childhood system within our communities that connects to the statewide system of councils. Included in our area is the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation. We are a highly impoverished part of the state and experience significant learning gaps that would benefit from RTT-ELC funding.

Our Council and community will work to help achieve the grant outcomes. We will participate in the expansion of QRIS and fully support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment. We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community. We look forward to conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Vangi McCoy, Coordinator

Morgan County
Early childhood Council 324 E
Railroad *Ave* 300b Fori: Morgan, CO
80701 970-867-6200 P 970-867-
6204 www.mcearlychildhood.org

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT -ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Morgan County Early Childhood Council, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT -ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Morgan County Early Childhood Council is dedicated to ensuring all children and families have access and knowledge of quality and comprehensive early care and education, health, mental health and family support and have the resources to meet their needs. We strive to coordinate a cohesive, quality early childhood system through education opportunities, resource development and collaborating with service
providers to support children in Morgan County Colorado.

Morgan County Early Childhood Council will help the grant achieve its intended outcomes by:

- We will support and promote the adoption, implementation and use of high

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quality early learning development standards.

- We will continue to advocate for quality early child care by expanding the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will support our providers as we use the Kindergarten readiness assessment to gain insight into our programs and our child care.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Morgan County Early Childhood Council

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September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Morgan County Family Center, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

As a Family Resource Center, we recognize the importance of providing family support services to all families. Our Center sees the direct benefits that young children receive from programs such as the Parents as Teachers program. As a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, we recognize the importance of quality child care for all children as well as education for providers caring for those children.

The Morgan County Family Center will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards: participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS); support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment; embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community; conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Executive Director

NATIONAL MIGRANT AND SEASONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION

Voice for the children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Association, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in the state, which will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs, including farmworker children, across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that they adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs.

Migrant programs across the country, including in the state of Colorado, provide a unique service to a special population. As the premier early childhood program in the country, we support early learning and parental involvement. For the past 45 years, Head Start has had a solid grasp on both.

National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Associations stands prepared to assist the applicant in the following manner:

- Embrace strategies that support and engage families in the proposed program and in the larger community.
- Will offer advice and guidance as you conduct workshops and prepare professional development on the unique interest of migrant children and their families.
- Will offer advice and guidance as you explore models of best practices that involve shared governance, as this has been a cornerstone of Head Start.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application. Please allow me to answer any further questions.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Cleo Rodriguez, Jr.
Executive Director

September 22, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Connections 4 Kids Early Childhood Council for Moffat and Rio Blanco Counties, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Connections 4 Kids has a very broad geographic catchment area covering approximately 8,000 square miles. Statistics show that early intervention and prevention are not only vital to a child's progression of learning, quality care and education dramatically changes child outcomes later in life. Receiving funds through the RTT-ELC grant will enable the Early Childhood Systems work to move forward in support of children and families in Northwest Colorado.

Connections 4 Kids will achieve grant outcomes by:

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will support the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Barbara West, Coordinator

United Way of Weld County
Promises for Children
814 9th Street
Greeley, CO 80631

October 13th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of United Way of Weld County's Promises for Children we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Promises for Children is a Weld County community collaborative formed in 2000 which is facilitated and supported by United Way of Weld County as part of United Way's Community Impact agenda. In July 2007 Promises for Children was recognized by the State of Colorado as Weld County's Early Childhood Council. Promises for Children's dedication to the wellbeing of young children, birth to 8 years of age is an extensive support structure that facilitates the effective development and execution of its programs and services. Multiple community leaders representing business, education, government, service providers and families make up the Promises for Children Early Childhood Council.

This group is responsible for developing projects, providing visibility and credibility to the program, managing committees, supervising funding, monitoring progress, and assuring accountability. Five committees are in place to address specific tasks and provide the working structure for the Promises for Children Initiative.

- *We assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *We support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely

(b)(6)

Jeannine Truswell
Executive Director
United Way of Weld County

Jildi Gentry
Interim Director Promises for Children
Weld County's Early Childhood Council

City of Boulder
Housing & Human Services
supporting individuals • strengthening community

Children, Youth and Families
Community Services
Housing
Senior Services

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. As Manager of the Children, Youth and Families (CYF) Division, City of Boulder, I strongly believe that the RTT-ELC grant is essential for the advancement of early care and education quality initiatives and closure of the achievement gap for children in Colorado and in our community of Boulder County.

CYF is comprised of school and community based programs. Our Child Care Subsidy and Referral Program and Child Care Recruitment and Training Program are part of the Qualistar statewide child care resource and referral system and provide CCR&R services for Boulder County. Our CCR&R work is aligned with both the Colorado and Boulder County Early Childhood Framework.

It is critical that all children in Boulder County have access to quality early care and education and enter school with the skills to succeed. In both county school districts, the percent of 4th graders scoring at/above proficiency and the median growth percentile were lower for Hispanic students than for white non-Hispanic students and for students eligible for the free/reduced lunch program than for students who were not eligible. An estimated nearly one in five children under age 5 in Boulder County, 18.2%, were below poverty in 2010. Hispanic children under age 18 in Boulder County were more than three times as likely to be in poverty than were white non-Hispanic children in Boulder County.

We especially support the state governance model of the RTT-ELC grant that allows for accountability but localized focus. Through our CCR&R work with families and providers and in our collaboration with the Boulder County Early Childhood Council, we look forward to supporting the goals of the RTT-ELC grant by engaging and supporting families, advancing the Quality Rating System, and strengthening the early care and education workforce.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's RTT-ELC grant application. This support is critical to our state's ability to continue in our efforts to ensure that all of our children have the opportunities they deserve and need in the early, formative years of their development.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Cindy Smith

Manager of Children, Youth & Families Division
City of Boulder

P.O. Box 791 Boulder, Colorado 80306 (303) 441-3140
Children, Youth and Families: 303-441-4357 Senior Services: 303-441-3148
www.bouldercolorado.gov/hhs

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Pueblo Early Childhood Council (PECC) and Children First the Child Care Resource & Referral Agency for eleven counties in southeastern Colorado, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services. PECC & Children First CCR&R have collaborative partnerships with local and state entities. PECC as well as the Children First CCR&R are comprised of numerous partners from a diverse cross section within our community, including, both our local school districts, CO Bluesky, our early intervention agency, well over 40 early care and education programs, which include both child care centers and family child care homes, local department of human services, court appointed special advocates, city/county health department, domestic violence shelters, home visitation programs, family support programs, child psychologists, both local hospitals, boys & girls clubs, health clinics, mental health agencies, local judicial system, retired educators and business people, child care resource & referral agency community partners and Pueblo Community College who serves as our fiscal agent, both for PECC and Children First, just to name some of the organizations that are actively involved with our early childhood council efforts, and who strongly support this application.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments, which focus on quality services for children and early learning programs, by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Pueblo Early Childhood Council's goal is to make Pueblo a great place to raise a child by working to improve early childhood care and education for children and their families. PECC has been in existence since 1997 and is a strong force in early childhood in the community as well as in the state in promoting a high quality early care and education system.

Children First CCR&R has been in existence since 1995, provides comprehensive services to children, families, early care and education professionals as well as communities at large. Services provided by Children First are: free child care referrals to licensed child care programs; partner with business and community leaders as well as employers to raise the awareness of the importance of quality child care; provide mentoring for early care and education professionals interested in improving the level of quality care they provide; assist military families with access to high quality child care and fee assistance; speak out a the local, state and national level on behalf of children and family issues; collect and disseminates child care data that is utilized to support ongoing early care and education efforts and provides a picture of where the system is now and where the data shows we need to plan for ongoing

efforts. Children First is a leader, with state and national collaboration, in bringing about accessible, affordable, quality early learning opportunities

When CO is awarded these early learning funds, the impact to young children and their families in our communities will support high quality services for all children living in the state of CO. We would be able to broaden, deepen and strengthen our current efforts as well as look at other needs we have not had the funds to currently address. It is our belief that it takes a Pueblo to build a child and that is the value system our early childhood council works with on all of our efforts.

PECC and Children First CCR&R will help achieve the outcomes stated in the grant in the following ways:

- *We will support and assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will actively participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS), by bringing the local perspective to this effort.*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment, working to assure all children are ready to enter kindergarten and capable of reaching their maximum potential.*
- *We will help to develop and embrace strategies that support and engage families we serve in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops, trainings and other formal and informal professional development opportunities, while providing resources we may have to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus, because CO is a local control state. Although, local control, does not keep us from working in a cohesive manner thru our CO Early Childhood System, it does provide us with a uniqueness to tailor our efforts so they are specific to our local communities, that align with statewide efforts.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado, and look forward to this opportunity to move our efforts forward in a positive manner that will benefit every child in our state. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Cindy Bernal,
Pueblo Early Childhood Council/Children First CCR&R Director
900 W. Orman Ave, AB 154D, Pueblo CO 81004
Cindy.Bernal@pueblocc.edu

October 18, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Re: Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant

Dear Secretary Duncan,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Qualistar Colorado, we offer our full support of Colorado's proposal for the **Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge** grant. Qualistar Colorado is a non-profit organization that has been committed to improving the quality of early childhood experiences for Colorado's children for more than 10 years. We applaud the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for providing this opportunity for States to submit their best thinking about how they can focus on their 'birth-to-five' early learning and development systems to improve the lives of the children and families they serve.

Colorado began its journey in improving quality for the early childhood system as a result of the 1995 Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers study. The results of this study were used to drive the initiative to develop one of the nation's first quality rating systems, Qualistar's Quality Rating.™. Qualistar welcomes the opportunity to once again partner to improve the programs and services provided for the benefit of young children.

Specifically, Section B, High-Quality, Accountable Programs, in the Early Learning Challenge proposal affords Colorado a unique opportunity to take the work that has already taken place to a higher level of participation with the Early Learning and Development community, and specifically to those serving high need children and families.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's response to the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Heather O'Mara, Chair
Board of Directors
Qualistar Colorado

Gladys W. Wilson
President and CEO
Qualistar Colorado

Stephanie Martin
P.O. Box 772790/135 6th Street

Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

www.firstimpressionsofrouttcounty.org

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As members of a statewide system, First Impressions of Routt County coordinates many early childhood initiatives in our local communities. We are poised and excited about the opportunity to work with our state partners to move Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. RTT-ELC funds will allow more of Colorado's children with high needs to access high quality programs and services and better prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten success.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of children and families in communities across Colorado.

First Impressions of Routt County, our local early childhood council, works to ensure that young children will be provided adequate resources and quality programs to promote healthy development and school readiness. We are committed to working with the State Departments of Education and Human Services to help achieve the RTT-ELC grant outcome in the following ways:

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS).
- We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness authentic assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our communities.
- We will continue efforts to maximize resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We will support the state governance model that allows for accountability with localized focus and oversight through our local early childhood council.

We are fortunate to have the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Stephanie Martin
Early Childhood Council
Program Supervisor

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express our organization's support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As part of the statewide system of Early Childhood Councils, and as the local hub for successful early childhood initiatives in Summit County, Colorado, we are poised and enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with our state partners to move Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms.
The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early childhood programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and our educational programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of children and families in communities across Colorado.

Early Childhood Options (ECO) is a local non-profit organization with a long history of bringing partners together to implement a high quality early learning system in our community. The Board of ECO is responsible for governing the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, as well as the local Early Learning Ventures Alliance hub. ECO oversees the local implementation of the Quality Rating and Improvement System, and we are actively engaged in supporting a strong early childhood workforce. ECO manages the Summit County Head Start Partnership Program, and the Board of ECO serves as the advisory council to the Board of County Commissioners for Head Start and a local initiative, Right Start. The ECO Board also serves as the advisory council to the Summit School Board for the Colorado Preschool Program. Finally, ECO partners with our regional counterpart, Grand Beginnings, to serve as the local Early Childhood Council. The Board of ECO includes key stakeholders from public and private domains, including heath care, education, family support, community development and local business. A membership list is included with this letter.

ECO is deeply invested in early care and learning. We are committed to working with the State Departments of Education and Human Services to support a statewide framework of quality and accountability, while effectively supporting children and families in the communities where they live. Specifically, ECO and the Northeast Division of the Rural Resort Region Early Childhood Council can help achieve the RTT-ELC grant outcomes in the following ways:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards and aligned assessments.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We will support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Alison Casias, Chair

Lucinda Burns, Executive Director

Attachment: Membership List

ECO Board and Council Members:

Alison Casias, Chair; Child Welfare Attorney
Linda Bateman; Board Rep, Family & Intercultural Resource Center
Thomas Davidson, Board of County Commissioners, Summit County
Nicole Fazande, Instructional Chair, Colorado Mountain College
Jennifer McAtamney, Town Council Member, Town of Breckenridge
Jocelyn Mills, Parent
Karen Strakbein, Assistant Superintendent, Summit School District
Joanne Sprouse, Manager of Social Services, Summit County
Amy Wineland, Manager of Public Health, Summit County
Carol Pfeiffer, Director of Human Resource, Vail Resorts at Keystone
Erin Major, Dental Health Supervisor, Summit County Community CARE Clinic
Daphne Schroth, At-Large Community Member

Resource Participants:

Georgette Contos, Early Intervention Colorado, Summit County Public Health
Scott Vargo, Assistant County Manager, Summit County

Kristin Radloff, Early Childhood Coordinator, Summit School District
Tamara Drangstveit, Family & Intercultural Resource Center
Sheila Groneman, Director, Summit County Head Start
Elizabeth Lowe, Manager, Child Care Resource and Referral Program

rly Childhood Council
of the San Luis Valley

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Early Childhood Council of the San Luis Valley (ECC SLV), we are excited about the opportunity the federal RTT-ELC grant would provide to move the State of Colorado forward on transformative early learning and education reforms. Colorado could continue to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, with the goal of preparing every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state who require equity in and access to high quality programs and services. The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. By providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools, they will be better able to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Early Childhood Council of the San Luis Valley is a nonprofit organization which has been actively working to improve the quality and availability of early childhood services for the last 11 years. Our service area covers 6 rural counties (Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande and Saguache) and 14 school districts in south-central Colorado. With high poverty rates (28% to 44% for children under age 18 in 5 of our 6 counties) and a population of high-risk children and families, early learning opportunities, parent education, and high quality services are making a difference for young children. These services and programs are changing the trajectory of young children in our community. Unfortunately, the community still greatly lacks enough supports and services for families, specifically teen parents and our youngest children, ages birth to three years.

This funding opportunity would allow for us to support at-risk young children and their families from birth to make a greater impact on their school readiness and help increase their chances of success in school and in life. This opportunity will allow communities such as ours all across Colorado to make systems changes that will benefit children and families. Through our continued dedication to the important work in the Early Childhood field: we will assist in supporting the definition and implementation of early learning development standards; we will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS); we will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment; we will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community; we will continue to conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce and we support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kari Harp, Board of Directors President

Sherri Valdez, Executive Director

October 13, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Subject: Support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express our organization's support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As part of the statewide system of Early Childhood Councils, and as the local hub for successful early childhood initiatives in Grand County, Colorado, we are enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with our state partners to advance Colorado on these early learning and education reforms.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs.

Early Childhood Council can help achieve the RTT-ELC grant outcomes in the following ways:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards and aligned assessments.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We will support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating an opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Nicol Houghland, Coordinator, Teller/Park Early Childhood Council

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of the Child Care Resource and Referral services provided by Child Care Innovations, Red Rocks Community College (CCI), I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. We are excited because this opportunity will allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These funds will help Colorado to assist children with high needs that require improved access to high quality programs and services, and will help ensure that every child in Colorado is prepared for kindergarten, as well as success beyond. The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The mission of CCI is to strengthen family functioning by providing increased access to early childhood support services. It is critical that these services be of high quality and easily accessed by families. A significant part of our work involves providing support to early learning professionals in understanding and implementing best practices in the field. Consequently, we propose to take an active role through involvement in the following ways.

- We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.
- We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).
- We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.
- We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.
- We will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.
- We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)
Patricia Bolton, Director

Western Colorado 2-1-1
510 29 1/2 Rd.
P.O. Box 20000-5069
Grand Junction, CO 81502-5069
www.wc211.mesacounty.us

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing in support of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Western Colorado 2-1-1 and Mesa County Child Care Resource and Referral, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services. The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Western Colorado 2-1-1 and Mesa County Child Care Resource and Referral in conjunction with our Early Childhood Council, provide support and leadership to the community through prevention, education, collaboration and advocacy. We support all children, their families, and early childhood educators through a network that promotes quality, affordability, and the capacity to create safe, healthy, and nurturing environments where young children and providers of care learn and grow. The RTT-ELC grant would have a positive impact on our programs by providing the support and assistance essential to our community mission. Our early childhood organizations can help achieve the grant outcomes by:

- Serving and acting on behalf of the needs, rights, and well being of children, families, and early childhood educators.
- Promoting developmentally appropriate, affordable, accessible early childhood care and educational services for Colorado children from birth to age eight.
- Advocate for improved working conditions, wages, and recognition for individuals in the Early Childhood field.
- Inform policy makers and public leaders about the mission and goals of Western Colorado 2-1-1 and Mesa County Child Care Resource and Referral.
- Cooperating with other local, state and national organizations and agencies having compatible goals in working with young children

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Charity Brockman
Western Colorado 2-1-1 Director
Child Care Resource & Referral of Mesa County Director

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Rural Communities Resource Center and its programs; the Northeast Colorado Child Care Resource and Referral and the Early Childhood Council of Yuma, Washington and Kit Carson Counties, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Rural Communities Resource Center has been providing services to Yuma, Washington and surrounding rural counties in Northeast Colorado since 1983. From the very beginning, our focus has been about healthy families. To this end, we have developed programs that provide services to assist in promoting the physical, emotional and economic health of families. The Northeast Colorado Child Care Resource and Referral is one of those programs. It was developed in 1993 and currently serves 9 counties. It is a Qualistar Colorado Partner. The Early Childhood Council of Yuma, Washington and Kit Carson Counties was started in 2005 and is part of the statewide Early Childhood Council System. It focuses on four domains: health, mental health, family support and early childhood education. We are proud of the fact that twenty eight years after the founding of the Rural Communities Resource Center, our focus of healthy families remains the same.

The Rural Communities Resource Center and its various programs can help achieve the grant outcomes by:

- *Assisting in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards*
- *Participating in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS)*
- *Supporting and promoting the kindergarten readiness assessment*
- *Embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community*
- *Conducting workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact us. We can be reached at 970-848-3867.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Patricia Brewster-Willeke, Co-Director
Rural Communities Resource Center

(b)(6)

Sheila M Anzlovar, Program Director
Northeast Colorado Child Care Resource and Referral

(b)(6)

Claudia Strait, Program Director
Early Childhood Council of Yuma, Washington and Kit Carson Counties

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I write to express my support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As chair of the Senate Education Committee, I am excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

I applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Senator Bob Bacon

BRANDON C. SHAFFER
SENATE DISTRICT 17
E-mail: brandon@brandonshaffer.com

200 E. COLFAX AVENUE, ROOM 257
DENVER, COLORADO 80203
CAPITOL: (303) 866-5291
CAPITOL FAX: (303) 866-3807

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SENATE
STATE OF COLORADO
DENVER

October 18, 2011
Arne Duncan, Secretary of
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado State Senate Majority Office we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

As a Colorado State Senator, I can tell you that the benefit to Colorado of receiving the RTT-ELC would be invaluable. In these times of economic crisis, we have had to make the tough decisions of cutting education funding, and each year the cuts have been deeper. The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant would benefit the State of Colorado, especially the children of Colorado, our future.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Brandon Shaffer
President

S. ROLLIE HEATH
SENATE DISTRICT 18
rollie.heath.senate@state.co.us
(303) 866-4872

STATE, VETERANS, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
CHAIR

EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MEMBER

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
MEMBER

October 18, 2011
Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education,

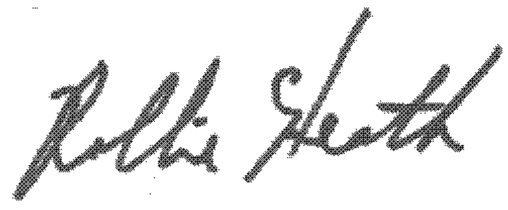
I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) from the state of Colorado. It is exciting to think about the opportunity that the RTT-ELC grant would provide to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It would allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. In addition, these funds would help Colorado assist children with high needs that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's already robust reform agenda. It would ensure that we adopt world-class early learning standards for children and early learning programs. I especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

On a personal level, I know how important early learning is to Colorado and the district I represent. I served on a Denver early childhood education task force under then-Mayor John Hickenlooper, and this effort culminated in a successful 2006 ballot measure that helped keep preschool affordable in Denver. I also took a trip to China in 2009, and was deeply impressed by their commitment to early learning. I believe it will truly pay off for China, and I am pleased to know that the RTT-ELC sends a strong message that our nation intends to make significant investments in our kids and our future.

As a member of the Colorado Senate Education committee, please be assured that I will do everything in my power to make sure we use the RTT-ELC grant wisely should we qualify. I applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

All the best,



Sen. Rollie Heath

October 8, 2011
Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave
Washington, D.C. 20202
Dear Secretary of Education:
The State of Colorado's application for the Early Learning Challenge grant will soon reach your desk for consideration. The proposal supports the work of the Early Learning Leadership Commission, the Legislative School Readiness Committee, the statewide Early Childhood Councils, and the countless providers, educators, and experts who have worked tirelessly to improve the status of education and care for Colorado's youngest learners. I applaud the Obama administration for focusing on early childhood care and education as an important avenue for improving the lives of our next generation.
Much work has already been done in Colorado to improve the quality of early childhood programs, and there is a great desire to build upon our accomplishments. Plans are in place to advance early learning standards and readiness measurement tools, to expand the Quality Rating Information System, to improve data collection for guiding instruction, to strengthen the professionalism of early childhood educators, and to create a governance structure that will respond to the specific needs of each community across the state. Being a recipient of the Early Learning Challenge grant would help Colorado expand on our efforts to create an improved system of quality early childhood programs.
Budget cuts and lack of resources do not dampen the resolve to move our state forward, but budget realities present challenges. Access to affordable quality programs remains a struggle for many families. The Colorado Preschool Program lacks funding to provide slots for an estimated 9,800 eligible children. Full-day kindergarten programs have been cut in many Colorado school districts due to budget constraints. Providing access to quality programs for all children will be our challenge, but we also know it holds the most promise in building a strong foundation for educational success and we are committed.
Thank you for consideration of Colorado's application for the Early Learning Challenge grants. Colorado is excited to advance efforts in providing a quality early childhood learning experience for all children.
Educating the youngest members of society is the best investment for our brightest future.
Respectfully,
State Representative Judy Solano
Ranking member of the House Education Committee
Member of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission

October 13, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. As a 25 year veteran public education teacher and current state representative, I am excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the state of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, and will prepare each child in Colorado for kindergarten and future success. In addition, these funds will help children with high needs to have better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. I especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

With the experience of serving on the Early Childhood Commission in Colorado, I will continue to:

provide support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards,
participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS),
promote the kindergarten readiness assessment, and
embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.

I applaud the U.S. Department of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Nancy Todd

Nancy Todd
State Representative
House District 41

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

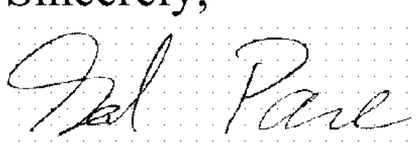
I am writing in support of the state's application for a Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant. I am excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant would provide to better prepare each and every Colorado child for kindergarten.

Colorado has a constitutional mandate to improve the education of our children. The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's educational reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

As legislators, my colleagues and I stand ready to provide support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards, and to embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating an opportunity to improve early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for considering Colorado's application.

Sincerely,



Sal Pace
Minority Leader
Colorado House of Representatives

October 13, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

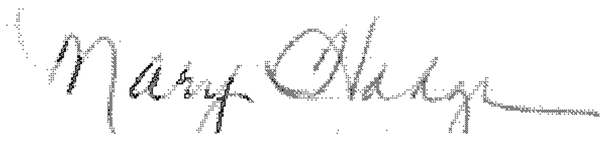
We, the members of The Early Childhood and School Readiness Interim Legislative Commission (the SRC), are writing to express our strong support for Colorado's application for a Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge award. The SRC is a bipartisan commission comprised of ten Colorado legislators that is charged to support the Colorado's goal of ensuring all children ready for kindergarten. The Early Learning Challenge award allows Colorado to continue implementing innovative policy and building upon a collaborative, statewide system that prepares our youngest learners for success before kindergarten and throughout their academic career.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado. We believe that implementing a highly effective and accountable state early childhood governance model will improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of Colorado's supports, services and programs. State-level oversight and coordination of early childhood programs has been a policy goal for decades.

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (Colorado's State Advisory Council) unanimously endorsed a governance proposal put forth by Lieutenant Governor Joseph A. Garcia and the Executive Directors of the Colorado departments of Public Health and Environment, Human Services, and Health Care, Policy and Finance. This proposal was developed in close collaboration with Colorado's Commissioner of Education. The proposal suggests the consolidation of several early childhood programs and funding streams under a new office of early childhood in the Department of Human Services. A public-private advisory board will provide oversight to the new office. Working in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Education this new model will help streamline services and aid local program administration. The SRC voted to support early childhood governance legislation on October 6, 2011. We look forward to working closely with legislative members of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission to draft legislation and guide its passage in the 2012 session. We believe this initiative will help families access the services they need, ensure programs share similar high standards and ultimately help Colorado achieve its shared vision of all children being valued, healthy, and thriving.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Senator Mary Hodge



Representative Tom Massey

JEANNE NICHOLSON
SENATE DISTRICT 16

STATE CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 332
200 E. COLFAX AVENUE
DENVER, COLORADO 80203
CAPITOL: 303-866-4873
FAX: 303-866-4543

Email: Jeanne.nicholson.senate@state.co.us

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & ENERGY COMMITTEE
VICE-CHAIR

APPROPRIATIONS
MEMBER

EDUCATION
MEMBER

JUDICIARY
MEMBER

October 13th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

,
I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. I am very excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. These reforms will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success in life. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. I especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

I have seen firsthand throughout my career as a public health nurse, and now as a law maker, the benefits of quality early childhood education. I applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Nicholson

State Senator Jeanne Nicholson

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

This letter is to serve as my express support (and thrill) for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") from the State of Colorado. I am grateful for the collaboration of the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that can pave the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. As a lead in child and family policy in the State Senate, and as a commissioner on the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, I am excited about the potential that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It will allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success in life beyond. Additionally, these funds will help us assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high-quality programs and services. Growing up with a brother with special needs, and now seeing at the state level the exacerbating need for better access to early assessment, early intervention, inclusion and quality of services, this part of the grant was particularly enticing to me.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. I especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across our state. As we've pushed for innovation, data-driven and evidence-based policy, this opportunity will further our efforts to serve not only our children (of all abilities) well, but also make significant progress toward building our talent pipeline for our future workforce and our communities to come.

As you can probably tell, I will be closely supporting the work to come out of this from a budgetary, legislative, and advocate role. I am starting a bipartisan, bicameral Children's Caucus this year, and plan on having this as a focal point for us to support. I am sponsoring the governance model bill in the Senate this session to help with access to quality services for "the whole child," capitalizing on the close collaboration of early learning, public health, and human services programs to be child-centric and driven by the needs of the child, not by the programs' silos or territories. Being on the Colorado Workforce Development

Council, I will also help support the professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application, and for your creativity in the paradigm shift that needs to continue nationally and locally.

Sincerely,

Senator Linda Newell

SENATE
STATE OF COLORADO
DENVER

October 4, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

This is a letter to support the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the state of Colorado. As a Republican member of the Colorado state senate, I am excited about the opportunity that the RTT-ELC grant provides in order to move our state forward on early learning and education reforms. It will allow us to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state. It is important that we prepare each and every youngster for kindergarten with the skills to be successful in school and beyond.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports our reform agenda by requiring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for Colorado's kids. We are especially supportive of the governance model that will ensure accountability yet allow local centers to respond to the unique needs of Colorado's diverse communities.

As a member of our state's Early Childhood Learning Commission I recognize the importance of this Learning Challenge as our commission has worked for the past year to develop strategies and resources to support those in our early learning development workforce.

We are grateful to the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for the opportunity to add value to early learning and childhood development in our state. Thank you for your consideration of our application.

Sincerely,

Nancy Spence

Nancy Spence

State Representative Sue Schafer
Colorado House of Representatives
House District 24, Jefferson County
State Capitol, Denver, CO

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
Department of Education
Ave.

U.S.
400 Maryland
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan

As a career educator, parent, and member of the Colorado House Education Committee I strongly support the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant. Too many Colorado children come to Kindergarten unprepared to succeed in school. My sister teaches Kindergarten and tells me she can identify children at risk for not achieving grade-level proficiency or graduating from high school as early as their performance in Kindergarten!

The Colorado Legislature has many building blocks in place for all students to succeed in school and life but we are missing the critical element of extra support for low-income, pre-school children. They need an early boost of quality teaching and learning the Early Learning Challenge grant can provide. One fourth of pre-schoolers in Colorado live in poverty and our state cannot afford to have a future uneducated workforce.

Several years ago the Colorado Department of Education developed Early Childhood Standards aligned to the Colorado Model K-12 Content Standards. We have identified the critical knowledge and skills to help all children learn but we have thousands of children on the Waiting List for public pre-school, and thousands of parents who cannot afford private pre-school. The Early Challenge grant would help close this serious gap.

Our state needs a statewide early childhood governance model to implement the Standards so all children can graduate from high school, enter post-secondary education or the workforce, and become productive citizens. We have spent too many resources in remediation, drop-out programs, and juvenile crime rather than investing in early childhood education to prevent such problems.

My school district of 82,000 students has successful Head Start programs but needs many more similar to Head Start or other successful models. Thank you for considering the Colorado application for the Race-to-the Top Early Learning Challenge grant. We will use it wisely.

Sincerely yours

Sue Schafer

Representative Sue Schafer
Capitol
Avenue

State
200 East Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

STATE OF COLORADO

cdhs

Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

OFFICE OF LONG TERM CARE
Joscelyn L. Gay, **Director**

DIVISION FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
Barbara D. Ramsey, Interim Director
4055 So. Lowell Boulevard
Denver, Colorado 80236
Phone 303-866-7450
TDD 303-866-7471
FAX 303-866-7470
www.cdhs.state.co.us

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Reggie Bicha
Executive Director

October 5, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

On behalf of the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division for Developmental Disabilities Early Intervention Colorado program which serves as the lead agency for the Part C program, I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. The Department is excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten, as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with developmental needs across the state that require better access to high quality developmental programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs are adopted, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. The proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families across Colorado is especially important.

The Part C program has a key role in ensuring accountability at the state and local level, promoting workforce development, and supporting family engagement and leadership to affect systems change. In addition, within the scope of the RTT-ELC work, the Early Intervention Colorado program will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards, examining how quality rating standards can be applied to home and community-based early intervention services, work collaboratively to identify effective screening Arne Duncan, U.S. Department of Education
October 5, 2011
Page 2

and assessment practices, and embrace strategies that support and engage families in the early intervention program and in the larger early childhood community.

I applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development

throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Respectfully,
Barbara D. Ramsey
Interim Director
Division for Developmental Disabilities

October 3, 2011

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

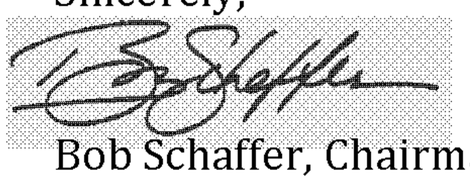
A coordinated interagency early childhood system that supports positive outcomes for our youngest children is a crucial component of a strong and aligned P-20 system that prepares all students for success in school and beyond. The Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge competition provides states an opportunity to advance critical reforms in the area of early development and learning. For this reason, the Colorado State Board of Education is pleased to support Colorado's Challenge Fund application.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has a strong history of interagency collaboration in early learning efforts and has long been a national leader in early education innovation and reform. The RTT-ELC grant provides opportunities to strengthen partnerships and build on the exemplary work already in progress. To this end, CDE will support and leverage the grant to:

- Manage the expansion of the Results Matter comprehensive early childhood assessment program.
- Implement an ongoing formative school readiness assessment system, embedded in the Results Matter framework, for publicly funded preschool and kindergarten classrooms across the state.
- Expand the professional development component of Results Matter to assure the use of high quality assessment practices and foster the understanding and appropriate use of assessment data to inform practice and policy.
- Use our State Longitudinal Data System grant resources to link early childhood assessment data with an interagency data system.
- Further the development of early learning guidelines for children ages birth to eight years that are aligned with Colorado's P-12 academic standards.

Thank you for considering Colorado's application.

Sincerely,



Bob Schaffer, Chairman
Colorado State Board of Education

STATE OF COLORADO

Office of the Lieutenant Governor
130 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

Phone (303) 866-3027
Fax (303) 866-5469
[illegible]

Joseph A. Garcia
Lieutenant Governor

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund proposal supports the state's reform agenda by ensuring the implementation of world-class early learning standards and assessments for children, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and programs. Most importantly, Colorado will strategically support children with high needs to ensure all children are ready for kindergarten. We are writing to express strong support for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC"). On behalf of the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the state of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, innovative early learning and education reforms.

In 1976, the Colorado General Assembly created, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs (CCIA). The Lieutenant Governor serves in the statutory role as chair of the CCIA. The CCIA was designed to be the official liaison between the Southern Ute Indian and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribes and the State of Colorado. Legislators and tribal leaders envisioned a productive relationship between the state and tribal governments. Since its inception, the CCIA has worked with the two Ute Indian Tribes in Colorado and the estimated 56,010 off-reservation American Indian people who live in Colorado.

It is important that high needs children, and American Indian children in particular, be able to take advantage of these opportunities. In an effort to increase the state's 50 percent high school graduation rate for American Indian students, the Colorado Commission on Indian Affairs believes that the support and promotion of the kindergarten readiness assessment and embracing strategies that support and engage families and the larger community is crucial. Providing resources to support professional

development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce will be critical.

Increasing educational opportunities for American Indians is a long-standing goal of this Commission. We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Garcia
Lieutenant Governor
State of Colorado

Carol Harvey
Executive Secretary
Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs

ECLC
Early Childhood Leadership Commission

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express our unanimous support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (Colorado's State Advisory Council), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts that will help prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten and success beyond. Importantly, these funds will help Colorado continue the focus on giving children with high needs better access to high quality programs and services.

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) is a high-level, interagency, public-private partnership established in statute "to ensure and advance a comprehensive service delivery system for children from birth to eight years of age using data to improve decision-making, alignment, and coordination among federally funded and state-funded services and programs for young children and their families." The ECLC was statutorily charged to review the overall state governance system for early childhood and develop recommendations. We are delighted our work on this issue has paid off and can be part of Colorado's grant application. We have unanimously endorsed a recently proposed state early childhood governance structure that will consolidate multiple early childhood programs and funding streams into a new Office of Early Childhood. A legislative member of the ECLC will be the prime sponsor of the related legislation, along with the bipartisan School Readiness Legislative Interim Commission. One element of this proposed legislation includes the establishment of a public-private advisory board to provide oversight of a new office. This board will be the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, meaning that we will continue to be deeply involved in the innovative work proposed in this grant.

ECLC Commissioners have been extensively involved in grant development with members participating on both Advisory and Steering Committees. In addition to providing high-level oversight of this grant, the ECLC has helped spearhead several

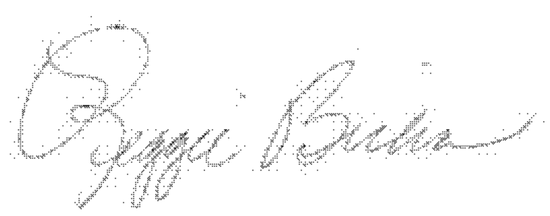
initiatives that align with the selection criteria outlined in the RTT-ELC request for proposal:

- Developing Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines
- Advancing Quality Rating and Improvement efforts
- Implementing recommendations in Colorado's P-3 Early Learning Professional Development System Plan, including the development of core competencies in partnership with the Department of Higher Education
- Supporting the pilot of Colorado's first Kindergarten Assessment
- Guiding planning for development of an early childhood data system

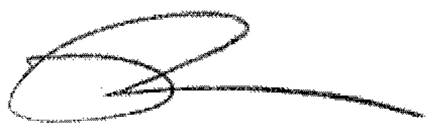
The ECLC, Lieutenant Governor Joe Garcia, Governor Hickenlooper's senior staff, and the Executive Directors of Public Health and Environment, Health Care Policy and Finance, and Human Services, and Commissioner of Education are all enthusiastically committed to creating real change in early childhood governance. All are committed to making the delivery of services to children and families more effective, efficient, and elegant in Colorado while supporting our system of local councils. Most importantly, all want to make significant progress towards Colorado's shared goal of improving outcomes for young children ages birth through eight and their families.

The unanimous endorsement of the RTT-ELC efforts in Colorado shows our desire to accelerate the work already in motion under the Early Childhood Leadership Commission. We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

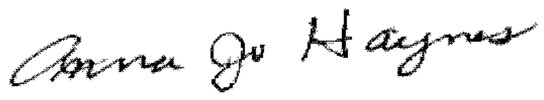
Sincerely,



Reggie Bicha
ECLC Co-Chair
Executive Director, Colorado Department of Human Services

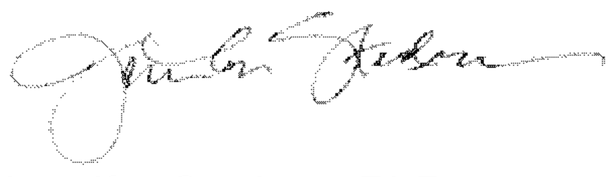


Pat Hamill
ECLC Co-Chair
Chairman and CEO, Oakwood Homes, LLC



Anna Jo Haynes
ECLC Co-Chair

President Emeritus, Mile High Montessori



Jennifer Stedron, PhD
Executive Director, Early Childhood Leadership Commission

STATE OF COLORADO

John W. Hickenlooper, Governor
Christopher E. Urbina, MD, MPH
Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer

Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

4300 Cherry Creek Dr. S.
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Located in Glendale, Colorado

Laboratory Services Division
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http://www.cdphe.state.co.us

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of the Colorado Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI), housed at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to accelerate the state of Colorado in engaging families as authentic partners to assure excellence through the process of education reform. It allows Colorado to take innovative steps regarding family engagement, many of which are already underway in our state, that will support parents to optimize the opportunities to prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten and throughout their life course. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist families across the state who have children with high needs, to be informed and equipped to navigate systems in order to access high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Colorado Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) is excited to partner in this reform agenda to assure that families are fully engaged throughout the process. FLTI offers families a democracy toolkit that gives them the skills, confidence and knowledge they need to be fully engaged parents as well as policy advisors. FLTI has consistently demonstrated across the state, across race and ethnicity and other key diversity indicators, that parents will indeed be engaged in education and civic matters when they have the skills and information that prepares them for authentic partnership. This proposal supports parent engagement through community-based leadership training opportunities statewide as well as a central infrastructure to match parent leaders with key leadership opportunities. With the successful funding of this proposal, Colorado is poised to offer this leadership training to hundreds of parents across the state that will ultimately result in strong parent engagement in local communities as well as at the state governance level.

Evidence supports that when parents are engaged during the early-learning years of their child's life, they become life-long stakeholders in civic and education issues. Through this funding, FLTI will partner in the following manner:

- We will assure that families are connected to leadership opportunities at the community and state level to assure that the parent perspective is embedded in all education reform activities
- We will promote the Kindergarten readiness by engaging parents in understanding child development and the importance of parents' involvement
- We will implement strategies that support and engage families to serve as key partners in their child's education as well as policy advisors to the state of Colorado.

The families of FLTI applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado with a strong attention on supporting parents to be engaged. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Eileen Forlenza
Director – Colorado Family Leadership Training Institute

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

130 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
Phone: (303) 866-2087

Education Leadership Council

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

We are writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. We believe these resources could provide the critical support for Colorado to deliver on our goal of preparing all students through a standard-based education with the 21st century skills required for college or career success. The Education Leadership Council (ELC) is helping guide statewide efforts to improve outcomes for access, quality and equity for all children in Colorado. The RTT-ELC will enhance our capacity to effectively target improvements in programs and systems that serve children, families and professionals.

The ELC is a 40 member board of education leaders, educators, business leaders, community members and education policy experts who were brought together by the Governor, with the aim of making recommendations and providing informed feedback on policy and implementation decisions. With the Lieutenant Governor at the helm, the council has put early learning at the top of its priority list because it recognizes the importance of impacting children's education at the earliest and most impactful period. Members of the ELC represent some of the most influential and hands-on stakeholders of the early childhood education field and therefore have a vested stake in the communities that will directly benefit from the RTT-ELC grant.

The ELC is enthusiastic about the opportunity the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning reform. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, and will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten and beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state acquire better access to high quality programs and services.

We are committed to providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards, supporting as well as promoting the kindergarten readiness assessment, embracing strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community, and supporting the Governor's vision for a streamlined governance model that allows for accountability.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Easley
President
Denver Public Schools
Board of Education

John Barry
Superintendent
Aurora Public Schools

(b)(6)

Barbara Grogan
Former CEO
Western Industrial
Contractors

(b)(6)

Janiel Allen-Davis
Vice President, Government
and External Relations
Kaiser Permanente

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of The Government Data Advisory Board, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, which will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Government Data Advisory Board (GDAB) was created through legislation under Colorado House Bill 09-1285. It was specifically established to advise the State Chief Information Officer on activities and policies necessary to developing the interdepartmental data protocol created in Colorado House Bill 08-1364. GDAB's mission is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state government, citizen service delivery and policy-making by providing guidance and recommendations on how the state should govern and manage data and data management systems. The Board has two primary roles. The first is to assist the State Chief Information Officer in determining the state's data strategy, policies, standards, architecture and assisting with issue management. The Board's second role is as advocate - both from their communities to the Office of Information Technology regarding stakeholder needs and concerns - and to their community as key communicators regarding the state's progress, concerns and challenges.

The Government Data Advisory Board will provide support by advising on the data standards and data governance models to enable the system integration that will be necessary to support the tools and capabilities required by the grant and to increase access and quality for Colorado's early childhood program.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sherri Hammons, Chief Technology Officer
Chair, Colorado Data Advisory Board

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

130 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
Phone: (303) 866-2087

Joseph Garcia
Lieutenant Governor

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan;

I write to you today in strong support of Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund proposal. As the Colorado's Head Start State Collaboration Director, I am excited about the prospects the RTT-ELC brings for all of Colorado's at-risk children.

The philosophy and practices of Head Start have been crucial to Colorado's RTT-ELC proposal. The recognition that Head Start implements best practices in each aspect of the grant every day not only informed the activities in our proposal, but our approach as well. At its base, Colorado's proposal is about bringing the Colorado Preschool Program, child care centers, and Head Start all into alignment. When all of Colorado's early childhood settings are able to deliver the same high quality and comprehensive services that Head Start children and their families experience, we will truly meet our vision of all children being valued, healthy, and thriving.

The State's RTT-ELC proposal is innovative and exciting, but it isn't new. Colorado began work on a comprehensive early childhood system that ensures that all children have opportunities to learn and develop long before this opportunity came to us. The RTT-ELC provides Colorado with the opportunity to move the state's *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* into action now – which means more of Colorado's children will enter school ready to learn, healthy and with families who understand their role as the child's first and most important teacher.

Colorado's Head Start community has been heavily involved in the creation of this application. Many Head Start directors and staff have spent countless hours working to ensure that Colorado's application will improve the state's entire early childhood system. The involvement of the HSSCO, the Colorado Head Start Association and individual programs has been crucial to the State's planning.

The RTT-ELC is an amazing opportunity for states. I thank you for your vision and your action. We know that the supports and opportunities we give our youngest children will mean they are ready for Kindergarten and ready to succeed throughout their school years.

Sincerely,

Heather Tritten
Head Start State Collaboration Director for Colorado
Office of Lieutenant Governor Joseph A. Garcia

October 6, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the State of Colorado. On behalf of the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT), we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move our state forward with ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It will enable Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in the state, and will prepare each and every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children across the state who have high needs and who require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

OIT is responsible for the operation and delivery of information technology services across all Executive Branch agencies in the State of Colorado. Our value proposition is to enable the effective, efficient, and elegant delivery of government services through trusted partnerships and technology. As the enterprise provider of IT, OIT oversees technology initiatives at the state level, recommending strategies and maximizing efficiencies of service delivery in a cost-effective manner through the application of enterprise technology solutions. Our enterprise approach also enables the agile delivery of new applications to state agencies that improve citizen access to government services while increasing accountability and transparency.

OIT will assist in supporting the information technology infrastructure that will be necessary to provide the tools and capabilities required by the grant and to increase access and quality for Colorado's early childhood program.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Kristin Russell
Secretary of Technology and Chief Information Officer

Colorado State University

Center for the New Energy Economy
108 Johnson Hall
1036 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1036
(970) 492-4215
FAX: (970) 492-4130

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

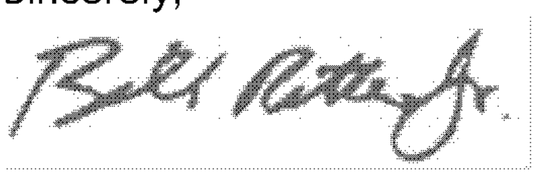
This letter provides you with my unqualified support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the State of Colorado. I take great pride in my accomplishments as Governor that improved the outlook for our youngest Coloradans. Thus, I am looking forward to the gains in early education that an Early Challenge Fund award facilitates. Such a grant will help the Hickenlooper Administration build on its successful record with early childhood initiatives. The grant will enable strategic investments in statewide quality enhancements, and prepare every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. I believe that Colorado's children would be afforded a valuable difference with an Early Challenge Fund award that would solidify the foundation for academic success and empower young learners with the tools for continued achievement.

My time in office underscored the importance of educating our youngest citizens. During my tenure, we passed a comprehensive package of education-reform measures which included initiatives that invest in preparedness like "Preschool Matters" and the 'Colorado Preschool Program," a legacy I'm proud to see Governor Hickenlooper and Lieutenant Governor Garcia continue. Therefore, I strongly support the proposed governance structure that streamlines bureaucracies and encourages program quality by increasing access for families that need early support programs the most.

Our children deserve strong leadership and advocacy to provide them with opportunities for success throughout their lives. I applaud the Obama Administration's visionary commitment to early childhood initiatives, and celebrate the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for the dynamic Race to the Top Early Challenge Fund program that encourages the innovation necessary for real progress for the youth of Colorado and the country.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,



Bill Ritter, Jr., Director
Former Governor, State of Colorado

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I write to express my unqualified support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the State of Colorado. My proudest accomplishments as Governor are those that improved the outlook for our youngest Coloradans, and I look forward to the gains in early education that an Early Challenge Fund award facilitates. Such a grant will help the Hickenlooper Administration build on its already rich record of success with early childhood initiatives by enabling strategic investments in statewide quality enhancements, and prepare every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. I am confident that an Early Challenge Fund award would make a valuable difference for Colorado's children by solidifying the foundation for academic success and empowering young learners with the tools for continued achievement.

My time in office underscored the importance of educating our youngest citizens. During my tenure, I supported growing Colorado's economy and global competitive workforce through education initiatives, a legacy I'm proud to see Governor Hickenlooper and Lieutenant Governor Garcia continue. As former state executive, I strongly support the proposed governance structure that streamlines bureaucracies and encourages program quality by increasing access for families that need early support programs the most.

Our children deserve strong leadership and advocacy on their behalf to provide opportunities for success throughout their lives. I applaud the Obama Administration's visionary commitment to early childhood initiatives, and celebrate the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for the dynamic Race to the Top Early Challenge Fund program that encourages the innovation necessary for real progress for the youth of Colorado and the country.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Richard Lamm

Richard D. Lamm
Governor of Colorado
1975-1987

BILL OWENS

October 14, 2011

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The purpose of this letter is to express my strong support for the State of Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application. Among my proudest accomplishments as Governor are those that improved our K-12 system, and I look forward to the gains Colorado would make should we be awarded this grant.

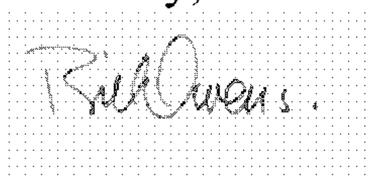
Such a grant will help the Hickenlooper Administration build upon its record of success with early childhood initiatives by enabling strategic investments in statewide quality enhancements, as well as prepare every child in Colorado for later success.

During my eight years as Governor of Colorado, I was proud of our Administration's efforts to improve Colorado's public schools, a priority embraced by Governor Hickenlooper and Lieutenant Governor Garcia. Therefore, I strongly support the proposed governance structure that streamlines bureaucracies and encourages program quality by increasing access for families most in need of early support programs.

Our children deserve strong leadership and advocacy on their behalf to provide opportunities for success throughout their lives. I appreciate the President's support of the Race to the Top Early Challenge Fund program which encourages the innovation necessary for real progress for the youth of Colorado and the country.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,



Bill Owens
Governor of Colorado, 1999-2007

999 18TH STREET · SUITE 270 NORTH TOWER · DENVER, CO 80202 · 303.376.9704 · BILL@OWENSLLC.COM

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203-1792
Phone (303) 866-2471

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

October 7, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

We strongly support Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC").

Colorado is poised to make transformative change for children. We're committed to giving Colorado's children with high needs better access to high-quality early learning, providing a strong starting point for kindergarten readiness and beyond. This grant would accelerate work already well underway and would give us the opportunity to further support our strong P-20 education agenda.

This month, the Hickenlooper-Garcia administration launched our Early Literacy Initiative, ensuring that all students are reading at grade level by the end of third grade. The RTT-ELC proposal is a key support for this initiative. You will see our birth-third grade approach to early childhood included in all major early learning building blocks in the grant – learning guidelines, quality ratings, professional development, and assessments. This will maximize our investments in young children so that results are sustained through third grade and beyond.

Preparing a 21st Century workforce means investing our time and talents in a strong, comprehensive public education program that encompasses best practices in early childhood development, supports excellence in the delivery of K-12 instruction and ensures that every student is well prepared for postsecondary opportunities. Our state is committed to an early childhood system that delivers top-notch early learning programs. We are so committed to this goal that we have made the passage of the new state early childhood governance structure as one of our primary legislative agenda priorities for the next session. This proposal has already been unanimously endorsed by Colorado's Early Childhood Leadership Commission (our State Advisory Council) and will be sponsored by Colorado's bi-partisan School Readiness Legislative Commission. We are confident that a more efficient, effective and quality service delivery system - at both the state and local level - will be the result of this governance change.

We have a track record of innovative and effective local approaches in early childhood. The Denver Preschool Program (DPP) in particular shows Colorado's ability to respect local implementation, maintain the highest standards of quality and accountability, and generate strong outcomes for children. We are committed to supporting local innovations through our nationally-known early childhood councils. We will continue to support innovation while maintaining the

highest standards around access to quality programs so that today's children are better prepared for tomorrow's challenges.

Thank you for the opportunity to bolster our state's efforts on behalf of young children.

Sincerely,

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor
State of Colorado

October 11, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I offer my unqualified support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application for the State of Colorado. As Governor, my proudest accomplishments are those that improved the future for our youngest Coloradans. I look forward to the gains in early education that an Early Challenge Fund award facilitates. Such a grant will enable the Hickenlooper Administration to build on its rich record of success with early childhood initiatives by enabling strategic investments in statewide quality enhancements, and preparing every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. I am confident that an Early Challenge Fund award would make a valuable difference by solidifying the foundation for academic success for Colorado's children and empowering young learners with the tools for continued achievement.

My time in office underscored the importance of educating our youngest citizens. It is a legacy that I'm proud to see Governor Hickenlooper and Lieutenant Governor Garcia continue. As a former Colorado governor, I strongly support the proposed governance structure that streamlines bureaucracies and encourages program quality by increasing access for families that are most in need of early support programs.

Our children deserve strong leadership and advocacy on their behalf to provide opportunities for success throughout their lives. I applaud the Obama Administration's visionary commitment to early childhood initiatives, and applaud the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for the dynamic Race to the Top Early Challenge Fund program that encourages the innovation necessary for real progress for the youth of Colorado and the country.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Roy Romer

Roy Romer
Former Governor, State of Colorado

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

130 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
Phone: (303) 866-2087

October 7, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Ave.

Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") represents a tremendous opportunity to accelerate our work on behalf of Colorado's youngest children. I proudly support this work and strongly endorse this grant application.

Governor Hickenlooper has entrusted my office with creating a seamless P-20 continuum focused on getting our students college and workforce ready. He did so first by appointing me to be Executive Director of Higher Education, second by putting early childhood and K-12 policy in my office, and lastly by naming me chair of the Education Leadership Council, a group of powerful stakeholders from across the continuum and from the public and private sector that is charged with implementing the powerful reforms from the past five years. We know that addressing these challenges in the P-20 pipeline has to start by first building a strong early learning system, one that focuses on increasing access to quality programs and services for children with the highest needs, and one that will ensure all Colorado's children are ready for kindergarten.

This grant provides a powerful step towards achieving our P-20 goals. First, our administration has made a firm commitment to making sure every student that leaves third grade will be grade level literate. In the coming months, I will be reaching out to communities, service organizations, and policy makers to determine how best to secure this vision. This grant helps to ensure that the Children with High Needs that we are trying to reach by the end of third grade will enter the classroom doors kindergarten ready. Second, our state has led the nation with recent landmark legislation called the Educator Effectiveness bill (SB10-191). Within this grant proposal are significant ways to support implementing Educator Effectiveness by implementing P-3 teacher competencies and a system to evaluate and support early childhood educators. Finally, this administration is committed to cutting down on remediation time once a student enters college. We know that the students who are not kindergarten ready are more likely to be the students who are not grade level literate by the end of third grade, and are more likely to be the students who do not graduate or else need remediation. I believe this grant will be instrumental in helping us achieve all of the P-20 goals set forth by this administration.

I also want to take a moment to emphasize Colorado's strong history of public-private partnerships. Many of our best innovations have come from the work of Colorado's dedicated business and philanthropic community. One such proposed effort – using a shared services approach to exponentially increase quality and sound business practices in high risk communities – will be a first for the nation. We are confident in our ability to implement this innovation because of the support of private partners like the Merage Foundation.

On a personal note, I would not be where I am without the educational opportunities I have been given. I know this by looking around at my relatives who, like me, grew up in high needs Hispanic communities; but who, unlike me, did not have a family that prioritized education. I was blessed with a mother who was vigilant about my academic development. Without this advantage I would not have been ready, socially or intellectually, to utilize future educational opportunities. It is my wish to give all children this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration of our Early Learning Challenge grant application.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Garcia
Lieutenant Governor
State of Colorado

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
201 East Colfax Avenue • Denver, Colorado 80203-1799
303 866 6611 • www.cde.state.co.us

Robert E. Hammond
Commissioner of Education

Diana Sirko, Ph.D.
Deputy Commissioner

Keith Owen, Ph.D.
Associate Commissioner

October 19, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I strongly support Colorado's State Plan for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application. This application represents an opportunity to actualize Colorado's P-3 vision for early learning and to ensure positive outcomes for all children, including providing targeted supports for those children with various special needs who are at greatest risk for challenges in school and beyond.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is an enthusiastic partner in this work. We actively work with other state departments, especially the Department of Human Services (CDHS), to jointly implement the foundations of a true P-3 system: early learning and development guidelines, developmentally appropriate assessment, professional development and shared standards of program quality. In addition, we have been a guiding force in the support of Colorado's Early Childhood Councils. We understand how vital it is to have strong local early childhood systems and know these councils are critical to helping us implement our P-3 vision.

Last fall, Colorado's State Board of Education endorsed the implementation of a multi-domain formative kindergarten assessment that builds on our highly successful Results Matter program. The board also endorsed the use of aligned formative assessments in first and second grade. With the legislative requirements of the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K), we are positioned to be first in the nation to implement a unified system of developmentally appropriate assessments from birth through the early elementary years. We have also committed to professional development and data systems that will allow us to use assessment data to inform individualized instruction, engage parents as their children's first teachers, and use data for continuous improvement for early learning programs across the birth to eight spectrum.

We remain committed to high quality standards for our early childhood programs and educators. For example, we require CDHS site licensing for programs receiving state preschool and special education funds and also require that they follow the Colorado Quality Standards that were co-developed by CDE and CDHS. I am confident that, as the work outlined in this grant moves forward, the new program standards for early childhood programs will serve as a cornerstone of our P-3 alignment efforts.

In addition to program quality standards, we are committed to a shared understanding of what young children should know and be able to do through the development of early learning and developmental guidelines. These guidelines will be anchored by the Colorado Academic Standards at the early grades, thus allowing a shared and comprehensive approach to child development for all adults that work with children.

Thank you for your consideration of our Early Learning Challenge grant application. We are excited about the opportunity to accelerate our work and make even greater gains for Colorado's youngest learners.

Sincerely,

Robert K. Hammond
Commissioner of Education
Colorado Department of Education

Get Smart Schools

October 12th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Get Smart Schools, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Get Smart Schools mission is to drive the development of schools that raise the academic achievement of a diverse group of students in Colorado's urban communities. In this capacity, Get Smart Schools will,

- Prepare new school leaders and support autonomous schools across the state of Colorado, increasing the number of effective school leaders serving kids, including ECE programs
- Provide valuable training and resources to autonomous school leaders
- Increase awareness of and demand for new high performing schools that include ECE programs
- Serve as a coordinator and catalyst for the many organizations locally and regionally engaged in education reform

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Amy Slothower
Executive Director
Get Smart Schools

Colorado Early Learning Partnership
Bruce Atchison, Executive Director
600 South Cherry Street, Suite 1200
Denver, Colorado 80246

October 13, 2011
Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing to provide support for the state of Colorado Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC). The Colorado Early Learning Partnership (CELP) is excited about the opportunity this grant provides to the children, families and providers in our great state.

The CELP is a project that has been in existence for the past year and a half. The purpose is coordination and integration of best practices across communities to influence local and state leadership with a common agenda that promotes children's school readiness and well-being from birth to age eight. Over the past 18 months the Executive Director has traveled the state meeting with 24 of the 30 local early childhood councils, school district superintendents and school board members, business leaders, providers, university and community college presidents, elected officials and other early childhood stakeholders to hear about what is working and what is needed to improve school readiness. The objectives described in the Colorado RTT-ELC grant such as the adoption of early learning standards, a standardized kindergarten assessment tool, higher quality opportunities for high needs children, provisions for access to data, and opportunities for professional development all reflect what we have learned at the local level. The most common theme we heard from every community was the need to consolidate, streamline and reduce redundancies across early childhood funding streams in the state. The RTT-ELC proposal moves the state in this positive direction through the creation of a new early childhood governance entity which will ultimately improve services for young children and their families, reduce red tape and put a higher value on the importance of early childhood in Colorado.

The Executive Director of the CELP has been working in the field of early childhood in Colorado for over 30 years. The progress our great state has made has been incremental but we have made great strides. In 1988 we were one of the first states to establish a state funded preschool program (Colorado Preschool Program), in 1997 we established the Consolidated Child Care Pilots in 12 communities to coordinate a collaborative system at the local level and we have expanded these to 30 entities and renamed them the Early Childhood Councils, we established the most bold teacher effectiveness bill across the nation (Senate Bill-191), expanded full-day-kindergarten, established in statute the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, supported numerous local ballot initiatives that fund early learning and we have created a common vision through the Early Childhood Colorado Framework. Clearly Colorado has a history and strong support system both politically and in the private sector for taking our work to the next level and the RTT-ELC will support our dynamic and unique reform agenda.

Once the Colorado grant is funded the CELP will support implementation of the new proposed governance structure by working closely with the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, state legislators, department heads and the executive branch to help ensure successful implementation. We will reach out to our contacts across the state to hear about what is working and what needs attention and we will participate in as many of the activities that we are allowed the opportunity including the expansion of the QRIS system, Kindergarten readiness assessment, embracing strategies that support and engage families, and coordination of the professional development system. Additionally we will continue to work with and support the local early childhood councils as they work at the local level to not only implement the initiatives but to continually strengthen the local early childhood systems.

Mr. Secretary your work and the work of Secretary Sebelius along with Joan Lombardi, Jacqueline Jones, and countless staff have demonstrated the depth of knowledge and support this administration has for the importance of work with children from birth to age 5 to ensure school readiness and school success. The Colorado Early Learning

Partnership applauds you for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,
Bruce Atchison
Executive Director
Colorado Early Learning Partnership

Action 22 inc.
Southern Colorado
GIVING VOICE TO SOUTHERN COLORADO

P.O. Box 697 • Pueblo, CO 81002 • 719-560-9897 • 888-799-1799
fax 719-546-1558 • www.action22.org

September 30th, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

We support the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Action 22, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state, that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Action 22 is the only advocacy organization covering an area of 22 counties – 14 of which have the highest poverty levels in the State and high unemployment. Early learning matters as it prepares our young citizens for jobs of the future. By having an educated workforce, it opens the doors to those seeking to locate their business to communities such as ours.

Action 22 has a variety of committees, including the Education and Workforce Committee. Action 22 will assist in the policy development of learning and development in Colorado and the organization, through its communication channels can help achieve grant outcomes:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will participate in the expansion of the Quality Information Rating System (QRIS).*
- *We will support and promote the Kindergarten readiness assessment.*
- *We will embrace and promote strategies that support and engage families in local programs and in the larger community.*
- *We will promote and market workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We support the state governance model that allows for accountability but localized focus.*

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado.

Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Cathy

Catherine A Garcia
President/CEO

October 1, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of The Piñon Project Family Resource Center, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

The Piñon Project Family Resource Center has a strong history of supporting early childhood. We currently provide early childhood services through the Tree House Early Learning Center; serve as the fiscal agent for the Montelores Early Childhood Council and have implemented the Incredible Year Child and Parent Programs.

As partners in education we will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community and we will conduct workshops and providing resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development work.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

Diana Buza
Diana Buza
Executive Director

Children's Hospital Colorado

October 12, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of Children's Hospital Colorado, I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the State of Colorado. Children's Colorado believes our state is well positioned to transform early learning and implement effective early child education reform measures. This grant would give Colorado the chance to make significant investments into programs that will prepare every child in Colorado for kindergarten and beyond. As providers of healthcare and early childhood services, we understand that early childhood investment is really an investment in our children's future health, wellbeing, and success.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs. By providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools, we can continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Children's Hospital Colorado has been invested in early childhood services since we opened our doors 100 years ago. It is our belief that children can and should have access to evidence-based programs that produce measurable outcomes for the children those programs serve. Today we provide several programs that support early childhood development. Our community health nurses support childcare providers throughout the state, helping them develop programs that meet the developmental needs of children ages 0-3 years. Further, our child development team evaluates children with a variety of developmental and neurobehavioral differences and then provides those patients and families with the resources necessary to understand a diagnosis, cope with the challenges they might face, and find appropriate therapies or interventions. Children's Hospital Colorado is uniquely situated to support our state's efforts in achieving its early childhood goals.

Specifically, Children's Hospital Colorado can help achieve the grant outcomes in the following areas:

- *We will assist in providing support for the definition and implementation of early learning development standards.*
- *We will embrace strategies that support and engage families in our program and in the larger community.*
- *We will conduct workshops and provide resources to support professional development initiatives for Colorado's early learning development workforce.*
- *We serve high needs children and these funds will help Colorado improve access to top quality health and educational programs and services for this often neglected population.*

As the largest providers of pediatric care in our region, we applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Respectfully,

(b)(6)

Heidi Baskfield
Director of Public Affairs

JOINT INITIATIVES for YOUTH & FAMILIES

October 10, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Mr. Duncan,

We, the Joint Initiatives for Youth & Families' Board of Directors express our support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application (RTT-ELC) for the state of Colorado. This grant will allow Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are underway in our state, that will prepare each child for kindergarten and life.

Joint Initiatives for Youth & Families is a prevention focused not-for-profit interagency collaboration of CEO's in the Pikes Peak Region with a common vision of a healthy community where children, youth and their families thrive. Since 1989, we have fostered collaborative initiatives in order to build strong families in our community.

The members of Joint Initiatives use their leadership, experience, talents, resources, and influence to foster social change. Several of our partner agencies are directly involved in early learning but all of them are involved with children and families with high needs that require better access to an integrated network of high quality programs and services.

One of Joint Initiatives' major programs is the Alliance for Kids, El Paso County's Early Childhood Council which is funded by the CO Department of Education. The Alliance serves as a catalyst for the integration of a high quality early childhood system for young children, that includes Early Care and Education as one of its major components. The Alliance is already adopting world-class early learning standards, programs and assessments for children through its School Readiness Quality Improvement project, funded by the CO Department of Human Services. In addition, an Office of Professional Development provides professional development opportunities and college scholarships to early care and education providers to improve their professional qualifications.

We also fully support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability, yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado. We embrace strategies which support and engage families in every aspect of their interaction with the systems in our community. All children deserve the best opportunity to succeed in school and life, particularly children with high needs. They will benefit greatly from the impact of the Challenge Grant. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kathy Moan
Executive Director

2340 Robinson Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80904
719-630-0927 Phone 719-630-1851 Fax www.jointinitiatives.org

JOINT INITIATIVES for YOUTH & FAMILIES

Board of Directors

Aspen Pointe, Morris Roth, President & CEO

CASA of the Pikes Peak Region, Trudy Strewler, Executive Director

Cedar Springs Behavioral Health System, Dr. Elaine Crnkovic, CEO

Colorado Springs Police Department, Richard Myers, Chief of Police

Colorado Springs School District 11, Dr. Nicholas Gledich, Superintendent

Community Partnership for Child Development, Noreen Landis-Tyson, President & CEO

El Paso County Public Health, Kandi Buckland, Director

El Paso County Department of Human Services, Rick Bengtsson, Director

Goodwill Industries of Colorado Springs, Karla Grazier, CEO

Griffith Centers for Children-CHINS UP Division, Barbara Ritchie, CEO

Memorial Hospital, Larry McEvoy, CEO

Office of District Attorney, Dan May, District Attorney

Penrose-St. Francis Health Services, Margaret Sabin, President & CEO

Peak Vista Community Health Centers, Pam McManus, President & CEO

Pikes Peak United Way, JD Dallager, President & CEO

Teller County Department of Social Services, Kim Mauthe, Director

TESSA, Connie Brachtenbach, Executive Director

Urban League of the Pikes Peak Region, Diane Allen, President & CEO

ENVER BOTANIC
GARDENS

tober 7, 2011

ne Duncan, Secretary of Education
S. Department of Education
0 Maryland Ave.
ashington, D.C. 20202

ar Secretary of Education,

m writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge
plication ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. The Gardens has long recognized the
portance of early childhood education and the role that outdoor exploration and
covery plays in developing early learning skills. Since its inception, the Gardens have
ovided numerous opportunities for children of all ages to explore the natural world.

thering our commitment to engaging young children in the outdoors, the Gardens
ened the Mordecai Children's Garden in 2010. This unique three-acre garden exposes
ung children and their families to the wide diversity of Colorado's outdoors, providing
e-appropriate opportunities for play, exploration and discovery. Both independent
rden exploration and structured programs in the garden are designed to support the five
velopment domains (social, emotional, cognitive, physical, creative) of young children.

e Mordecai Children's Garden is one component that will help improve early learning
d kindergarten readiness for all children in the state of Colorado. We are excited about
opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado
ward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows
lorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which
e already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for
dergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist
ldren with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality
ograms and services.

nver Botanic Gardens will support the grant outcomes by embracing strategies that
pport and engage families in helping their children to discover the natural world and
velop important early childhood skills. Additionally, we are able to support early
ldhood educators with professional development on tools and pedagogy that will help
m engage their students in outdoor experiences that facilitate early learning.

e applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for
ating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and
velopment throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's
plication.

cerely,

(b)(6)

Davis
sociate Director of Education

York Street
ver, Colorado 80206
-865-3500
w.botanicgardens.org

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Mr. Brian Vogt

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I am writing to express Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning's (McREL) support for Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC). McREL is excited about the opportunity that the RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. The grant will allow Colorado to make significant investments in quality enhancement efforts—many of which are already underway—that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for success in kindergarten and beyond. These funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state who require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that the State adopts world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and programs, and by providing early learning professionals access to the data and tools necessary to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We also support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Established in 1966, McREL is a 501(c)(3) private non-profit organization whose purpose is to improve education through applied research and development. Since 1999, McREL has provided technical assistance and professional development for early childhood education in the areas of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment; policy; teacher and program quality; and program evaluation. McREL is currently working with the Colorado Early Childhood Leadership Commission to develop and finalize Colorado's Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines under the guidance of an interagency advisory group. If Colorado is awarded the RTT-ELC grant, McREL will work with several demonstration sites to ensure the Early Learning Guidelines are appropriate for multiple settings and inclusive of all learners. This feasibility test will investigate various approaches to professional development and technical assistance for the Early Learning Guidelines and how these approaches influence changes in program practices. As a result of this work, McREL will develop a dissemination plan to guide statewide rollout and integrate the Early Learning Guidelines into assessment, professional development, program standards and improvement efforts, and family engagement.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application. If I can provide any further information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

J. Timothy Waters, Ed.D.
President & CEO

DENVER MUSEUM OF
NATURE&SCIENCE

October 3, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:
I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application (RTT-ELC) for the state
On behalf of the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-EL(provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education refc allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underw state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten, as well as success beyond. In addition, thes help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs an services.The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early lea standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals w to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and deve programs.

The Denver Museum of Nature & Science's (DMNS) mission is to inspire curiosity and excite minds of all ages throug scientific discovery and the presentation and preservation of the · world's unique treasures. The Museum has over 3(experience providing engaging science programming for young children, in particular, children preschool through gra Currently, DMNS is creating a Science Center for Early Learners that emphasizes improved science learning for chilc 3-8, their families, and their teachers. This initiative, funded by a Museum capital campaign and opening in 2014, will learning through a new 5,500 ff science discovery gallery along with an ECE studio and new programming for childre parents, and their educators.

Museum staff looks forward to working with the state of Colorado to support the definition and implementation of earl development standards, especially in the STEM areas. DMNS has several programs for young learners that engage families and will improve upon and grow these programs with the support of RTT efforts. Along with children and fam programs, DMNS will continue to offer its very successful Simply Science for Preschool Teachers professional develo academy to increase the competency of the early learner workforce.

2001 Colorado Blvd. Denver, CO 80205-5798 **p** 303.370.6000 **F** 303.331.6492 www.dmns.org

ROCKY MOUNTAIN PBS
1089 Bannock Street
Denver, CO 80204

October 14, 2011

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary of Education:

I am writing to express support for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application ("RTT-ELC") for the state of Colorado. On behalf of Rocky Mountain PBS, we are excited about the opportunity that the federal RTT-ELC grant provides to move the State of Colorado forward on ground-breaking, transformative early learning and education reforms. It allows Colorado to make significant investments into quality enhancement efforts, many of which are already underway in our state that will prepare each and every child in Colorado for kindergarten as well as success beyond. In addition, these funds will help Colorado assist children with high needs across the state that require better access to high quality programs and services.

The RTT-ELC proposal supports Colorado's reform agenda by ensuring that we adopt world-class early learning standards and assessments for children and early learning programs, and by providing early learning professionals with access to the necessary data and tools to continuously improve the quality of both our workforce and early learning and development programs. We especially support the proposed governance model that ensures accountability yet allows local entities to respond to the unique needs of communities across Colorado.

Rocky Mountain PBS focuses on early childhood learning as a key component to its programming and understands the benefits and importance of the RTT-ELC grant.

It should be noted that I was the founding chairman of Educare Colorado, now known as Qualistar Colorado. As the innovator and current patent holder on the quality ratings "QRIS" rubric upon which the national grant expectations are based. I am intimately familiar with Colorado's capacity to swiftly become a national leader in the evolution of these systems and its capacity to deliver this most important component of early childhood education at scale.

We applaud the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for creating a bold opportunity that paves the way for improving early learning and development throughout Colorado. Thank you for your consideration of Colorado's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Douglas M. Price
President and CEO
Rocky Mountain PBS

Race to the Top Review Committee
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing today to express Teach For America • Colorado's strong support for the Colorado Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application.

Teach For America • Colorado is committed to partnering with others in our community to provide a transformational education for students in low-income communities. Our 340 corps members and 575 alumni in Denver, Colorado Springs, and throughout Colorado are working to achieve excellent academic outcomes for all students. We are deeply invested in Colorado's application because we know Colorado is also maximizing the entire early learning community to improve outcomes for young children. Colorado's primary vision is to ensure healthy child development and school readiness for all children by strategically supporting the people, programs, and places with the highest needs.

Improving early education in Colorado is a top priority, because of the stakes for our youngest students. By the third grade, almost half of low-income students in our state are already below proficient on the Colorado state assessment. The agenda set forth in the application will align and integrate Colorado's P-3 vision by formalizing statewide execution of core early learning system elements. While our state is committed to carrying out these reforms regardless of whether it is awarded additional funding, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge would undoubtedly provide Colorado with critical resources to jumpstart the transformation the governance model, to strengthen the early childhood workforce, and to develop the next model of the QRIS system. Colorado's application takes the absolute priority to focus on the highest need young students as the underlying principle, essential to closing the achievement gap prior to Kindergarten.

Teach for America • Colorado is particularly supportive of this application for its proposed comprehensive data gathering system which will link interagency data systems to ensure the best possible information on our students. In addition, our early childhood initiative, including pre-K corps members and alumni in Colorado, is focused on preparing students for kindergarten. We believe the implementation of the application proposals will increase children's opportunities to learn essential kindergarten readiness skills.

We are confident that Colorado's leaders are prepared to execute the ambitious, innovative plans for reform that are outlined in the state's Race to the Top application. We have been pleased to observe Colorado's commitment to working collaboratively with state and local officials, Head Starts, nonprofits, school districts, teachers, parents, students, and community organizations, as it goes about this important work. Teach for America • Colorado is prepared to continue to work with the state of Colorado to provide

excellent pre-K and lower elementary teachers across the state, a vital strategy towards an excellent early childhood workforce.

Our corps members also strive towards transformational gains in their classrooms, an important part of Colorado's drive towards school readiness for the highest need students. As an organization, we are committed to consulting with the state of Colorado to support implementation best practices in training teachers and using data to inform instruction.

Teach for America • Colorado is confident that Colorado's application will promote school readiness for children, a great early childhood education workforce, and measurable outcomes and progress towards these goals. Colorado's students deserve and demand the best, including these dynamic changes. We appreciate your careful consideration of Colorado's Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Sean VanBerschot
Executive Director
Teach for America • Colorado

Appendix K
Qualistar Quality Components

Please note that this file has been converted from a PDF to an image file. The quality may have been affected.

QUALISTAR RATING™ CRITERIA CHART

Qualistar COLORADO

1. Learning Environment	2. Family Partnerships	3. Training and Education	4. Adult-to-Child Ratios & Group Size	5. Program Accreditation
Points are awarded based on average classroom scores on the ITERS-R® / ECERS-R® or FCCERS-R® Classroom Environment Rating Scale. **Score for component:** 0-10 points	Points are awarded based on how well programs communicate with, collaborate with, and involve families. Information is collected through family questionnaires and program documentation. **Score for component:** 0-10 points	Points are awarded to teachers, family child care providers, and center administrators based on their professional development level AND amount of experience, with criteria separated by position. **Score for component:** 0-10 points	Points are awarded based on the average adult to child ratio and group size in each classroom or family child care program. **Score for component:** 0-10 points	Points are awarded for receiving and maintaining national program accreditation through an approved organization. **Score for component:** 0 OR 2 points

TOTAL QUALITY POINTS REQUIRED FOR EACH STAR LEVEL:

Please note: *Program must earn at least 2 points on The Learning Environment component to receive a star level above Provisional.*

Early Learning Programs and Family Child Care Programs

Provisional = 0 - 9 points OR Learning Environment score of 0
Star 1 = 10 - 17 points
Star 2 = 18 - 25 points
Star 3 = 26 - 33 points
Star 4 = 34 - 42 points

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENT SCORE REQUIREMENTS

Learning Environment (ITERS-R© / ECERS-R© / FCCERS-R©) *Scores from all classrooms are averaged.*

Average of Classroom Scores	Points
1.00 – 3.49	0
3.50 – 3.99	2
4.00 – 4.69	4
4.70 – 5.49	6
5.50 – 5.99	8
6.00 – 7.00	10

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale—Revised Edition, by Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer. (Teachers College Press, Copyright © 1998 by Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer.) Used with permission of the publisher and the authors.

Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale—Revised Edition, by Thelma Harms, Debby Cryer, and Richard M. Clifford. (Teachers College Press, Copyright © 2003 by Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer.) Used with permission of the publisher and the authors.

Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, byThelma Harms, Ellen Vineberg Jacobs, and Donna Romano White. (Teachers College Press, Copyright © 1996 by Thelma Harms, Ellen Vineberg Jacobs, and Donna Romano White.) Used with permission of the publisher and the authors.

Family Partnerships

a. To receive points on Family Partnerships:
   i. For Family Child Care Programs: 75% of Family Questionnaires distributed must be returned.
   ii. For Early Learning Programs: 60% of Family Questionnaires distributed must be returned.

b. Family Questionnaire responses are tallied for each question.
   i. 80% of families must answer that the program offers an activity to receive credit.

c. To receive credit for family responses on the questionnaire, the program also needs to provide documentation that the activities on criteria 1 and 7 take place.

d. A total of 48 raw points are possible to earn for the Family Partnerships component for early learning programs.
   A total of 46 raw points are possible to earn for the Family Partnerships component for family child care programs.
   i. 18 points can be earned from the Program Documentation Checklist.
   ii. For early learning programs: 30 points can be earned from the Family Questionnaire.
   iii. For family child care programs: 28 points can be earned from the Family Questionnaire.

e. The Family Questionnaire points and the Program Documentation points are added together to achieve raw points which are scaled against the table below.

CENTERS			FAMILY CHILD CARE	
Raw Points	Quality Points		Raw Points	Quality Points
0 - 33	0		0 - 31	0
34 - 38	4		32 - 36	4
39 - 43	8		37 - 41	8
44 - 48	10		42 - 46	10

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENT SCORE REQUIREMENTS

Family Partnerships, continued

F. The following are the requirements to earn points.

Criterion			
1. New families receive written information on: a. program philosophy b. policies c. procedures	5. The program provides opportunities for staff and families to get to know one another.	9. The program asks families about their child's activities, interests, and behavior at home. (asked on Family Questionnaire only)	13. Families feel that their concerns are taken seriously and that their questions are answered. (asked on Family Questionnaire only)
2. The program offers information on parenting practices and child development.	6. The program shares information with families regularly about their child's activities, interests, and behavior in the program. (asked on Family Questionnaire only)	10. Families have a variety of opportunities available to take part in their child's program. (asked on Family Questionnaire only)	14. Families are kept informed of changes in the program. (asked on Family Questionnaire only)
3. The program provides information and activities to families to extend children's learning experience at home.	7. Families receive information on their child's progress on a regular basis, using a formal mechanism such as a report or parent conference.	11. The program takes the time to get to know what a family's goals are for their children. (asked on Family Questionnaire only)	15. All staff members within the program communicate well with each other about needs of individual children. (asked on Family Questionnaire for early learning programs only)
4. The program provides information to families on community resources/activities.	8. Families are included in planning and decision-making for the program.	12. Families understand how the program works to support their children's development and learning. (asked on Family Questionnaire only)	16. Families are asked to evaluate the program at least annually (in addition to the Qualistar Family Questionnaire). (asked on Program Documentation Checklist only)
			17. The program has a written plan for supporting program family partnerships that has stated goals / outcomes, a description of activities, and a time line. (asked on Program Documentation Checklist only)

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENT SCORE REQUIREMENTS

Training and Education

Please note:

All child care programs must turn in transcripts – diplomas, licenses and / or credentials must be submitted.

Administrators are considered those who provide supervision of staff and / or provide curriculum implementation support whether they are on or off site employees of the organization.

a) Individuals are assigned points based on their professional development level AND experience.

b) The total number of hours all child care programs in the program work are calculated, the total number of hours all administrators work are calculated or the total number of hours all home providers work are calculated.

c) Each individual's hours worked are divided by the total number of hours worked by all persons in that position, to get a proportion of the time each person contributes to the program.

d) Each individual's points are multiplied by the proportion of time they work in the program.

e) Each individual's weighted points are added together to obtain overall child care programs points, overall administration points or home provider points.

f) In Early Learning Programs, Teacher points and Administrator points are added together to get overall Training and Education Points

CENTERS: TEACHERS

Training and Education	Experience	Points
Less than 45 training ours, over past 3 years	2,000 hours	0
45 training hrs. over past 3 years/ Non-credit CDA/ 3 ECE credits	2,000 hours	1
6 ECE credits/Montessori Certificate	2,000 hours	2
15 ECE credits	2,000 hours	3
24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	4
Associates degree in ECE or Associates degree in non-ECE field with 24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	5
Bachelors/Masters/Ph.D. degree in non-ECE field	2,000 hours	6
Bachelors/Masters/Ph.D. degree in ECE OR Bachelors/Masters/Ph.D. in non-ECE field with 24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	7

CENTERS: ADMINISTRATORS

Training and Education	Experience	Points
Less than an Associates Degree	2,000 hours	0
Associates Degree in ECE or any A.A. degree with at least 24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	1
Bachelors degree in ECE or any B.A. degree with at least 24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	2
Masters Degree/Ph.D. in ECE or M.A./M.S./Ph.D. with at least 24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	3

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENT SCORE REQUIREMENTS

Training and Education, continued

FAMILY HOMES:

Training and Education	Experience	Points
Less than 45 training hours over past 3 years	2,000 hours	0
45 training hours over past 3 years / Non-credit CDA / 3 ECE credits	2,000 hours	1
6 ECE credits / Montessori Certificate	2,000 hours	2.5
15 ECE credits	2,000 hours	4
24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	5.5
Associates degree in ECE or Associates degree in non-ECE field with 24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	7
Bachelors / Masters / Ph.D. degree in non-ECE field	2,000 hours	8.5
Bachelors / Masters / Ph.D. degree in ECE OR Bachelors / Masters / Ph.D. in non-ECE field with 24 ECE credits	2,000 hours	10

Adult: Child Ratios / Group Size:

a. Counts:
   i. Full Day Centers / Family Homes: 8 Ratio / Group Size counts are taken
   ii. Part Day Centers / Family Homes: 4 Ratio / Group Size counts are taken
b. Each count is awarded points based on the adult: child ratio and group size for the specific age group (where 50% of the children fall) from the chart below.
c. Ratio points and group size points are added respectively and divided by the number of counts taken to determine the average for the classroom.
d. If a classroom receives 0 points on 1 count, the overall score will drop 2 points. If a classroom receives 0 points on MORE than 1 count, the overall score for that classroom will be 0.
e. The average group size and ratio points for each classroom are added together respectively and divided by the total number of classrooms to achieve a program's average group size points and ratio points.
f. The program's average ratio points and average group size points are added to achieve the Ratio/Group Size component points.

Exceptions (CENTERS Only):

- If 20% or more of children are 23 months or younger, the ratio required for the youngest age group within that 20% will be applied.
- If 50% or more of the children in a room are 72 months or older, the ratio required for the youngest child in the group will be applied, regardless of the percentage of the total they represent.

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENT SCORE REQUIREMENTS

Ratios/Group Size, continued

CENTERS:

Points Assigned	0-17 Months	10-23 Months	24-35 Months	36-47 Months	48-71 Months	30-71 Months
Adult : Child Ratio						
0 points	1:6+	1:6+	1:8+	1:11+	1:13+	1:11+
4 points	1:5	1:5	1:7	1:10	1:12	1:10
6 points	1:4	1:4	1:6	1:9	1:10	1:9
8 points	1:3	1:3	1:5	1:8	1:8	1:8
Group Size						
0 points	7+	7+	11+	17+	17+	17+
1 point	6	6	10	16	16	16
2 points	1-5	1-5	1-9	1-15	1-15	1-15

FAMILY HOMES:

Points	Ratios:
8	1:6 children 2 to 13 years (no children under 2 years).
8	1:5 children 0 to 13 years, no more than 2 children under 2 years.
7	1:8 children 2 to 13 years, at least 2 school age children (no children under 2 years).
7	1:7 children 0 to 13 years, at least 2 school age children, no more than 2 children under 2 years.
6	1:6 children 0 to 6 years, no more than 2 children under 2 years (no school age).
6	1:4 children 0 to 13 years, 3 or 4 children under 2 years.
5	1:8 children 0 to 13 years, at least 2 school age children, no more than 2 children under 2 years.
5	1:6 children 0 to 13 years, no more than 3 children under 2 years.
	Group Size
2	10 children, at least 2 school age children, none under 2 years.
2	6 children, any under 2 years.
1	12 children, at least 2 school age children, none under 2 years.
1	8 children, any under 2 years.

Program Accreditation: If accrediting organization is recognized and certificate is active, 2 points are awarded.

Appendix L
RFP Scope of Work for Expanded TQRIS

Next Generation of Colorado's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System
RFP
Summarized DRAFT Scope of Work
October 2011

1. Cross-walk of current national program standards, Colorado program specific standards and licensing standards such as, but not limited to, standards developed by the following groups:

    - National Association for the Education of Young Children
    - Head Start and Early Head Start Program Performance Standards
    - United States Department of Defense
    - Colorado Preschool Program
    - National Association of Family Child Care
    - Council of Accreditation for School Age Children
    - Colorado's new Early Learning and Development Guidelines
    - Federal benchmarks for Quality Indicators in Early Childhood
    - Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards

2. Develop indicators for each of the five category areas within the four levels of Colorado's TQRIS system. The five categories include:

    - ***Curriculum and Learning*** – curriculum, comprehensive assessment, teacher and child interactions, special education, and early learning guidelines

    - ***Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development***-Directors, substitute directors, early childhood teachers, teacher aides, volunteers and family child care home providers.

    - ***Environment-*** indoor, outdoors, health promotion, nutrition, adult to child ratios, space requirements, group size and safety and learning environment.

    - ***Leadership, Management, and Administration-*** Supervision, management, community involvement, leadership, school collaboration and transition and community involvement, effective data practices.

    - ***Family Partnership***

3. Develop quantitative methodology for determining adherence to indicators

4. Develop Technical manual for the TQRIS system

5. Analysis of tiered reimbursement systems in other states

6. Inventory of existing supports and incentives available to support providers in obtaining TQRIS rating including but not limited to:
    - Consultation and planning

- Stipends, scholarships
- Training
- Financial incentives
- Coaching
- Mini grants
- Shared services
- Higher reimbursement rates based on quality levels

Appendix M
Lessons Learned from the Qualistar Rating and Improvement System Validation Study

Please note that this file has been converted from a PDF to an image file. The quality may have been affected.

LESSONS LEARNED

FROM THE QUALISTAR RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM RAND VALIDATION STUDY

Qualistar
EARLY LEARNING

(b)(6)

October 2008
Principal author: Diana Schaack

Introduction

In 1995, the *Child Care Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study*[1] was released. This study, which in part was conducted in Colorado, found that the quality of child care was directly linked to children's academic success and social skills. Further, the study found that upwards of 87 percent of child care was considered poor to mediocre. In response to this demonstrated need to improve child care quality, child care advocates, educators and researchers across Colorado came together to help solve this critical problem.

In 1998, Qualistar Early Learning (formerly Educare Colorado) was created with the mission of improving early care and education experiences for children and families across the state. One way in which Qualistar sought to do this was to develop and implement a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). A QRIS provides families with an easy to understand gauge (such as 0-4 stars) of child care quality. They offer child care funders an accountability measure, and they offer child care providers a detailed quality improvement tool. The Qualistar Rating combines multiple research-based indicators of child care quality into a composite rating. These indicators are:

- Learning Environment
- Adult to Child Ratios and Group Size
- Staff Training and Education
- Family Partnerships
- National Accreditation by Professional Early Care and Education Associations

Qualistar was one of the first in the country to develop a QRIS. These tools are gaining ground as a promising strategy for early childhood education reform. They are rapidly becoming an essential component for a comprehensive early childhood system.

As a pioneer in the early care and education industry, Qualistar understood the importance of examining the effectiveness of their QRIS at improving child care quality and children's learning experiences. In 2000, with support from The Colorado Trust and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Qualistar contracted with The RAND Corporation to evaluate its rating system, marking one of the first comprehensive evaluations of a QRIS. In this research brief, Qualistar presents key lessons learned from this evaluation to assist QRIS developers, child care policy advocates and QRIS evaluators in creating an effective QRIS.

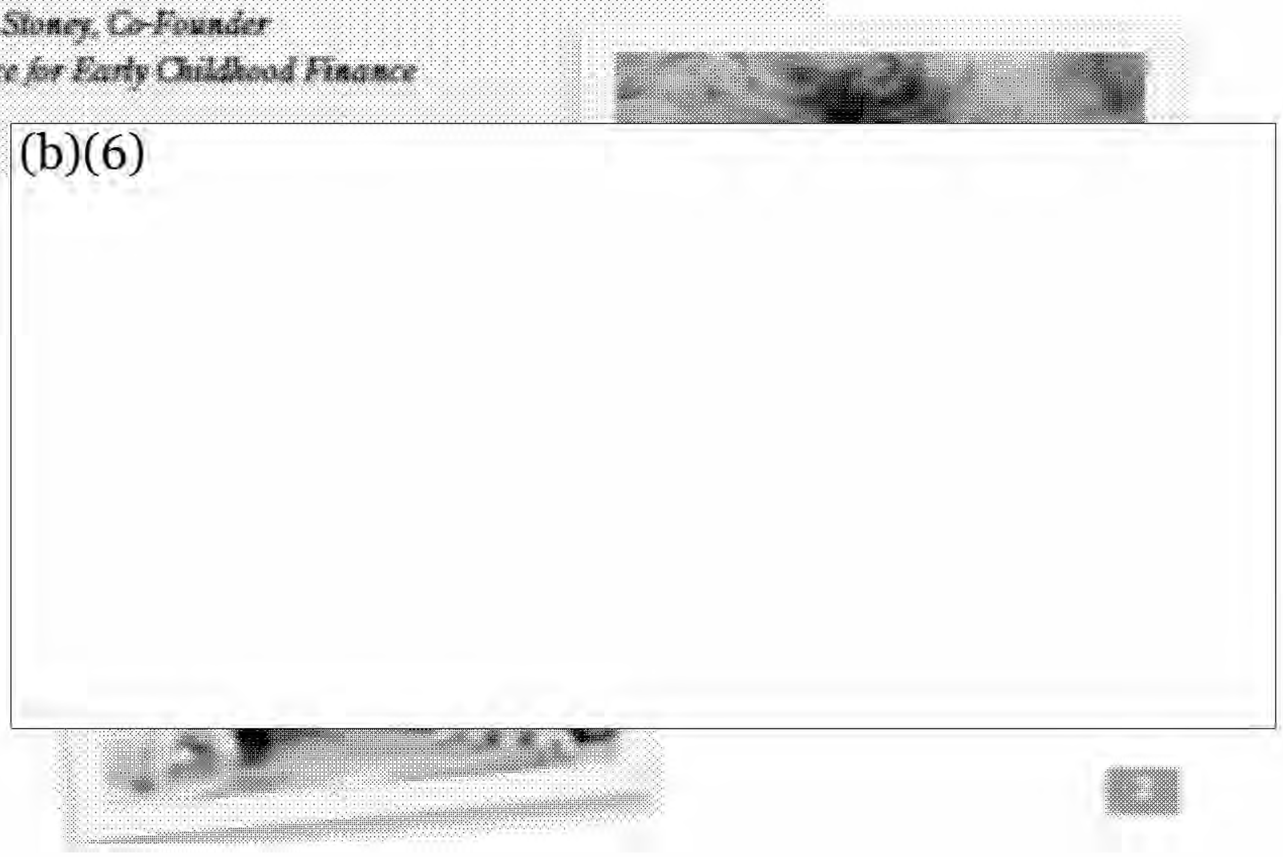
Qualistar's Mission: Improving early care and education experiences for children and families across Colorado.

[1] Helburn, S. (1995). *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study*. Denver, Colorado: University of Colorado at Denver.

Key Learnings:

- Investing time in researching and improving individual QRIS quality components is critical to developing an effective QRIS. Components that Qualistar spent time researching and improving are demonstrating better validity.
- Center and family homes that participated in the Qualistar Rating System improved in quality.
- Developing and evaluating a QRIS is an iterative process that takes time with clear steps. Embarking on a child outcome study should only occur after piloting and improving QRIS measures and processes.

> "What early care and education needs is a set of industry-wide standards that can help assure that all children – regardless of who pays for their care and education – receive high-quality services. And we need financing linked to those standards, so that programs are able to offer high-quality services at affordable prices. Right now our field is struggling with multiple standards, policies, procedures and funding streams. At best, the result is parallel play; at worst, lengthy and expensive turf battles. We can do better. QRIS offers a unique opportunity to craft industry-wide standards and supports that not only embrace and link existing silos but are market-based, so that even families or ECE programs with no connection to government funding can participate."
>
> – *Louise Stoney, Co-Founder*
> *Alliance for Early Childhood Finance*



Measuring Child Care Quality

An effective QRIS offers a framework for assessing, improving and communicating the level of quality in an early care and education (ECE) setting. The approach should be uniform, statewide, and apply to a broad range of ECE programs (center-based child care, family child care, public and private pre-kindergarten, and Head Start) regardless of the funding the programs receive. Developing a QRIS is a complicated task that requires multiple trade-offs. On the one hand, a QRIS must be accurate (reliable and valid); on the other hand, it must be cost effective to administer. Effectively balancing these needs is key to success.

Qualistar's evaluation focused on how well the individual Qualistar Rating components functioned. This important information can be used by other states when selecting quality measures and in deciding how to administer them in the most effective ways possible.

The RAND evaluation produced many findings, and those with particular relevance to QRIS planners and implementers are summarized in this document.

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Effectively achieving balance is the key to success.

Learning Environment:

Most QRISs, including the Qualistar QRIS, use The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) to measure the classroom learning environment.[2] The ERS provides a measure of the physical environment, the health and safety practices, the teacher-child interactions, the curricular materials and the daily schedule of early care and education classrooms. Both research and practitioner wisdom support the idea that when children are provided a stimulating learning environment and supportive interactions with teachers, they are more likely to have better school readiness skills.[3]

The Qualistar evaluation offered the following helpful information on the ERS:

- A sample of 12-15 items on the ERS can be used to achieve an accurate score.
- ERS scores do not appear to vary between classrooms in a program. Administering the ERS to 50 percent of classrooms with the same age group provides an accurate score.
- Programs that are nationally accredited tend to have higher ERS scores.
- While the ERS purports to measure seven distinct aspects of child care quality, it appears to measure one comprehensive aspect of quality that primarily represents the physical environment of the classroom. Less emphasis appears to be placed on in structional quality and supportive teacher-child interactions.

Implications:

If ERS are included in a QRIS, there are effective ways to reduce the cost of administering these tools (e.g. sampling items or sampling classrooms). Using ERS may be important for programs that are working on improving the basic health, safety and physical environment of classrooms. Using learning environment measures that focus more on the instructional support and the quality of the teacher interactions may be more directly related to improving children's school readiness skills and may be more helpful for programs that already have good classroom physical environments.

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[2] Harms, T., Clifford, R. & Cryer, D. (1998). The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised. New York: Teachers College Press.

[3] Burchinal, M. R., Howes, C., & Pianta Peisberg, R. S. (In preparation). Development of academic skills from preschool through second grade: Family and classroom predictors of developmental trajectories.

Classroom Ratios:

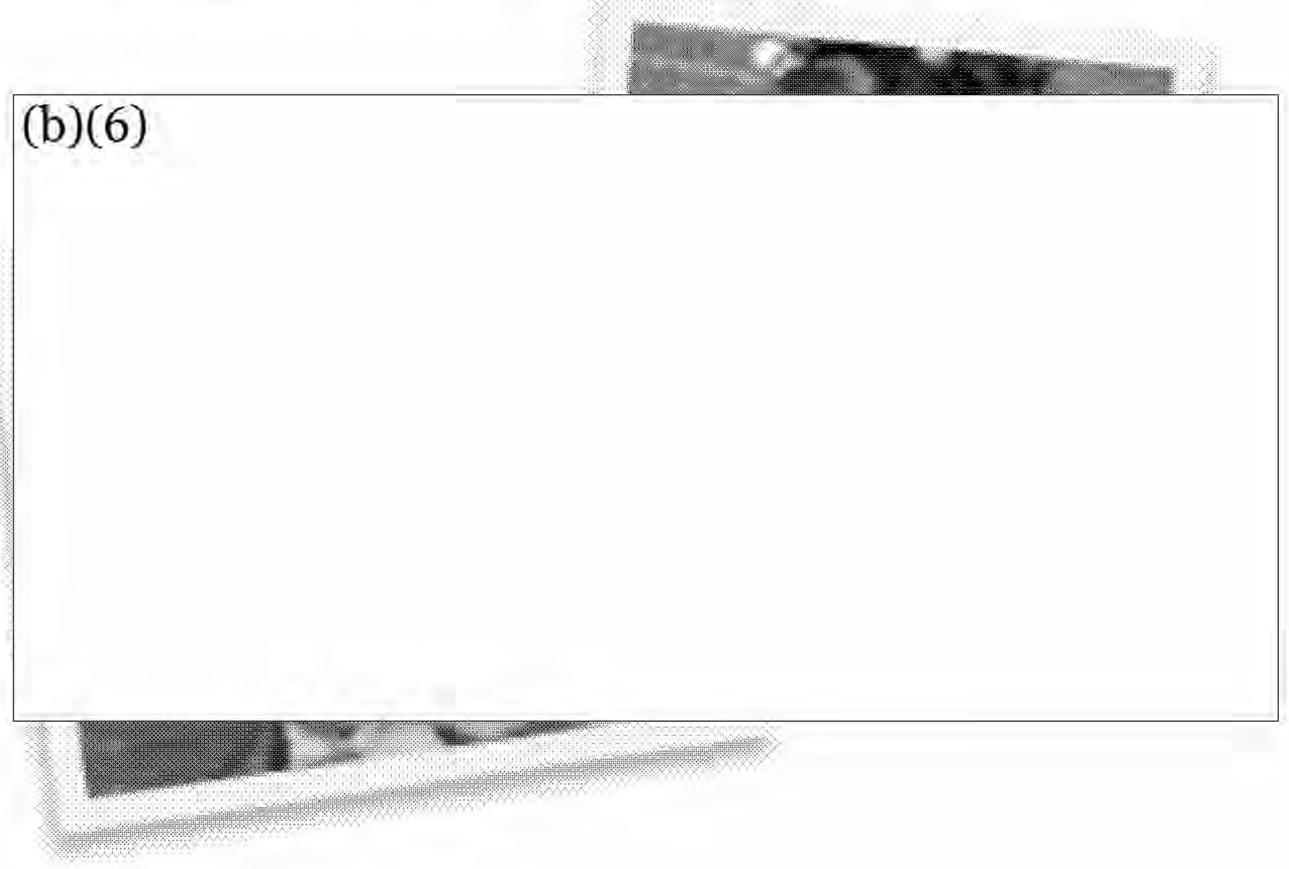
Low child to staff ratios make it more possible for teachers to plan and implement individualized learning. Past research has consistently shown a link between lower classroom ratios and better school readiness skills in children.[1] The ratio of children to staff is included in some QRISs, most typically in states where licensing ratios are higher than recommended by early childhood experts.

The Quality Matters evaluation offered the following helpful information on measuring ratios:

- In many center-based programs there is a large and predictable change in classroom ratios throughout the day. Using one ratio count during morning programming does not accurately portray the ratios children experience. To produce an accurate account, eight specific time periods should be observed.
- Relying on teacher/director self-report of classroom ratios does not produce an accurate account of the ratios children experience. In Colorado (where ratio monitoring is not stringent) relying on licensing compliance as a measure of classroom ratios does not produce an accurate representation.
- Classroom ratios appear to vary from classroom to classroom in a program. Relying on a sampling of classrooms does not yield an accurate account of classroom ratios.

Implications:

QRIS developers will need to consider their state's licensing compliance history and the degree to which licensing standards support developmentally appropriate ratios to determine if this costly ratio collection strategy is an appropriate and worthwhile investment for a state.



[1] NICHD ECCN. Characteristics and quality of child care for Toddlers and Preschoolers. Applied Developmental Science, 4 (3), 116-135.

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Staff Training and Education:[5]

Research and practitioner wisdom support the notion that when early care and education staff have more knowledge about children and effective early education practices, they are more apt to respond to children sensitively and provide developmentally appropriate instruction.[6] All QRISs, including Qualistar's, measure the professional development levels of child care staff. The Qualistar evaluation offered the following helpful information on staff training and education:

- To meet mandated ratio requirements, many center-based programs move teachers and children to different classrooms throughout the day. When this occurs, children interact with many different teachers – not just the head teacher assigned to their classroom.
- When the amount of time that children experience each teacher is considered, teachers with B.A. degrees (or higher) and with more experience appear to be more effective in promoting and enhancing children's literacy skills.
- Since children receive large amounts of care and instruction from assistant teachers and teacher aides, promoting their professional development through a QRIS is important to improving children's literacy outcomes.

Implications:

These findings have implications for QRIS developers, evaluators and classroom interventions aimed at improving child care quality. Since it can not be assumed that children are assigned to one classroom with stable classroom teachers, it is important to provide professional development and quality improvement activities to all teachers in a program, not just to head teachers or at a classroom level. Many QRISs rate the professional developmental level of just head teaching staff or only require a percentage of teachers to hold degrees. QRIS developers might consider, if feasible, measuring and advancing the education levels of all teachers in an effort to support children's literacy skills.

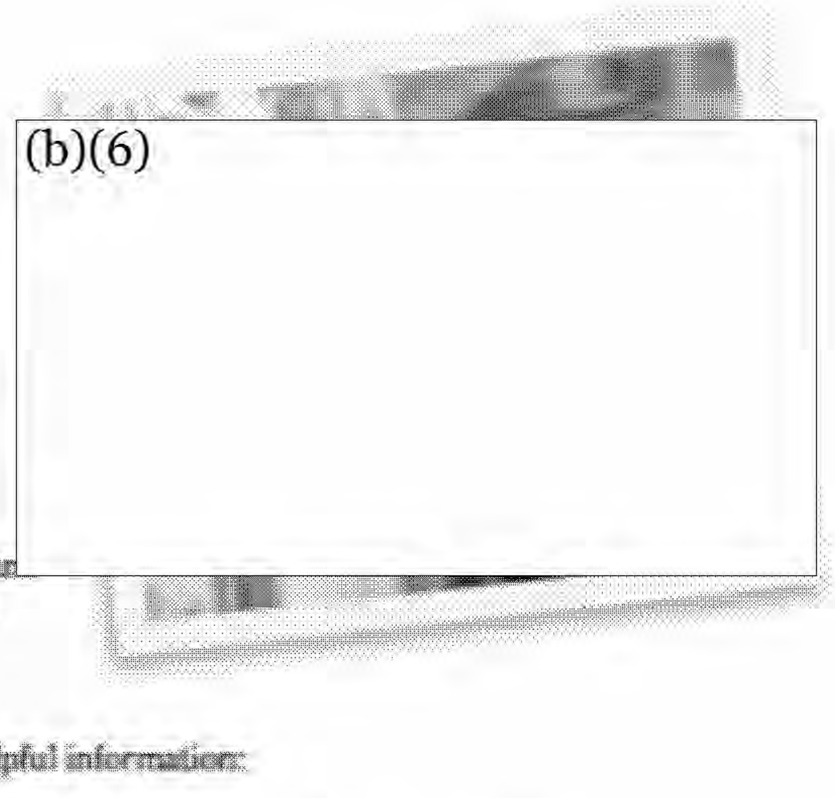
All QRISs, including Qualistar's, measure the professional development levels of child care staff.

[5] Information provided in this section is taken from data collected through Qualistar's validation project. For more information, please see Setodji, C., Le, V. & Schaack, D. (in preparation).

[6] Thomas, C., Smith, K., & Galinsky, E. (1999). The Florida child care quality improvement study: Interim report. New York: Families & Work Institute.

Family Partnerships:

Many QRISs, including Qualistar's, offer some type of measure of parent involvement as an indicator of quality. Many early childhood educators agree that when families and child care programs work together, children benefit. However, little is known about the essential ingredients of parent involvement and how the ingredients support children's development. Qualistar and RAND worked together to understan several different types of measures that examine parent involvement and satisfaction.



The Qualistar evaluation offered the following helpful information:

- Measures of parent satisfaction or surveys about the quality of teacher-parent relationships do not provide much variation in parent response. Most parents respond positively about their child's program or teacher regardless of whether the program offers high quality services or not.
- A promising new family partnership measure focuses on how well programs communicate with families and supports families by providing them information on child development and developmentally appropriate activities. This measure is showing a correlation with children's social development.
- Family Partnership self-report measures administered to program directors or family home providers do not correlate with how families respond about the quality of family partnership activities offered in a program. Family responses appear to be a better gauge of the effectiveness of family partnership activities than program self-assessments.

Implications:

It is important to consider the object being measured and the assessor when evaluating parent involvement or family partnerships. Existing measures of parent satisfaction do not distinguish high quality programs from low quality ones. Similarly, measuring parent attendance at meetings or events may not effectively capture the quality of parent involvement activities. Measurements of family perceptions of program communications and support are more reliable and show connections to children's social skills.

How do the Qualistar Rating Components Work Together?

RAND also examined how well the individual Qualistar Rating components relate to one another. This analysis was used to determine if substantially different aspects of child care quality were being measured in the Qualistar Rating and to determine whether particular components could be dropped from the rating, thereby making the system simpler and more cost effective.

RAND found that the learning environment, classroom ratios, staff training and education and the quality of family partnerships were moderately correlated with one another. This implies that the components are measuring different but related aspects of child care quality. Consequently, it may be important to measure all of these components of child care quality in QRISs.

RAND also suggests that because of the high correlations between NAEYC accreditation and other QRIS measures, that national accreditation be dropped from the rating as a way to streamline the ratings process. However, it is important to note that NAEYC accreditation was completely reinvented and a new system launched in late 2006, to address the limitations of the accreditation process noted in RAND's evaluation of the Qualistar QRIS. The new process and accreditation criteria were not used by programs in this evaluation and a very small number of programs in the sample were accredited. Consequently, recommendations in this report on the role of accreditation in QRISs should be considered with extreme caution. Additionally, some states have worked collaboratively with NAEYC to establish a simpler, more streamlined process. In these states accredited programs receive a rating via their accreditation status and do not have to participate in multiple assessments.

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Did Child Care Quality Improve?

Ultimately, a critical outcome for a QRIS is to improve the daily experiences of children who receive early care and education services. While the Qualistar evaluation cannot attribute program quality improvement unequivocally to participation in a QRIS process, findings do suggest that:

- Child care centers that participated in the Qualistar Rating process improved their ECERS-R[3] scores by nearly one point on a seven point scale.
- Family Child Care Homes that participated in the Qualistar Rating improved their FDCRS[4] scores by over one point on a seven point scale.

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Improving Children's School Readiness Skills

Ultimately, one of the goals of a QRIS is to support children's development and improve the school readiness skills of children who attend early care and education programs. Unfortunately, RAND was unable able to make definitive conclusions about the effectiveness of the Qualistar Rating System at improving children's school readiness skills. The study simply had too many methodological challenges. First, the evaluation was unable to draw from a random selection of child care providers, but instead was based on providers that volunteered for the initiative and had been working on improving their quality for several years. This limited the range of child care quality in the sample, making it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions. Second, programs that dropped out of the evaluation were generally of lower quality; thus restricting the quality range even further. Third, only 7 percent of the children remained in the study for all three years.

Given these limitations, results from this evaluation should not be generalized to the effectiveness of all QRISs to support children's development. In fact, it is unlikely that any conclusions can be drawn about child outcomes until research is conducted with a much larger sample of participating programs and children as well as some assurance that the desired outcomes are aligned with the quality measures embedded in the QRIS. These conditions may not be present for many years. However, the field still needs practical evaluations that help on-the-ground QRIS developers understand how different aspects of QRISs effect children's development. The RAND evaluation of the Qualistar QRIS has contributed to this body of knowledge.

[3] Harms, T., Clifford, D. & Cryer, D. (1998). *The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised*. New York: Teachers College Press.

[4] Harms, T.& Clifford, D. (1989). *The Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale*. New York: Teachers College Press.

> "QRISs are a system reform framework with enormous potential to improve children's growth and learning, support families and build a sustainable system of early care and education in the states. Children are the immediate beneficiaries. In the long run, we all win. What states need is practical counsel based on better study designs to help states build better systems."
>
> – *Anne Mitchell, President*
> *Early Childhood Policy Research*

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Conclusion

Qualistar's evaluation offers lessons for those interested in embarking on QRIS evaluations.

- Evaluations should start by examining how well individual quality measures function so that improvements can be made to them. The components that Qualistar spent concerted time researching and improving are demonstrating better validity.
- Evaluations should examine how quality measures function together to determine whether measures can be dropped from the rating.
- Once measures have been improved and demonstrate good internal validity, a study of the associations with child outcomes might be considered.
- If child outcome measures are included in an evaluation, it is critical to assure that the desired outcomes are aligned with program quality measures embedded within QRISs.
- Evaluations should use a random and representative sample of child care providers to assure that there is a wide range of quality represented and children are tracked over time.

Finally, child care advocates should be realistic about the degree to which a QRIS can improve children's outcomes. Assuring that children are provided rich and stimulating early care and education experiences is important for their development, but many other factors, such as poverty, access to health care, community violence and family dynamics, influence children's development.

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems offer a promising early care and education reform strategy, help to align the myriad of child care standards, promote coordinated accountability among a range of funders, and improve the care and education offered to children throughout the country. Qualistar's evaluation of their Quality Rating and Improvement System can serve was a helpful resource to both QRIS developers and evaluators.

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Appendix N
Colorado Building Blocks

The Colorado Building Blocks
for Early Development and Learning

Introduction

The original Colorado Building Blocks included a comprehensive guide to development and learning in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. These documents were well received and used in numerous preschool programs in Colorado. Over time, the need for a comprehensive document that addressed all developmental and academic domains was clear. After several years of stakeholder feedback and an extensive review of early learning guidelines in use across the country, the decision was made to adopt the Rhode Island early learning guidelines in their entirety. This newest edition of the *Building Blocks,* was first made available to Colorado's early childhood system in July of 2007.

The CDE Office of Early Childhood recognizes the work of the Rhode Island Departments of Human Services, Education, Health and Children, Youth and Families as well as the Rhode Island Head Start State Collaboration Project, the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. The document that follows represents their collaborative efforts and has been adapted with permission only with regard to making the document Colorado specific.

New Developments 2009

The Colorado P-12 Academic Standards have replaced the K-12 Model Content Standards. Early childhood programs should use the new standards in conjunction with the Building Blocks. Colorado Academic Standards are created to support an aligned P-20 system which provides an inclusion of early school readiness expectations and postsecondary competencies. Historically, these standards have been organized by grade spans but have evolved to be articulated by grade. Additionally, state standards reflect workforce readiness and 21st century skills such as critical thinking and reasoning, information literacy and invention. The ability to take responsibility for additional learning, self direction and interaction with others to learn new information quickly and more naturally is the new emerging direction of our work. For more information about the standards, go to: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/index.html For more information about how the preschool level of the Colorado Academic Standards align to the Building Blocks and other early childhood tools, go to: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/index.html

New Developments 2011

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission has requested that the State of Colorado develop new early learning guidelines that will cover all developmental and academic domains and be inclusive of all children ages birth to eight years. These new expectations are intended to be used throughout the early childhood system and will build on The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and the Colorado Academic Standards. A state level advisory group is leading this effort and an educational research organization has been hired to complete the initial development phases of the work. Opportunities for stakeholder feedback should be available by the end of 2011 or early 2012.

cde *Improving Academic Achievement*

Guiding Principles

These are some of the guiding principles for the implementation of the *Colorado Building Blocks* in early childhood programs serving children ages three to five.

- Early learning guidelines should reflect current research and a strong foundation in child development theory.

- Families should be respected and supported as partners in the education and development of their child.

- Educators should make decisions about curriculum, environments and interaction styles based on:

    - current research and knowledge about child development and early learning theory
    - the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of children and families
    - subjects that are related to the real interests and experiences of children and families
    - appropriate recognition and response to information gained through observation and ongoing assessment
    - the knowledge that children use play as a way to develop, to generate knowledge of the larger world and to acquire the disposition for lifelong learning

- Children must have the opportunity to learn in an environment where their physical and psychological needs are met so they feel safe, valued as unique individuals and engaged actively in acquiring new skills and knowledge.

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Overview

The *Colorado Building Blocks* provide guidance for families, early care and education providers and administrators on what children should know and be able to do as they enter kindergarten. They are intended to be used in conjunction with the Colorado P-12 Academic standards. They are intended to be inclusive of all children — children who are English language learners, children with special health care needs, children who are at risk, children with disabilities and children who are typically developing. It is important to recognize that children may meet the expectations described in the *Building Blocks* document at different times and in different ways.

The *Colorado Building Blocks* should be used to:

- illustrate a continuum of learning
- inform understanding of child development during the preschool years
- inform curriculum development
- guide the selection of assessment tools that are appropriate for learners from a variety of backgrounds with differing abilities.
- provide a framework for administrators to oversee educational practices and advocate for resources
- focus a conversation among families, community members and legislators about the education of young children

The *Colorado Building Blocks* align to and support:

- Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework
- Results Matter global child outcomes and assessment systems
- Colorado P-12 Academic Standards

The *Colorado Building Blocks* are not intended to be used to:

- assess the competence of young children
- mandate specific teaching practices or materials
- prohibit children from entering kindergarten
- exclude groups of children from programs because of disabilities or home language

The *Colorado Building Blocks* are organized in a three-tier structure:

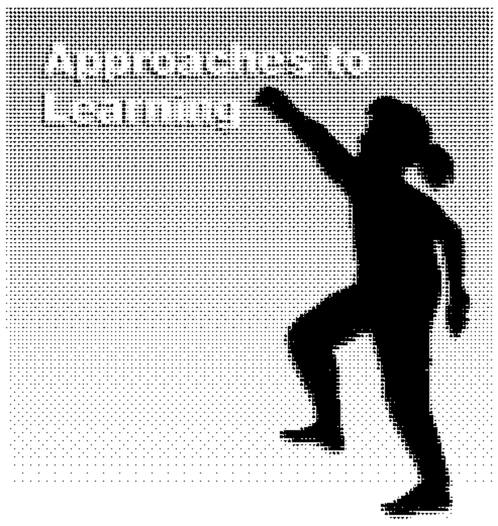
- There are 8 *Domains* or general areas of learning.
- Within each domain, there are *Learning Goals and Definitions* which include categories of knowledge and skills.
- Each domain also highlights *Expectations* which are examples of typical four-year-old behavior that demonstrate competence in relation to each Learning Goal

A wealth of research confirms the fact that children learn through play. Through their play, children have the opportunity to understand their world, interact with peers and adults, express and manage emotions, develop their symbolic capabilities and enhance the learning of skills, knowledge and dispositions that guarantee success in later schooling. The *Building Blocks* reflect Colorado's strong belief in the important role of play in children's learning, as well as the importance of the adult's role in facilitating children's learning through play.

Approaches to Learning

As early as infancy, children display some of the dispositions and styles of learning that lead to success in school. Some children seem to be born well-organized and bursting with initiative while others require more structure and encouragement while they discover their unique capacity as learners. Adults must ensure that every child has the opportunity to take responsibility in directing their own learning. All children, regardless of innate abilities or the presence of disabilities, are able to learn and be successful.

When children complete a puzzle, construct an elaborate block structure, or ride a tricycle through a maze, they learn when to ask for assistance, seek additional resources and take responsibility for the care of materials. A well-planned learning environment, carefully designed activities and teachers who participate as co-learners will promote in children a willingness to try new experiences and demonstrate persistence in completing projects. As children connect their learning each day to past experiences, they learn how to take the initiative to carry their knowledge and skills to a new level of mastery.



Children demonstrate positive attitudes, habits and learning styles.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their individual approach to learning.	• Initiate sustained play with peers. • Enter into and play cooperatively with other children. • Choose from a variety of play activities.
2. Curiosity Children demonstrate curiosity and a willingness to participate in tasks and challenges.	• Demonstrate an eagerness and interest in learning through questioning and adding ideas. • Show an interest in people, things and the world around them. • Choose to participate in an increasing variety of activities, tasks and play areas.
3. Persistence Children demonstrate an increased ability to show initiative, accept help, take risks and work towards completing tasks.	• Invest time in a sustained activity despite distractions and interruptions. • Accept help from another child or adult when encountering a problem. • Seek help when appropriate from another child or adult.
4. Self-organization Children demonstrate an increased ability to establish goals, develop and follow through with plans.	• Demonstrate an increased ability to understand a task as a series of steps. • Demonstrate an increased ability to organize themselves and materials in the learning environment. • Follow through to complete tasks and activities.
5. Reasoning Children demonstrate an increased ability to identify possible solutions to problems.	• Demonstrate an increased ability to generate different approaches to solving problems. • Seek alternative approaches to problem solving.
6. Application Children use their prior experiences, sense and knowledge to learn in new ways.	• Communicate about events and experiences. • Use prior knowledge to understand new experiences.

Social and Emotional Development

Children are dependent upon their interactions with peers and adults to construct a sense of self and to view themselves as learners. As toddlers, children begin to notice differences among people. They willingly explore these differences as they mature. This natural curiosity about other people helps children to develop a strong sense of identity and provides teachers and families with opportunities to associate schools and programs with a child's home and community.

Ideas of citizenship are based upon meaningful daily events and a classroom environment that ensures that children are aware of and respect another person's interests, preferences and cultural background. When children participate in activities that bring the community into the classroom, they feel good about themselves and find out how different groups of children live. Teachers and family members who help children negotiate the rules, responsibilities and challenging issues that characterize a vibrant learning environment can expose children to a community based upon kindness, equality and justice.

Children demonstrate a strong and positive self-concept, appropriate self-control and growth in their awareness of their responsibilities when interacting with others.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children use play as a vehicle to build relationships and to develop an appreciation for their own abilities and accomplishments.	• Participate in a variety of individual and group play experiences. • Explore and understand new experiences and differences among people.
2. Self-Concept Children demonstrate and express an awareness of self.	• Progress toward identifying self according to gender, community membership, ethnicity, ability and family membership. • Separate from familiar people, places or things. • Demonstrate confidence in their range of abilities and express pride in accomplishments.
3. Self-Control Children increase their capacity for self-control.	• Demonstrate an increased understanding and acceptance of rules and routines within the learning environment. • Begin to accept the consequences of their behavior. Use materials purposefully, respectfully and safely. • Effectively manage transitions between activities. • Demonstrate progress in the capacity to express feelings, needs and opinions.
4. Interactions with Others Children develop successful relationships with other members of their learning community.	• Play, work and interact easily with one or more children and adults. • Develop friendships with peers. • Demonstrate empathy and caring for others. • Develop ability to take turns in activities. • Begin to participate in resolving conflicts and disagreements with others.

5. Sense of Community Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to the program, family and community.	• Begin to respect the rights of others. • Demonstrate a growing understanding and appreciation of the relationships, people and places that make up their communities. • Participate in the care of the learning environment. • Demonstrate progress toward an understanding and valuing of similarities and differences among people. • Perceive the needs of others and demonstrate growing empathy.

Language Development and Communication

A rich language environment has an essential impact on the rapid development of a child's brain that occurs during the first years of life. When adults speak with children in a timely, responsive manner, children understand the construction of speech, learn new words and become capable conversationalists. It is important that young children have many opportunities to learn language and practice communication skills in order to obtain information and express themselves in a variety of ways and settings.

Children increase their language and communication skills by engaging in meaningful experiences that require them to effectively express their ideas and feelings, listen and understand others. Teachers must plan for the many ways that children communicate both verbally and non-verbally. Educators must respect and incorporate the rich diversity of families' languages and dialects into the educational environment as children make progress in speaking and understanding English.

Children develop skills in listening and expressing their thoughts and ideas.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their listening and expressive language skills.	• Develop and experiment with conversation during daily activities and interactions. • Represent stories and experiences through play. • Think and talk about play experiences.
2. Listening and Understanding Children develop skills in listening and in understanding language.	• Listen and understand stories, songs and poems. • Listen and increasingly understand conversations and questions. • Follow directions that involve multiple steps. • Learn to wait and take turns during conversations. • Demonstrate progress in listening and understanding English while maintaining home language.
3. Speaking and Communicating Children will use verbal and non-verbal language to express and communicate information.	• Communicate needs or thoughts through non-verbal gestures, actions, expressions and words. Participate in communication around a topic. • Use more complex and longer sentences. • Communicate clearly enough to be understood by unfamiliar listeners. • Begin a conversation with other children and adults. Understand an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.

Literacy

Literacy is the foundation for creating a well-educated and responsible citizen. It is essential that each child arrive in kindergarten able to take advantage of the materials, activities and interactions in classrooms that nourish literacy. The ways in which children learn to read and write are similar to how they develop language. Just as children seem to be compelled to learn language, children become excited about using pictures and letters to communicate.

The printed word, whether it is in a storybook or in the environment, is the bridge that allows children to connect themselves to distant places, to quality children's literature and to new ideas. Through natural exposure to books and print, and through conversations that prompt children to discuss the people and important events in their lives, children discover that written words are another way to share ideas. A child who enters school experiencing the joy of a storybook, developing awareness of letters of the alphabet and demonstrating the ability to write a few letters, is a child well prepared to learn to read and write.

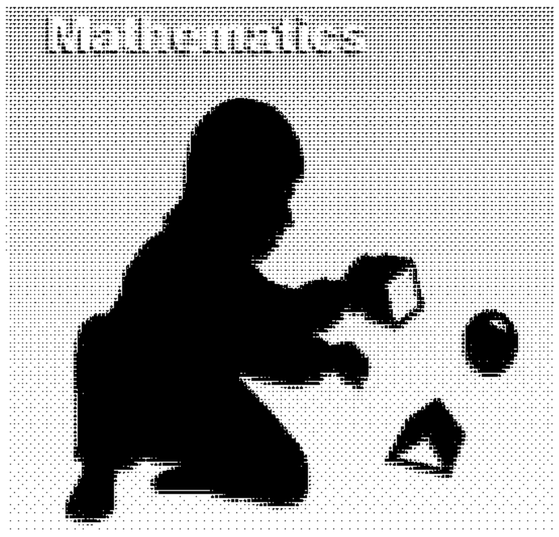
Children develop skills in writing and reading while exploring print in books and in the environment.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop early reading and writing skills.	• Use symbols and forms of early writing to create more complex play. • Use writing tools and materials in all areas of the learning environment. • Create play ideas that come from favorite stories, poems and songs.
2. Early Writing Children demonstrate an interest and ability to use symbols to represent words and ideas.	• Begin to print letters in own name. • Understand that writing carries a message. • Experiment with a variety of writing tools and materials. • Use scribbles, shapes, letter-like symbols and letters to write or represent words or ideas. • Begin to dictate ideas, sentences and stories.
3. Early Reading Children demonstrate an interest in: **A. Phonemic and Phonological Awareness** Learning letters and the combination of letter sounds with letter symbols.	• Show increasing ability to discriminate and identify the sounds of language. • Demonstrate growing awareness of the beginning sounds of words. • Show growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words. • Begin to associate sounds with written words. • Recognize and generate rhymes.
B. Book Knowledge and Appreciation Understanding and appreciating that books and other forms of print have a purpose.	• Attempt to read or tell a story and guess what happens next. • Listen to and talk about a variety of types of literature. • Handle and care for books in a respectful manner.
C. Comprehension Understanding that spoken and written words have meaning.	• Retell parts of a story with prompts. • Connect information to familiar experiences when being read a story. • Demonstrate understanding of the meaning of a story.
D. Print Awareness and Concepts Recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud.	• Explore and investigate books and other forms of print. • Understand that print carries a message. • Show an increasing awareness of how books are organized. • Recognize some letters and words captured in books and in the environment. • Recognize own name in print. • Show an increasing ability to recognize individual words in sentences.
E. Alphabet Knowledge Recognize that symbols are associated with letters of the alphabet and that they form words.	• Know the names of some letters and words. • Identify some letters in print. • Know the names of most letters in own name.

Mathematics

Mathematics helps young children make sense of the world around them and understand their physical world. Children are inclined to make comparisons, notice similarities and differences in objects and group their toys and materials. The ability to organize information into categories, quantify data and solve problems helps children to learn about time, space and numbers.

When children play in the sandbox, cook applesauce and complete a puzzle, they are engaging in activities that allow them to develop the thinking skills that are naturally used in daily life. Children learn the uses of mathematics to describe and explore relationships among objects and materials in the environment. They increasingly develop the vocabulary and skills to measure, describe patterns and to express order and position.



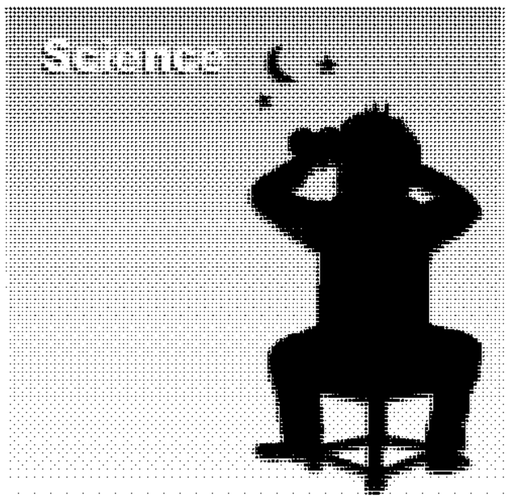
Children develop ways to solve problems and to think about math.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children engage in play to develop their mathematical thinking and problem solving.	• Begin to make groups and match objects. • Use counting and number vocabulary as a part of play. • Experiment with patterns and shapes. • Explore measurement, number and quantity with various materials. • Collect and organize information and materials as a natural part of play.
2. Numbers and Operations Children show interest and curiosity in counting and grouping objects and numbers.	• Match, sort, put in a series and regroup objects according to one characteristic. • Begin to use numbers and counting as a means for solving problems, predicting and measuring quantity. • Use one-to-one correspondence in counting objects and matching groups of objects. • Begin to associate a number of objects with names and symbols for numbers. • Use words such as more than, less than and add/subtract to express some number concepts.
3. Geometry and Spatial Sense Children show an interest in recognizing and creating shapes and an awareness of position in space.	• Describe and name common shapes found in the natural environment. • Use language to understand the arrangement, order and position of objects that are on top of, next to, on the bottom, underneath, beside and in front of other objects. • Group objects according to their shape and size.
4. Patterns and Measurement Children show an interest in recognizing and creating patterns, comparing and measuring time and quantity.	• Group and name a number of similar objects into simple categories. • Begin to understand that some events take place in the past, present or future. • Begin to order, compare or describe objects according to size, length, height and weight using standard or non-standard forms of measurement.

Science

Children are captivated by the natural world and by physical events. They insist that teachers and family members answer their questions about the world around them. By cultivating this sense of wonder, we help children to become scientific thinkers.

Children can learn to use the scientific method in their everyday life. The questions that children ask about insects flying, making a shadow or mixing paints are transformed into hypotheses about their world. They use their senses and scientific tools to observe, collect and interpret data and draw conclusions. Communicating their findings informally in conversations or through the documentation of results, lead children to ask new questions and to continue the cycle of scientific investigation.



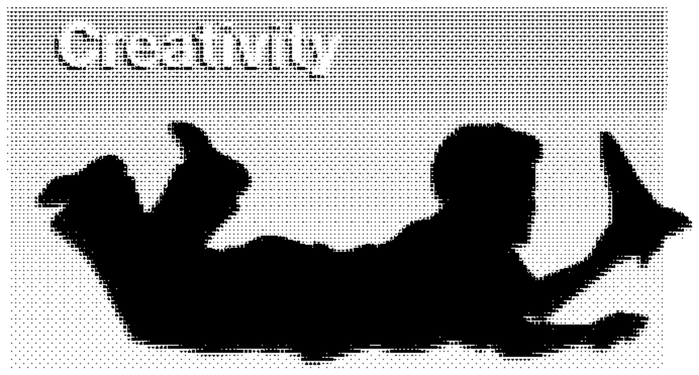
Children will understand and use the scientific method of asking questions, observing and recording their findings and discussing their conclusions.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their scientific skills.	• Ask questions based upon discoveries made while playing. • Use play to discover, question and understand the natural and physical world. • Use scientific tools as props in their play.
2. Scientific Knowledge Children learn about the development of the natural and physical world.	• Collect, describe and learn to record information through discussion, drawings and charts. • Use tools and their senses to make observations, gather and record information and make predictions about what might happen. • Investigate changes in materials and cause-effect relationships. • Ask and pursue their questions through simple investigations.
3. Scientific Skills and Methods Children begin to use scientific tools and methods to learn about their world.	• Explore the natural processes of growing, changing and adapting to the environment. • Make simple observations, predictions, explanations and generalizations based on real life experiences. • Explore time, temperature and cause-effect relationships based on everyday experiences.

Creativity

Investigating and appreciating the arts allow children to integrate a number of different skills essential to child development. The arts provide each child with another vehicle and organizing framework to express ideas and feelings. Music, movement, drama and visual arts stimulate children to use words, manipulate tools and media and solve problems in ways that simultaneously convey meaning and are aesthetically pleasing.

Through experimenting with sounds, colors, forms, motion and words, children communicate in ways that are distinctly their own and that reflect their own learning style. Each painting, dramatic play scenario and improvised tune provides teachers and families with insights into a child's interests and abilities and allows children to express what they know. In an environment that fosters the arts, children learn to appreciate the contributions of other children and the works of others that reflect different experiences, cultures and views.



Children enjoy, express themselves, create and learn about the arts through experiences with a variety of art forms and media.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children engage in play as a means of self-expression and creativity.	• Engage in spontaneous imaginative play using a variety of materials to dramatize stories and experiences. • Use movement, a variety of media and music while playing to represent stories, moods and experiences. • Use musical instruments and tools from various art forms as props in dramatic play.
2. Creative Expression Children engage in individual or group activities that represent real-life experiences, ideas, knowledge, feelings and fantasy.	• Explore various roles in dramatic play through the use of props, language and fantasy roles with others. • Use movement and a variety of musical styles to express feelings and to understand and interpret experiences. • Participate in musical activities using a variety of materials for expression and representation. • Plan, work cooperatively and create drawings, paintings, sculptures and other art projects. • Demonstrate care and persistence when involved in art projects.
3. Tools Children use a variety of tools and art media to creatively express their ideas.	• Experiment with different tools to creatively express and present ideas. • Select and use a variety of tools to approach tasks.
4. Appreciation of the Arts Children express interest in and begin to build a knowledge base in the arts.	• Begin to understand and develop a vocabulary to share opinions about artistic creations and experiences. • Enjoy participating in a variety of art experiences. • Appreciate and demonstrate respect for the work of others. • Begin to notice differences in the arts from a variety of cultures.

Physical Health and Development

Children use their senses and bodies to explore their physical environment. They investigate and practice with intensity the motions that lead to the mastery of fine and large motor tasks. How a child learns to sit, walk or hold a spoon has implications for how the child understands space, coordinates thinking and holds a pencil. Children often describe their competence according to their physical accomplishments.

Children enthusiastically explore how to move their bodies. Children may need encouragement to adapt sensible health habits. They appreciate learning how to enhance their strength, balance, muscle control and coordination.

Young children's future health and well-being are directly related to strengthening their large and small muscles, using their sensory experiences and practicing healthy behavior.

Learning Goals and Definitions	Expectations
1. Play Children engage in play as a means to understand healthy behavior and develop their physical bodies.	• Participate in games, outdoor play and other forms of play that enhance physical fitness. • Use their senses to explore materials and experience activities. • Begin to use health and safety practices. • Initiate activities that challenge their bodies in new ways.
2. Gross Motor Children increasingly move their bodies in ways that demonstrate control, balance and coordination.	• Demonstrate increasing strength and stamina in movement activities. • Demonstrate body and space awareness to move and stop with control over speed and direction. • Develop coordination and balance with a variety of playground equipment.
3. Fine Motor Children use their fingers and hands in ways that develop hand-eye coordination, strength, control and object manipulation.	• Demonstrate increasing strength and stamina to perform fine motor tasks. • Use hand-eye coordination to perform fine motor tasks with a variety of manipulative materials. • Show increased awareness and control of tools for various learning activities.
4. Healthy Habits Children begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety.	• Demonstrate safety awareness when purposefully using materials. • Demonstrate the increasing ability to perform self-care skills independently when eating, dressing, toileting and washing hands. • Shows care for personal belongings. • Begin to understand that some foods have nutritional value.
5. Senses Children increase their understanding of the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, nose and mouth and how the senses work together.	• Discriminate between a variety of sights, smells, sounds, textures and tastes. • Explore and learn to tolerate a wide variety of sensory input. • Combine and use different senses depending on the activity.

Glossary

Art Forms: The four components of art education — dance, music, dramatic play and visual arts.

Cause/Effect: Understanding how action creates a change in the environment.

Comprehension: Understanding the meaning of spoken and written languages.

Cooperative Play: Physical activities in which children play with each other rather than against each other to master challenges.

Curriculum: The framework for the philosophy, goals and expectations for guiding children's learning and engaging families in their children's development.

Data: Information used as a basis for making decisions and drawing conclusions.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice:
The manner in which children are provided opportunities to learn and practice newly acquired skills, offering challenges just beyond their present level of mastery and taking place in a setting where children are safe, valued and where physical and psychological needs are met.

Discriminate: Use of senses to compare and note differences between objects.

Documentation: The way in which information is recorded by practitioners, children and families to capture events and child progress.

Empathy: The ability to recognize the feelings of others and respond appropriately.

Ethnicity: Ethnic affiliation or distinctiveness; belonging to a particular group by descent, language or culture rather than by nationality.

Expressive Language: Having the ability to convey ideas and feelings using words and expanded sentences.

Fine Motor Tasks: Using and coordinating the small muscles in the hands and wrist with dexterity.

Large Motor Tasks: Moving the large muscles in the body, especially the arms and legs, consciously and deliberately.

Learning Environment: The structure of the setting that makes it possible for practitioners to guide children in their development and learning.

Literacy: Using vocabulary, oral language, phonological awareness, letters, words, print, comprehension, books and other print materials to help children explore, expand and participate in their world.

Order/Classify: Methods of data collection, organization and representation. Others include sorting, graphing, counting, measuring and comparing.

Phonological Awareness: Hearing and understanding the different sounds of spoken language including hearing and understanding the different ways oral language can be broken down into individual parts (phonemes).

Play: A dynamic process that develops and changes becoming more varied and complex, allowing children to practice skills they will need later in life. Play is the vehicle for learning and development across domains, reflecting the social and cultural contexts in which children live.

Practitioner: Professional charged with guiding children's learning including teachers, caregivers and assistants.

Predict: Use of prior knowledge to guess what an outcome will be.

Scientific Method: How children put facts together to make sense of the world around them including observing, questioning, experimenting, manipulating, predicting and demonstrating understanding of concepts.

Sensory Experiences: Providing objects and materials that children can explore using all their senses.

Symbols: Scribbling, scribble writing, letter like forms, letters, numbers and pictures used to represent sounds, words, ideas and feelings.

Visual Arts: Painting, drawing, collages, modeling and sculpting with various materials.

For more information on the *Colorado Building Blocks*, please contact:

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Appendix O
McREL Statement of Evidence Regarding Early learning and Development Guidelines

Evidence for (C)(1)(a) and (b)
Prepared by McREL, Contractor for the State of Colorado

Proof of Use Across Early Learning and Development Programs in the State:

The Guidelines will contain significant approaches, strategies, and content needed to support a wide variety of early childhood care-givers and contexts. The Guidelines will be written in one unifying document with supplemental documents, abbreviations or annotations, created to target the needs of specific audiences. For example, a brief one page summary of the Guidelines may be distributed with the Guidelines for parents, whereas greater detail would be required of documents for providers. Finally, to verify that the content and intent of the Guidelines are communicated effectively to different types of Early Learning and Development programs, a stakeholder review process will be conducted to collect feedback on ease of use and relevancy for multiple audiences.

To engage Colorado Stakeholders in the process of reviewing the draft Guidelines, a joint regional tour with representatives from Colorado Department of Education and the Lt. Governor's Office will be organized as well as an online survey developed. These activities will allow feedback and input from diverse constituents across Colorado to inform the process of the development of the Guidelines. The meetings will convene educators, students, parents, business and community leaders and other interested citizens. The meetings will provide a brief presentation about the Early Childhood Colorado Framework, research from national exemplars, the alignment process, and the vision for the new Guidelines. Following the presentation participants will be invited to gather in small groups to discuss questions such as "Do the Guidelines make sense to you?", " "How will the Guidelines enhance student learning & performance?", "Are the Guidelines linguistically and culturally inclusive?" and "How will these Guidelines help you in your role?" In addition to the meetings, a presentation will be recorded as a webinar to accompany an online survey link that will be made available on the various early childhood agency websites to allow those who are unable to attend a meeting in person the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Guidelines. A link to the webinar and survey will also be distributed to targeted stakeholder email groups.

The State's Early Learning and Development Standards for:
Infants and toddlers and Preschoolers

The documents chosen for analysis to develop the Guidelines will reflect research and best practices for infants and toddlers and preschoolers. The guidelines will be aligned birth to eight and organized according to age group 0-3, Pre K, K-2.

Documentation that the standards are developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate for all children, including children with disabilities and developmental delays and English Learners:

The Guidelines will be selected based on criteria including the extent to which they are developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate for all children, including children with disabilities and developmental delays and English Learners and inclusive of all areas of child development and learning. Once developed, to ensure that the Guidelines are age appropriate, developmentally significant, and appropriate for diverse learners a state and national expert review process will be implemented. Individuals selected as expert reviewers will have expertise in the areas of children with disabilities and developmental delays, English Learners, Family engagement, Health, and represent programs such as Higher education, Head Start, and private/non-profit centers. Expert reviewers will provide feedback on the draft Guidelines in regards to the research base, comprehensiveness, and accuracy of the Guidelines to address early learning outcomes for all children. Expert reviewer feedback will be analyzed and synthesized. The Guidelines will be revised based on recommendations established following this meeting.

Documentation that the standards address all Essential Domains of School Readiness and that they are of high-quality;

The Guidelines will be aligned with all 11 domains articulated in the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework.* This framework will serve as an organizing structure or an "anchor" against which content in all documents will be aligned and organized for review. While Head Start focuses on preschool-aged children, the domains are applicable to all children from birth to age 8 and so will be used as an initial organizing tool to align content for all relevant ages. The documents chosen for comparison will reflect research and best practices for infants and toddlers and preschoolers. Aligned content will be organized by age, so that results may be sorted and analyzed for different age groups. If content is found in the documents that does not align to the domain structure, the structure will be expanded to track prevalence of such content, which will help inform the possible structure and breadth of content of the Colorado guidelines.

Documentation of the alignment between the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and the State's K-3 standards; and

Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines will be aligned with state models of early learning standards and development guidelines. All documents selected for analysis will be compared with significant Colorado early learning documents. Colorado documents include *Building Blocks,* the *Colorado Academic Standards*, and assessment protocols such as High Scope COR & Teaching Strategies GOLD. Collectively these Colorado documents provide content against which additional state and national documents will be compared. These comparison documents include relevant national standards, such as the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* and *Zero to Three Policy Center Guidelines,* as well as a variety of early learning guidelines and models from other exemplar states.

Appendix P
Background Information on Approved Assessments in Results Matter (Teaching Strategies GOLD and Highscope COR)

Please note that this file has been converted from a PDF to an image file. The quality may have been affected.

TeachingStrategies®

Teaching Strategies GOLD®

Reports

Welcome to an inside look at *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* reports!

Teaching Strategies GOLD® reports are unique: they are cutting-edge, state-of-the-art, and designed to make it simple for teachers and administrators to analyze information.

Imagine being able to bring data to life with just a few clicks of a mouse, telling a story about children's progress. With *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* reports, now you can.

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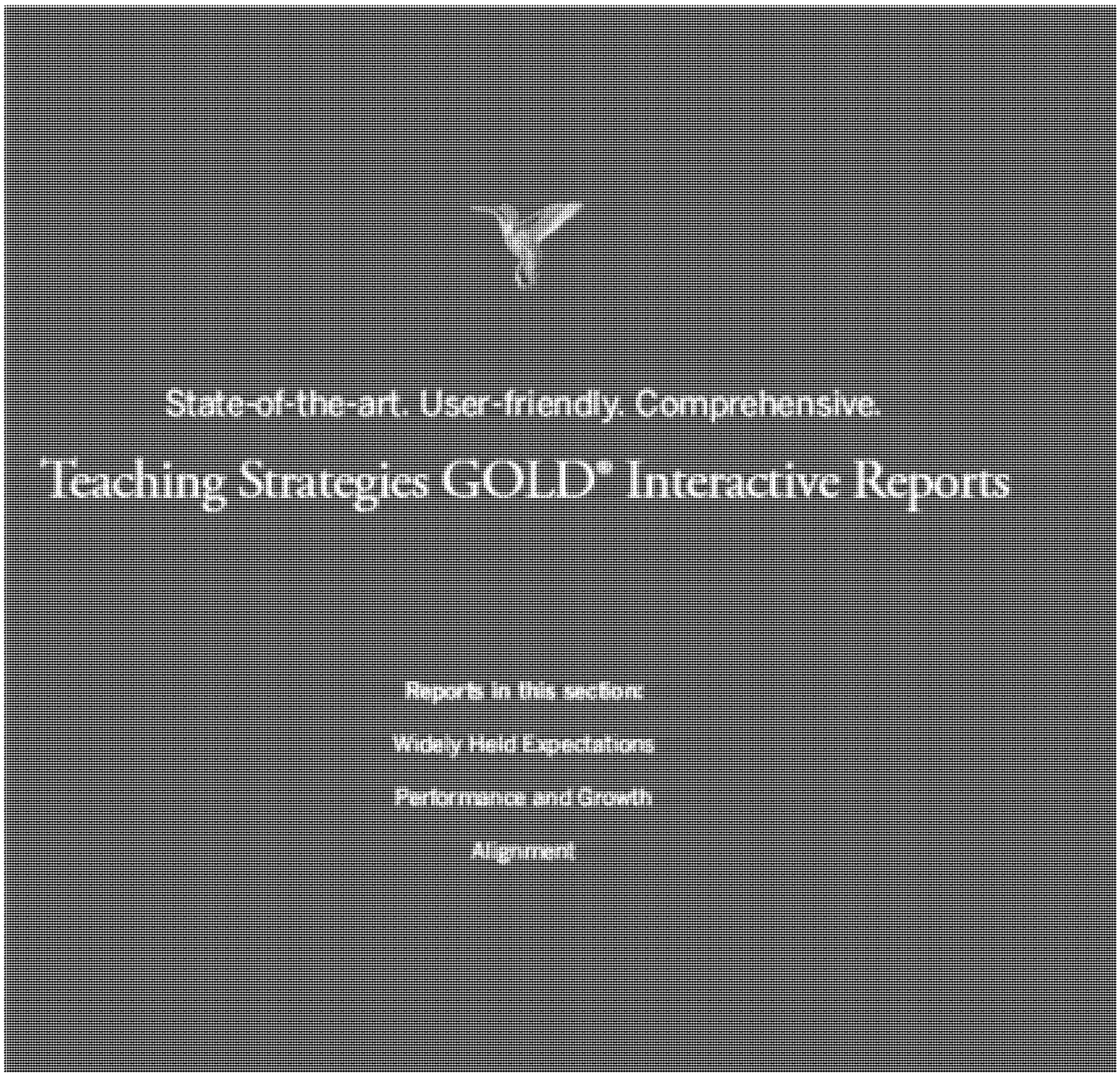

State-of-the-art. User-friendly. Comprehensive.
Teaching Strategies GOLD® Interactive Reports
Reports in this section:
Widely Held Expectations
Performance and Growth
Alignment

Widely Held Expectations Report

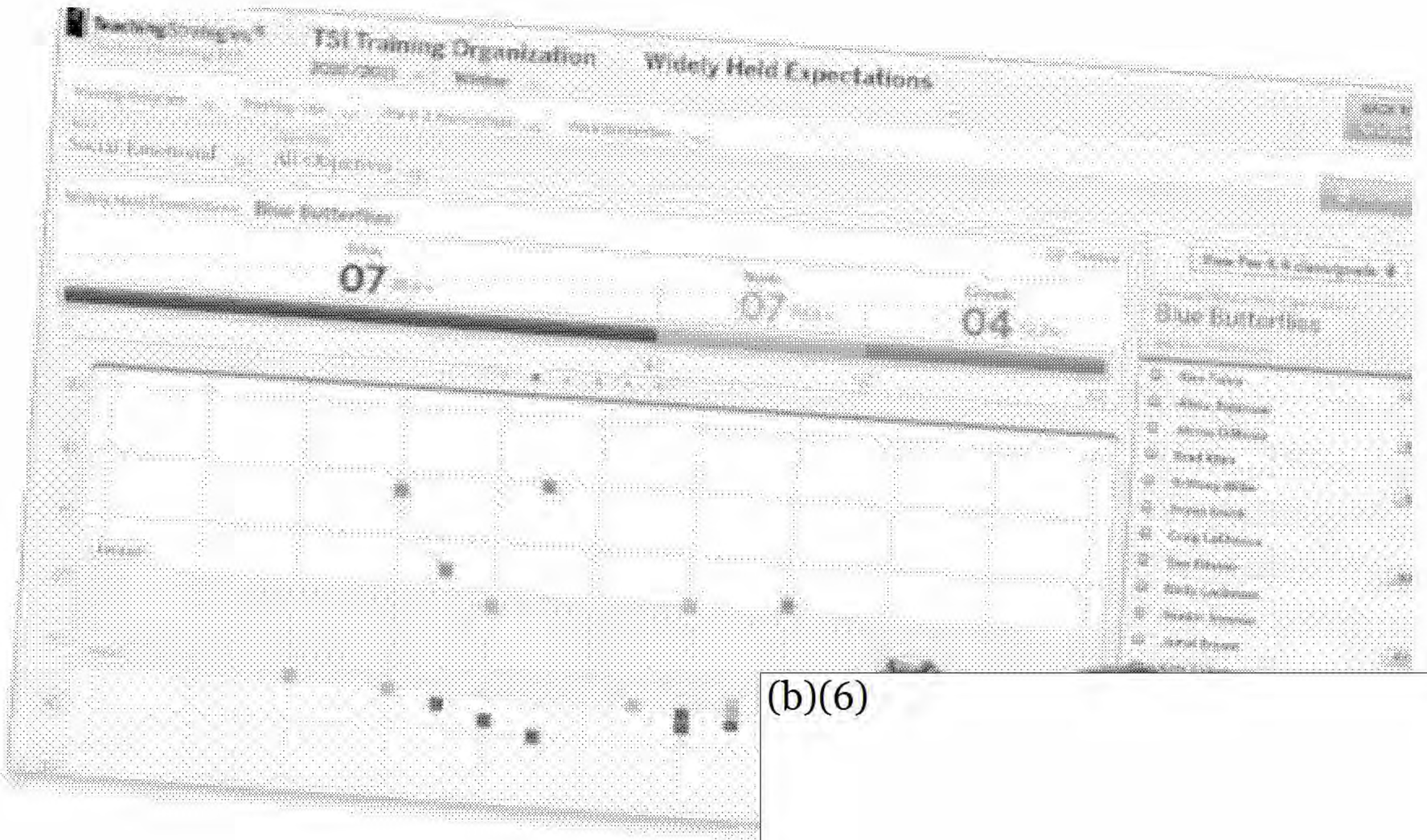
The Widely Held Expectations Report can be generated by both administrators and teachers, and customized to include data from an organization, program, site, or class, depending on your level of access.

How It Works

The "Widely Held Expectations Report" is based upon the color-coded bands found in *Teaching Strategies GOLD*®. These color-coded bands represent widely held expectations for most children of the same age or same class/grade. The "Widely Held Expectations Report" compares information for each child, class, or group, placing children into three categories: below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations. This lets teachers and administrators know where children are relative to most children of the same age or class/grade.

A Closer Look

The "Widely Held Expectations Report" has a hierarchy, which gives teachers and administrators the opportunity to view data as broadly or as specifically as they would like. Teachers and administrators begin by looking at a particular area, such as mathematics or literacy. From there, they can look at children's skill levels related to specific objectives and/or dimensions. Due to the interactive nature of the report, users also have the option to incorporate information about support services, averages, and progress. This enables teachers and administrators to quickly identify children who may be in need of additional support.



Widely Held Expectations Reports:

- provide an **at-a-glance understanding** of the number of children exceeding, meeting, and below expectations.
- offer **user-friendly**, visual representations of data.
- enable teachers to easily identify areas where children need more **individualized instruction.**
- can be **generated by administrators** for their entire organization, program, or site by area objective, and/or dimension.
- enable teachers to **look broadly** at data for all children, then **drill down** to specific ages, or classes.

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Performance and Growth Report

The Performance and Growth Report enables teachers and administrators to organize outcome data in a variety of ways: by program, site, school, class, or individual child level.

How It Works

The "Performance and Growth Report" provides a big picture view of how children are progressing toward meeting development and learning objectives. It helps teachers and administrators answer two essential questions:

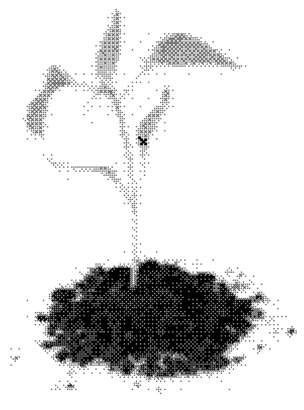
- Is this child or group of children meeting end of year expectations? (performance)
- Is this child or group of children demonstrating progress toward meeting expectations? (growth)

A Closer Look: Performance

The performance information in the report enables teachers and administrators to identify the progress necessary to meet performance expectations. As with the "Widely Held Expectations" Report, users begin by looking at a particular area, such as social–emotional or literacy. From there, they can look at children's skills related to specific objectives. Teachers and administrators can monitor children's progress toward performance goals at all levels, and use that information to meet the needs of the site, class, or individual child.

A Closer Look: Growth

The growth information in the report shows evidence of change over time. Teachers and administrators use growth information to examine movement between any two checkpoint periods. Unlike performance information, which is tied directly to widely held expectations, growth information can show gains independent of these expectations. This enables administrators and teachers to demonstrate any gains children make over time. This is particularly helpful to show incremental growth of children who begin with developmental or other delays. They can still show gains toward meeting widely held expectations.



Performance and Growth Reports:

- help teachers and administrators easily see whether children are meeting **end-of-year expectations.**
- allow **clear, visual demonstration of progress** toward meeting expectations.
- enable educators to **access data in a variety of helpful ways**, including by program, site, school, class, or individual child level.
- can be used to **show gains that occur independently** of widely- held expectations.
- provide a quick and easy way to **show gains for children with developmental or other delays.**

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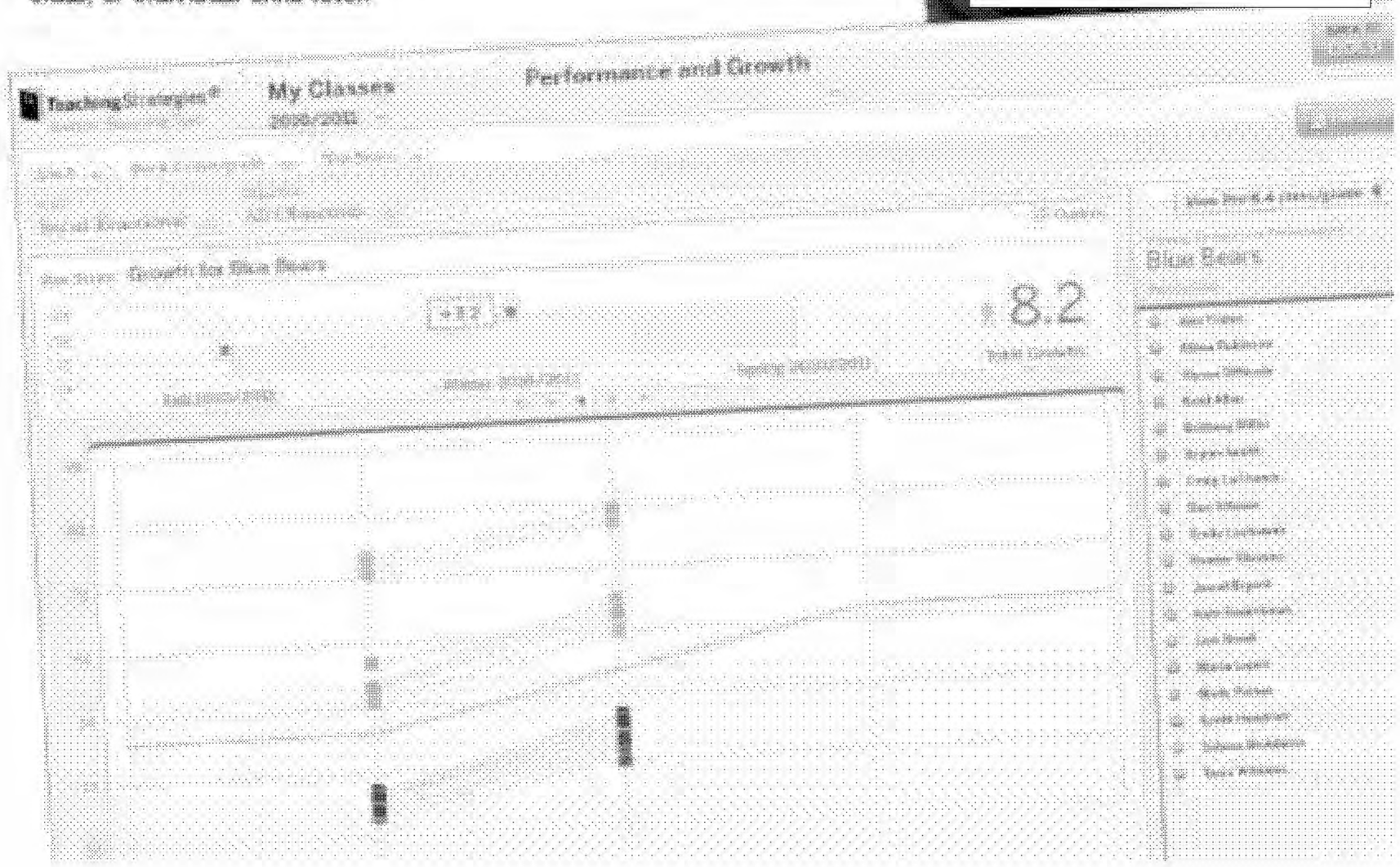


Alignment Report

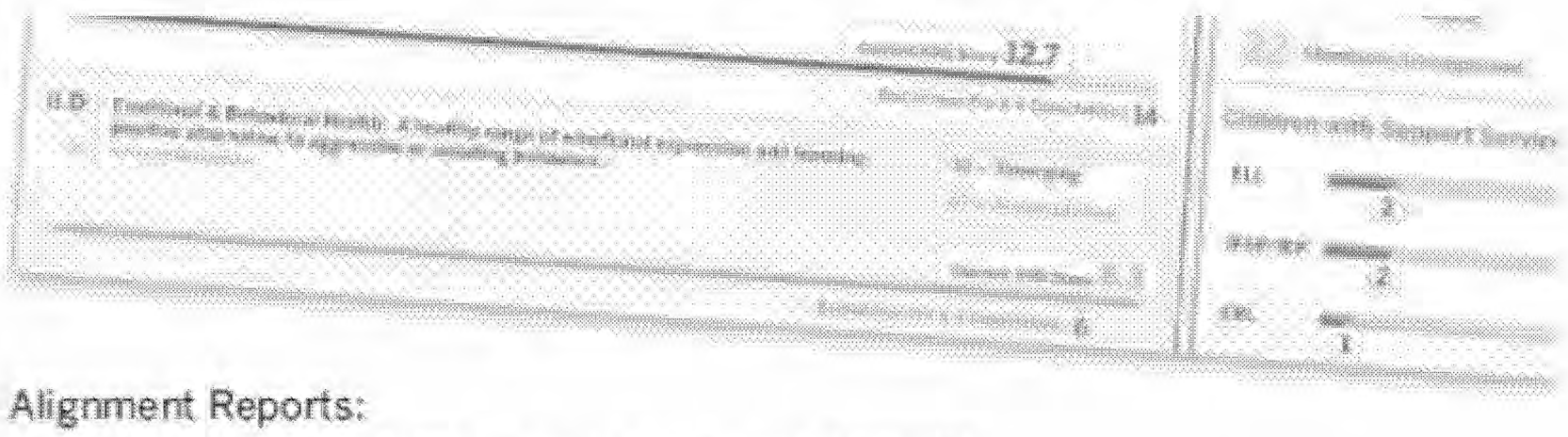
The Alignment Report enables teachers and administrators to show how the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of a child or groups of children meet important state early learning standards and/or align to the domains of the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*.

How It Works

The information generated by the "Alignment Report" is based upon the state standard or Head Start alignment, which is selected by the user during the report-generation process. Teachers and administrators drill down into their own state early learning standards and quickly see which *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® objectives are aligned to them. The resulting report will show users the actual or average score for the child or group of children, as well as the percent of children who are emerging toward or who have met the particular state or Head Start standard.

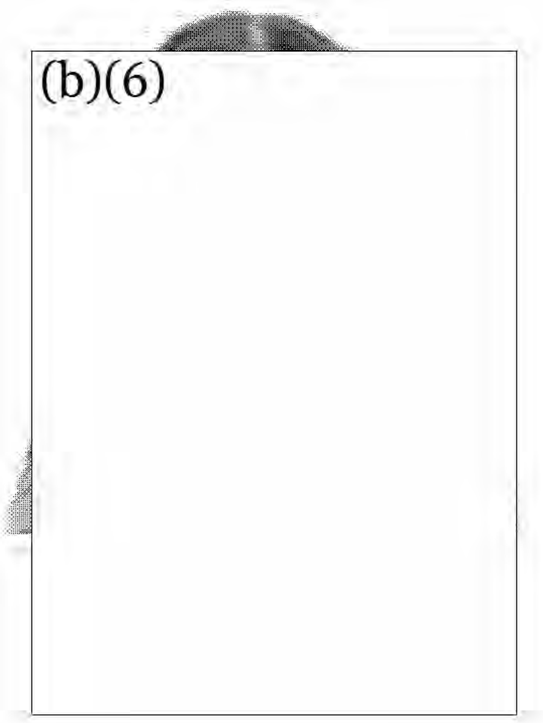
A Closer Look

The "Alignment Report" can also be used to generate other information that is essential to the reporting process. The reports have the capability to show the end of year expectations for a particular objective as it relates to a particular state or Head Start standard, as well as the average score for a group of children. Like all of the interactive reports, this report also provides users with important information about support services that a particular child or group of children may be receiving. This helps the administrator or teacher better understand the context of the data that they are seeing.



Alignment Reports:

- enable collection of **universal child outcomes data**.
- enable teachers and administrators to **quickly see the alignment** of each of the *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® objectives to the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* or the early learning standards of the states for which there are alignments.
- provide easy access to **information that's essential to outcomes evaluation**, such as the number of children who received support services.
- let educators clearly and easily view the **percentages of children whose skills are emerging and who have met the standards**.



Streamlined. Customizable. Easy-to-Use.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® Reports for Planning

Class Profile Report

The Class Profile Report, available in English and Spanish, compares information about the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of the children in one or more classes with the widely held expectations of their age or class/grade. This information can be compared for each dimension during one checkpoint period.

How It Works

The "Class Profile Report" can be run on multiple classes at once, enabling administrators to get an overview of where all children are, or on a specific class, making the report more useful for daily planning. Teachers using the report can do so at any time during the checkpoint period, using preliminary levels, in order to understand where children are at that time. This information can then be compared with the information from the end of the previous checkpoint, helping teachers plan for the rest of the checkpoint period based upon growth.

A Closer Look

Because the "Class Profile Report" shows teachers where the children in their classes are along each progression, teachers can utilize the color bands that appear on the report to easily plan small group activities for children that are below, meeting, or exceeding the widely held expectations. For example, if a group of three children appear just below their widely held expectations, they could be grouped with one child who is well into the color band, allowing for modeling to take place within the group activity. This report also lets teachers consider how they might form a mixed ability group so children can learn from each other.

Class Profile Reports:

- enable teachers and administrators to quickly **see where the children in all their classes stand along each progression.**
- can be created for all classes at once to provide overview information, or for individual classes to **help with day-to-day planning.**
- **can be generated at any time** using preliminary or unfinalized data during the checkpoint period, or using finalized data at the end of the checkpoint.

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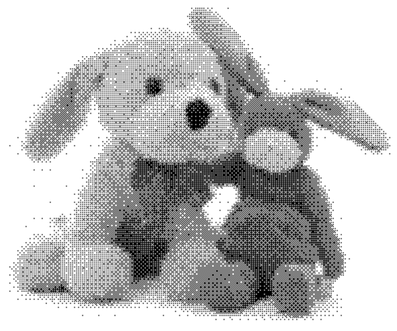


Individual Child Report

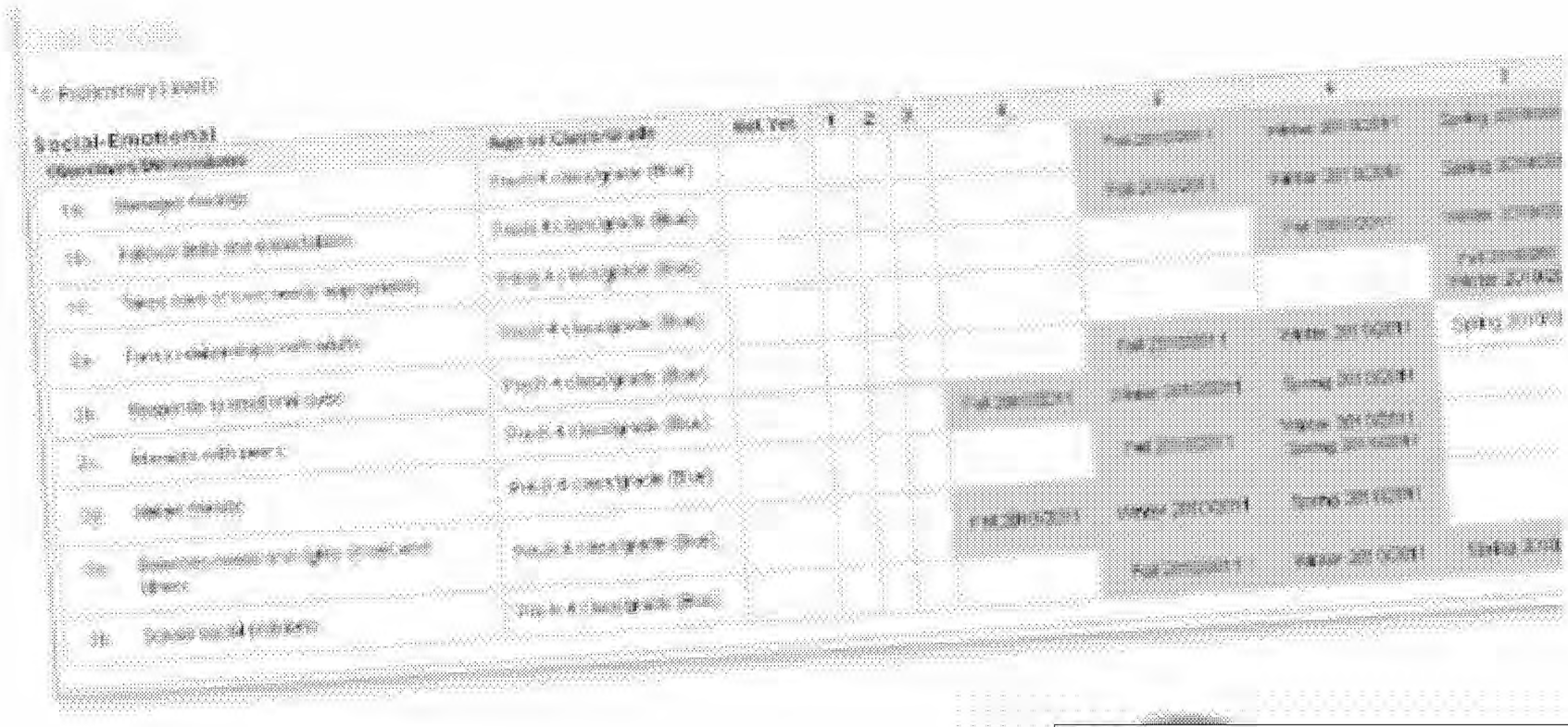
The Individual Child Report lets teachers and administrators see how individual children are performing during one checkpoint period or progressing over multiple checkpoint periods.

How It Works

The "Individual Child Report" can be run for one child or multiple children at a time, and customized to include one or multiple checkpoint periods. Teachers select the criteria they wish to use, and quickly and easily create a thorough report that provides information on how to plan for a particular child. Using the color-coded bands linked to widely held expectations, the teacher can focus on each child's individual strengths and see what is needed to support every type of learner.

A Closer Look

Like many other *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® reports, the "Individual Child Report" can be run at the end of a checkpoint period using finalized data from previous checkpoints, which is helpful for demonstrating progress. Or, teachers can generate the report in the middle of a checkpoint period using preliminary levels, in order to get a better idea of where children currently are versus where they were at the end of the last checkpoint. This allows teachers to plan based upon a child's growth, by getting a better picture of where the child is improving versus where he or she is remaining the same or regressing.



Individual Child Reports:

- let teachers and administrators see **how individual children are progressing** over multiple checkpoint periods.
- help teachers **plan for each individual child** and easily identify areas where he or she may need additional support.
- **can be generated at any time** using finalized data from previous checkpoints or preliminary levels to plan based on growth.
- can be used as a final report to **show where the child started and where he or she finished** for each dimension.

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Snapshot Report

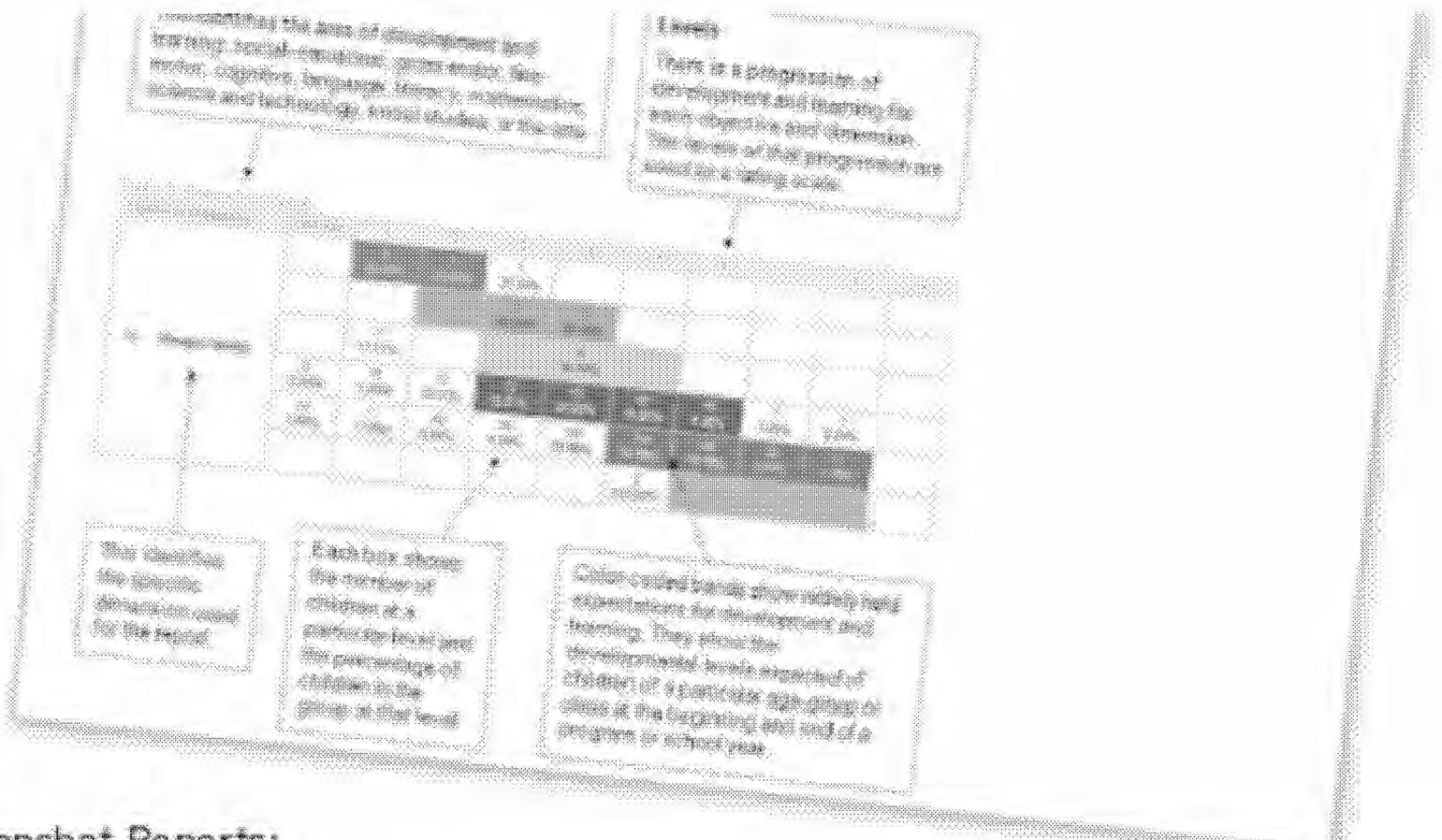
The Snapshot Report offers teachers and administrators the chance to get an overarching look at their program's performance levels for a single checkpoint season. The report can be run on the Teaching Strategies GOLD® areas of learning, state standards or the domains of the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*.

How It Works

The "Snapshot Report" functions like photographs, capturing information about a group of children at one particular point in time. Teachers and administrators can generate a "Snapshot Report" to show the number of children at a particular developmental level for each objective and dimension. Charts can be included in the report, which show whether the skills of children are below, meeting, or exceeding expectations. This can be done for an area of development and learning, an objective, a dimension, or another outcome, such as a Head Start or state early learning standard. It can also be created to include the entire program or any combination of sites. With these reports, teachers and administrators can easily see the status of their group of children.

A Closer Look

The "Snapshot Report" is especially helpful for sharing with stakeholders, such as boards or funders, because it does not show identifying information about any child, ensuring confidentiality. This report can focus on areas, objectives, and dimensions on which the group of children may need additional support. The "Snapshot Report" also enables teachers to filter based on important demographic information, such as special needs, language, length of time enrolled in the program, or ages and birthdates. It is also useful for administrators, who can use it to see which of their sites may need additional professional development or other support in particular areas.



Snapshot Reports:

- show a "snapshot" of **development at a particular point in time.**
- help teachers **understand how to best support children** by showing their status at a given point.
- use important **information that's essential to the reporting process**, such as a children's ages, background, family, or language.
- keep identifying information confidential, making reports useful **for sharing with boards or funders.**
- can be created using the program's logo and a **customized** introduction for formal submission to agencies, boards, or state officials.

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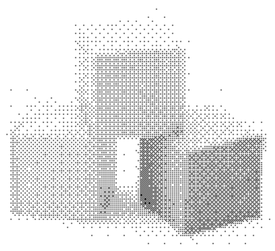
Supportive. Thorough. Essential.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® Reports for Families

Powered by Child Development and Learning



Development and Learning Report

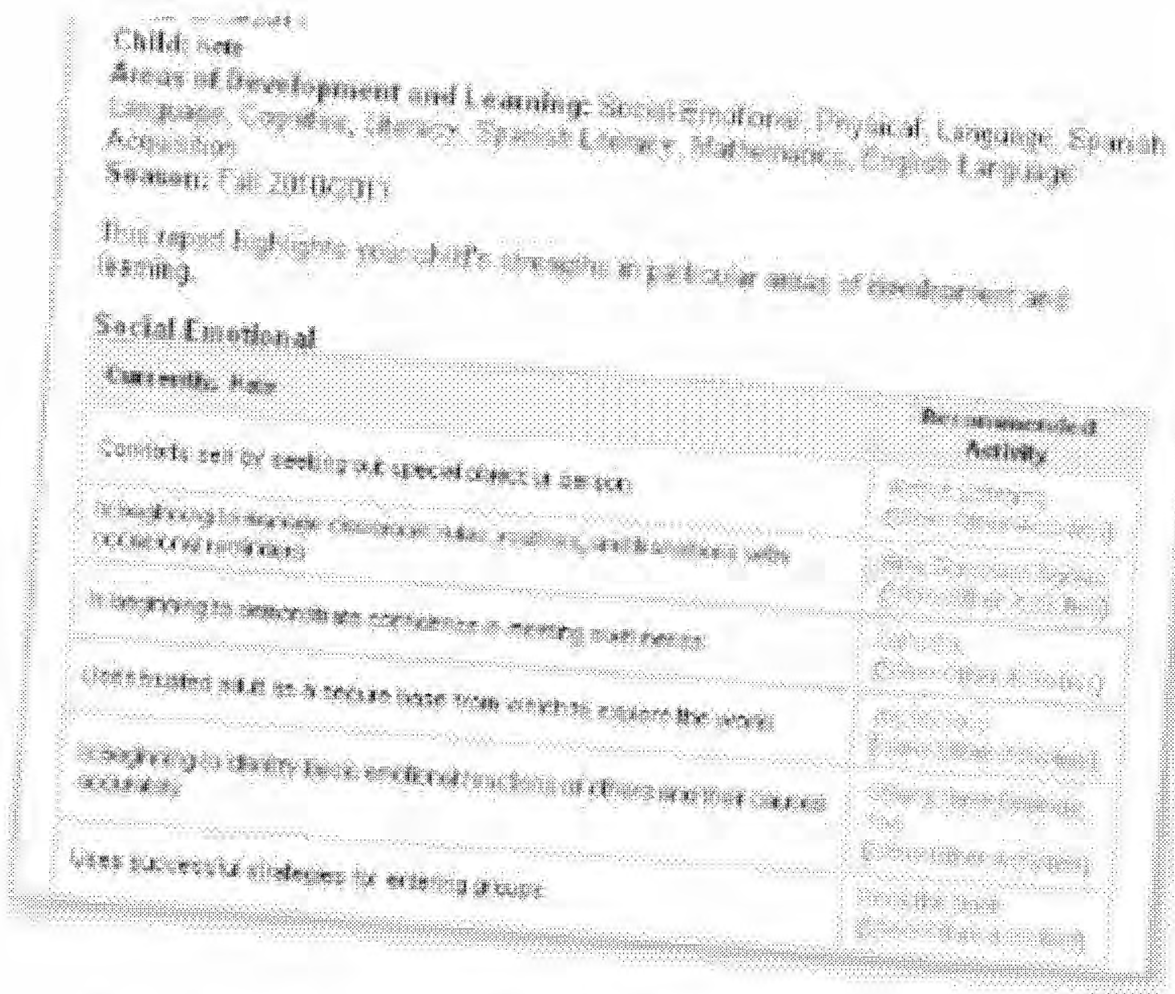
The Development and Learning Report helps teachers share important information with family members. It can be generated in both English and Spanish, and uses an easy-to-understand format that conveys what the child is currently able to do, and what steps they will likely be taking next.

How It Works

The "Development and Learning Report" provides narratives that explain the child's knowledge, skills, and behaviors in relation to each objective or dimension. Based on the child's developmental levels, the report also recommends activities customized with the child's name for the family to do at home to provide additional support. The "Development and Learning Report" can be sent to families electronically, through the dedicated family portal that is part of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. Sending the report electronically also allows families to access the recommended activities online.

A Closer Look

The "Development and Learning Report" was designed with families in mind, with content provided in an easy-to-follow, narrative form. It gives teachers the option to remove information that might needlessly complicate the report, such as objective and dimension numbers, and instead simply state the essential information that parents need to help support their children's progress. Parents can quickly and easily access the recommended developmentally appropriate activities suggested by the report by using the *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* online activity library. With the "Development and Learning Report," involving families in a child's progress becomes a greatly simplified process.



Child: [redacted]
Areas of Development and Learning: Social/Emotional, Physical, Language, Spanish Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Spanish Literacy, Mathematics, English Language Acquisition
Season: Fall 2010(2011)

This report highlights [redacted]'s strengths in particular areas of development and learning.

Social Emotional

Currently, [redacted]	Recommended Activity
Comforts self by seeking out special object or person	[redacted]
Is beginning to express emotions, ideas, wishes, and questions with words and gestures	[redacted]
Is beginning to demonstrate confidence in meeting own needs	[redacted]
Uses trusted adult as a secure base from which to explore the world	[redacted]
Is beginning to identify basic emotional reactions of others and their causes accurately	[redacted]
Uses successful strategies for entering groups	[redacted]

(b)(6)

Development and Learning Reports:

- provide a **simple narrative** of information to share with families.
- **help parents understand** the knowledge, skills, and behaviors in relation to each objective or dimension.
- identify where children currently are and the **likely next steps** they will take along each progression.
- **recommend developmentally appropriate activities** for families to do at home to support children's learning.

Ready to get started with Teaching Strategies *GOLD*®?

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HIGHSCOPE®

THE CHILD OBSERVATION RECORD (COR)

Systematic, High-Quality Assessment of Young Children in All Areas of Development

Educators and caregivers need reliable, valid measures in order to the gauge the progress of children, and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and practices. HighScope's Child Observation Record (COR) is a systematic, observation-based tool that addresses those needs by producing a useful, accurate and complete picture of each child's development.

Unlike other approaches, our assessment tool meets all the key criteria for a high quality assessment:

- COR is **authentic** because it goes beyond the limits of traditional testing to include objective observations, portfolios of children's work, and teacher and parent ratings of children's behavior.
- COR is **developmentally appropriate** because it is based on events that occur during the course of a normal day and because it examines all aspects of young children's development.
- Both the Infant-Toddler and Preschool CORs are **reliable** and **valid** (For research supporting this statement, visit our website at highscope.org.)
- Finally, both measures are, **user-friendly**, easy to administer, and causing no disruptions in daily routine.

What Teachers, Caregivers and Administrators Need to Know About COR

COR is available in two versions. The **Infant-Toddler COR** is designed for programs serving children between the ages of six weeks and three years, while the **Preschool COR** is used to assess children from the ages of two-and-a-half to six years. Because children develop at different rates, the two measures overlap in the age range covered.

Both versions of the COR can be used by any program serving children in these developmental ranges—not just those following the HighScope Curriculum. They can also be used for children with special needs, whose chronological and developmental ages may differ widely on one or more dimensions

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The COR Process – Authentic Assessment vs. Traditional Testing

Traditional testing with multiple-choice questions is one way to measure children's learning, but it provides only limited information. It doesn't indicate how children solve problems or collaborate with others. Nor does it show how they perform outside of the testing situation, in real educational settings and everyday life.

Rather than creating an artificial testing environment, *authentic assessments* take place in the real world or duplicate a familiar situation. By providing a more accurate picture of normal activity based on objective observations and other factors, authentic assessments reflect children's true capabilities.

How the COR Works

When using the COR, teachers or caregivers spend a few minutes each day writing brief notes (called "anecdotes") that describe significant episodes of young children's behavior during the normal day-to-day routine. This data-gathering process generally takes place over a period of weeks or months and requires no change in the daily routine.

Once entered, anecdotes are classified and rated according to various COR categories, items, and levels. The information is then compiled—either by using printed forms or through our online system—and analyzed to provide a comprehensive portrait of each child's developmental gains and the progress of the group as a whole.

A Continuous Planning Framework

To facilitate the planning process, both versions of COR include specific teaching and caregiving suggestions directly linked to COR observations. The result is a seamless transition between *assessing* children and *planning experiences* to support their development.

By enabling adults to observe children's progress over time, COR provides a framework for continuous planning, allowing caregivers to guide each child's development in a variety of areas–rather than just one or two.

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The Infant-Toddler COR (I-T COR)

Unlike diagnostic instruments that focus narrowly on problems and deficits, I-T COR focuses on strengths, providing a complete and accurate picture of each infant's or toddler's developing abilities. This helps caregivers support the development of individual children and plan for the group as a whole.

The Infant-Toddler assessment tool is based on six categories representing broad domains of child development:

- Sense of Self
- Social Relations
- Creative Representation
- Movement
- Communication and Language
- Exploration and Early Logic

Within each category, children are assessed on three to eight COR items that describe developmentally important behaviors. Each item has progressive levels indicating a typical developmental sequence for the behavior, enabling COR users to assign precise ratings to their observations of children.

The Preschool COR

The Preschool COR is organized into six broad categories of child development, including:

- Initiative
- Social Relations
- Creative Representation
- Movement & Music
- Language & Literacy
- Mathematics & Science

Each category contains a list of observation items based on key developmental indicators (KDIs) in each content area. In all, there are 6 categories and 32 items within the Preschool COR. Under each of the items are developmental levels that describe specific behaviors.

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COR for Children Who Speak English as a Second Language (ELL)

By highlighting the richness and complexity of young children's development, COR offers an effective way to gain specific information on each child in multicultural, multilingual centers. The assessment is particularly helpful in the case of children who do not yet communicate well in English. (The online version of COR includes specific ELL items.)

For ELL children adjusting to an English-speaking environment, traditional diagnostic testing can indicate problems where none exist. In contrast, a COR assessment not only gathers culturally specific information but also focuses on what youngsters can do rather than what they cannot do. Since COR observations take place over a longer period of time and focus on a broad range of developmental achievements, children's strengths are more likely to be noted.

As an added benefit, parents may also participate in the assessment process by sharing stories about their ELL children. This often promotes family involvement in other aspects of the program as well.

Multiple Uses, Multiple Benefits

Assessing individuals or groups – COR can be used to measure development for individual children, for an entire class, or for particular age groups.

Evaluating the curriculum— Because COR looks at all aspects of development, teachers and caregivers can spot gaps in their curriculum and pinpoint categories overlooked in their planning.

Documenting changes over time—Young children grow at an astonishing rate. COR documents these changes as they occur, ensuring that neither program staff nor parents miss crucial developments.

Self-education about child development—COR can help teachers observe the impact of their daily interactions with children.

Evaluating the room group or program as a whole—COR is a valuable tool for gauging the progress of a single room or the success of an entire program in meeting the developmental needs of children.

Using COR Results with Parents

Working together, program staff members and parents make a winning combination. Program staff can encourage parents to understand and use the COR by sharing daily

anecdotes. When parents become familiar with COR, they are better able to understand the developmental profiles teachers or caregivers complete for their children and more likely to contribute child observations of their own to supplement those made by program staff.

The COR also allows program staff to prepare reports for parents that summarize the observations and developmental material collected. These reports can then serve as the foundation for parent conferences.

Using COR in Head Start Programs

All categories and items of the Preschool COR are closely linked with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, currently used by Head Start as a guide in fulfilling child assessment and self-assessment requirements. To see how COR aligns with specific Head Start standards, visit our website at www.highscope.org.

OnlineCOR – Assessment and Reporting at Your Fingertips OnlineCOR combines easy, convenient, secure access with robust reporting and time-saving features. Using this Web-based version of COR, *teachers* can enter anecdotes online, add digital attachments, copy an anecdote to multiple children, or check out suggested activities to create daily plans. *Parents* can see their child's progress by viewing anecdotes, artwork, photographs, and more. *Administrators* can access assessment information from multiple sites and review notes by staff members for accountability and mentoring.

In addition, OnlineCOR :

- Supplies teachers with a full-featured lesson planning tool that can also be accessed by administrators.
- Effectively assesses children with special needs in any classroom setting.
- Gives specialists access to virtual classrooms, enabling teachers and specialists to share information on the developmental progress of children.
- Tracks receptive and expressive language skills of English Language Learners (ELLs).
- Offers report options at many levels, including state and federally mandated reports, reports based on state alignments, and reports for funding groups.
- Enables administrators to assist with mentoring and professional development by reviewing notes entered by specific staff members.

- Features a mobile app, compatible with iPad or android-based tablets, for entering and scoring anecdotes online through a Web browser or offline for later synchronization with the OnlineCOR account.

OnlineCOR Plans

Choose from three COR pricing plans and receive all the reporting functionality you need for one per-child price.

Limited Plan

The Limited Plan is designed to provide standard child assessment reports needed by smaller programs with few classrooms. It is available only for organizations serving less than 100 students.

Basic Plan

The Basic Plan features all the standard COR reporting modules required to meet the needs of most centers and many districts. It includes correlations to Head Start's Child Outcomes Framework, and OSEP Child Outcomes, along with related reports.

Premium Plan

This plan includes everything in the basic plan, plus reporting functions correlated to state standards, an OLAP reporting module for data analysis, and customized reporting with user-defined fields. The Premium Plan is ideal for programs such as large districts, or those who must report up to the state level.

All plans include Infant-Toddler and Preschool tools, Family Reports, Head Start reporting, and other outcome reports (the Limited Plan includes summarized data only), as well as many resources. Premium and Basic Plans include a teacher planning tool, OSEP reporting, and Parent Corner access. State alignment reporting is available only to Premium Plan subscribers.

OnlineCOR in the College Setting – HighScope makes OnlineCOR available to colleges and universities for little or no cost.

Educational Purposes Only - Designed for college instructors teaching about child assessment, OnlineCOR is available at no charge.

College Lab School Setting – Reduced pricing is available for children served by a college lab school.

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COR Paper Versions

The following components of the paper-and pencil Infant-Toddler and Preschool COR Kits provide all the necessary materials for a year's assessment in an infant and toddler room of 12 children or a preschool class of up to 25 children. Each component of the Infant-Toddler COR has a corresponding component in the Preschool version.

- *User Guide*—Presents the rationale for COR assessment, describes validity and reliability studies of the instruments, and provides clear, detailed instructions on how to use each component.
- *Observation Items*—Contains the actual COR assessment tool plus explanatory material describing and clarifying each of the COR categories, items, and levels.
- *What's Next*—Designed to help teachers or caregivers put their COR-based child observations to work as they plan ongoing strategies, experiences, and activities to support children's development.
- *Child Anecdotes Booklet*—Includes forms for recording and scoring anecdotes (brief notes on developmentally important behaviors).
- *Child Information and Developmental Summary*—Provides one convenient location for summarizing and storing significant information about each child.
- *Group Summary (Infant-Toddler COR)/Class Summary (Preschool COR)*—Allows users to summarize COR results for their entire group and document growth over time.

Observations About Your Child (Infant-Toddler COR)/Family Report (Preschool COR)—Used to create reports for parent conferences or home visits.

Appendix Q
Colorado Core Knowledge and Standards

Colorado Core Knowledge and Standards

A Guide for Early Childhood Professional Development

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COLORADO OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
1580 Logan Street, Suite 310
Community College of Denver
Denver, CO 80203

Introduction

It is with great pleasure that the Colorado Office of Professional Development presents the first revision of the *Colorado Core Knowledge and Standards: A Guide for Early Childhood Professional Development*.

The original Core Knowledge and Standards document was released in 1996 as the culmination of a three year project that included the following stakeholders:

- early childhood faculty from area vocational schools, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, and graduate programs;
- parents of young children;
- the Colorado Departments of Education, Human Services, Public Health and Environment, Higher Education and the Colorado Community College System;
- representatives from professional organizations;
- private trainers and consultants; and,
- Governor Romer's Office

Dedication

The original project was coordinated by the late Louise J Keller, PhD. Her talents for organization and team-building, and her lifelong commitment to professional development were instrumental in forging the Colorado Core Knowledge and Standards: A Guide for Early Childhood Professional Development. It is therefore to Dr. Keller that this revised addition is dedicated.

The revisions are focused mainly on the following areas: strengthening early childhood mental health and maternal attachment items; incorporating the new research on brain development; updating language to reflect new research and evidence-based practice; and adding current references.

Acknowledgements

As with the original project, the Colorado Office of Professional Development solicited a broad range of stakeholders who provided expert consultation and writing of the Revised Colorado Core Knowledge and Standards: A Guide for Early Childhood Professional Development.

The Office of Professional Development is indebted to the com-

mittee members who gave their time and professional expertise to the working sessions. They volunteered countless hours that entailed thoughtful discussion and insight that you will see throughout the knowledge areas and standards.

Committee Participants

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Holly Wilcher Colorado Office of Professional Development

Special honors and thanks go to Sudy Opsahl, Associate Director, Colorado Office of Professional Development. Her ability to continue to move this work forward, her understanding of the complex issues of how children grow and thrive, and how educators can support this development was crucial to the completion of the revisions.

Purpose

The areas of core knowledge and standards provide a foundation for common information for agency administrators, instructors, trainers, students, and employees involved in the care and education of young children, and in peripheral occupations. Standards are divided into two levels related to the first two of six levels of credentialing for early childhood professionals. The knowledge and standards are identical for credit and non-credit learning.
A committee of stakeholders has developed criteria to approve early childhood training to be used by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, to meet licensing rules and regulations. This system will approve training based on the eight sections of core knowledge contained in The Guide: Child Growth and Development; Health Nutrition, and Safety; Developmentally Effective Approaches; Guidance; Family and Community Relationships; Cultural and Individual Diversity; Professionalism; and Administration and Supervision.
The subsections entitled "Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities" are meant to serve as aids

to instructors and trainers, and as tools for students and credentialing candidates to increase their knowledge and skills. The Activities are coded to meet the standards of either Professional Level I or Level II.

The primary users of The Guide are (1) Secondary and postsecondary instructors of Early Childhood Professions (ECP); (2) Colorado Department of Education Learning Cluster Coordinators; (3) Colorado Department of Human Services' training staff; (4) Resource and Referral (Qualistar Early Learning) personnel; (5) Head Start and other early childhood program education coordinators and directors; and (6) workshop presenters.

The secondary users of The Guide are (1) Secondary and postsecondary students enrolled in the Early Childhood Education program (ECE); and (2) persons who seek non-credited training, that is training which is not associated with a formal academic program.

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SeCTIon 1.0 Child Growth and Development

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

1.1 Child Development Theories & Methods of Research, & Their effects on early Childhood Practices in the United States

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of major historical and current child development theories and their effects on early childhood practices in the United States.

Professional Standard, Level II: Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate guidelines for applying theories to professional practices.

Focus areas of this core knowledge and suggested supporting activities:

1.1.A. Terms, definitions, and principles

□

Define the following terms: theory, growth, development, maturation, prenatal, neonate, reflexes, cognitive development, motor development, sensory system, temperament, social development, emotional development, bonding, and attachment.

□

Define the basic principles of child growth and development: direction growth, general to specific growth, individual differences in growth, optimal tendency in growth, sequential growth, and growth during critical periods.

■

Describe the following growth factors: heredity and environment, nutrition, emotional state, gender, ethnic background, socio-economic status, health, glandular

functioning, emotional regulation, brain development, prenatal care, and environment.

1.1.B. The theorists and theories of early childhood care and education, and their impact on the field.

☐ Trace the historical concepts of child growth and development.

☐ Describe how the concepts of early childhood theories have changed over time.

■ Examine and describe selected theories of development, e.g., those of Erikson and Piaget, and their implications for professional practices.

■ Discuss cautions used when applying theories that are culturally sensitive to the children being served.

1.1.C. Influences in a child's early years that affect his/her development.

☐ List influences that may affect a child's development.

■ Investigate and describe how the following risk and protective factors affect development: biological, environmental, social, economic, and cultural.

1.1.D. Current research on early childhood development.

☐ Explain the major methods of child growth and development research.

■ Research a current issue. Synthesize your findings and develop a plan to apply them to a practical workplace situation.

1.1.E. Methods of child study.

☐ List details of the process of gathering and using information from parents regarding the child's development.

☐ Explain the importance of confidentiality and objectivity when gathering information about children.

☐ Outline the importance of consulting professional resources before drawing conclusions about a particular child's individual differences in development.

■ Compare and contrast experimental and naturalistic methods of child study, e.g., portfolio systems, parent interviews, child interviews, observations.

■ Review and critique NAEYC's position on assessment of young children.
("Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation," 2003 joint position statement of NAEYC and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education)

■ Discuss appropriate uses of informal methods of child study, including journals, observations, interviews, and portfolios.

■ Study and use various techniques of observation, e.g., running records, anecdotal records, event sampling, time sampling, charts, case studies, and developmental checklists.

1.1.F. Professional code of ethics.

□
Obtain, review, and paraphrase NAEYC's Code of Ethics.

■
Examine the potential ethical issues in the study or research of children.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

SeCTIon 1.0 Child Growth and Development

1.2 Conception & Prenatal Development

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of optimal prenatal development.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of heredity predispositions and environmental dangers that may hinder children's optimal development.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

1.2.A. The environmental influences on prenatal development.

□
Describe the environment of the fetus.

□
Identify and list diseases that impact the development of the fetus.

■
Discuss the effects of substance use and abuse on the fetus.

■
Examine how environmental influences (teratogens, e.g. stress, domestic violence, lack of social support, economic factors, lack of proper nutrition, and lack of prenatal care) can affect the growth and development of the embryo or the fetus.

■
Find, summarize, and discuss a research study in the area of potential prenatal danger.

1.2.B. Prenatal development.

□
Describe the three periods of prenatal development and those factors which influence the fetus, including nutrition, maternal experiences, and personal habits.

□
Identify the sensitive periods in prenatal development.

■
Examine why and how the embryo or fetus is particularly vulnerable during those stages of prenatal development.

■
Describe and evaluate the common types of prenatal testing and the advantages and disadvantages of each type.

1.2.C. The heredity influences on prenatal development.

□
Define heredity, genes, and chromosomes.

□
State the purposes of genetic counseling.

□
Explain why it is important for an early childhood professional to know each child's prenatal history.

■
Identify and discuss the medical tests that can detect fetal malformations, genetic disorders, and disease.

■ Investigate ways that diseases or genetic abnormalities are transmitted from parents to children.

1.3 Birth and the neonate

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of how the birth circumstances and characteristics of the neonatal stage of development influence the application of neonate care practices.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate how to assist and provide needed developmentally supportive interactions to parents of both premature and full-term neonates.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

1.3.A. Birth.

□ Describe the three stages of the birth process.

□ Explain complications that may arise during the birth process.

□ Tell how various methods of childbirth may affect the health and well-being of the mother and the neonate.

1.3.B. The neonatal stage.

□ Outline the environmental changes/adaptations the neonate must make from fetus to newborn status.

□ Explain the emotional factors that are important during the neonatal period, e.g., how bonding and attachment begin.

□ Describe how the neonate demonstrates competency in sensory areas.

□ Describe the process of perception.

■ Investigate neonatal brain development research.

■ Discuss how the various reflexive responses of the neonatal period protect and help the neonate adapt to the environment.

■ Examine the effects of cultural and religious beliefs on neonatal health and care practices.

■ Discuss how neonatal assessment tools, such as the APGAR and the Brazelton Scale, can help early childhood professionals and parents understand the status of the neonate's development.

1.3.C. Providing parental support.

□ List ways to provide support for parents of neonates with special needs, including prematurity.

■ Discuss the collaborative role of parents and early childhood professionals in guiding the neonate's development.

SeCTIon 1.0 Child Growth and Development

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

1.4 Growth & Development of the Infant

Professional Standard, Level I:

Demonstrate knowledge of physical/motor development, cognitive/language development, and social/emotional development of infants.

Professional Standard, Level II:

Demonstrate knowledge of how heredity, the environment,and sensorimotor progression affect the development of infants.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

1.4.A. Physical/motor development.

☐ Trace the sequential progression of the growth of infants.

☐ Explain the reasons for individual differences in rates of growth and development of infants.

☐ Define and distinguish between gross- and fine-motor skills.

☐ Describe how the infant's bone and muscle growth, as well as brain development, emotional development, and social development coincides with the development of gross- and fine-motor skills.

☐ Tell how the infant's brain and reflexive system develop to provide increasingly more complex skills.

☐ Identify the milestones of physical growth in the period of infancy.

■ Compare individual uniqueness to norms of physical development of the infant.

■ List and discuss factors that influence, as well as delay, motor development in infants.

■ Examine several ways motor development can be supported, e.g., preparation of the environment and interactions with adults and children.

1.4.B. Cognitive/language development.

☐ Describe the simultaneous or sequential progression of language acquisition and the role of responsive relationships with the infant.

☐ Describe the sequential progression of cognitive acquisition and the role of responsive relationships with the infant.

☐ Explain why brain lateralization is important to language and cognitive development.

☐ Determine how infants use their senses to gather information about their environment.

☐ Explain the importance of responding appropriately to the critical periods of brain growth according to current research.

☐ State why infants' social interaction and social resources are essential to their cognitive development.

■ Contrast Piaget's stages of cognitive development with current research, e.g., that of Bower, Wishart, and Siegler.

■

Examine how cognitive development in infancy is closely tied to sensorimotor growth.
■
Identify and discuss ways to provide sensorimotor experiences needed in order for the infant to develop cognitively.
■
Research the benefits and/or challenges of simultaneous or sequential second language acquisition.

1.4.C. Emotional and Social development.

□
Paraphrase Erikson's theory of infants' development.
□
Explain bonding and attachment, according to Bowlby, Ainsworth, Main, Honig, et al.
□
Explain the concept of stranger and separation anxiety and how infants display different responses to the stress.
□
Explain the sequential process of emotional development (see Greenspan, et al).
□
Explain the development significance of self-regulation.
□
Investigate the sequential process of social development.
■
Investigate the developmental stages of infant/adult interactions (see Bowlby).
■
Analyze the importance of independent play and exploration.
■
Discuss the affective behavior of the caregiver, and the impact of emotional responsiveness during infancy.
■
Compare and contrast what is known about adult/child interactions within individual cultures.
■
Determine how infant competence is enhanced by the development of attachment and good reciprocal relationships with adults.
■
Compare and contrast at least two theories of temperament, e.g., those of Thomas, Chess, Buss, Seifer, and Plomin.

1.4.D. Socio-cultural aspects of infant development.

□
List and discuss socio-economic and cultural factors, and caregiver practices that may affect infant development.
■
Examine stress factors in the lives of adult caregivers and how these factors may affect the infant.
■
Determine why teen parents and other adult caregivers need information about child development.
■
Examine programs that include child development classes and parent education that support parents and caregivers.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

■

■ Compare individual differences to norms of physical/motor development of the toddler and the genetic and/or environmental factors that may affect these differences.

■ Discuss how the physical/motor, cognitive, and s ocial skills affect the achievement of developmentally appropriate toilet learning.

■ Discuss how toddlers indicate gender and body awareness.

1.5.B. Cognitive/language development.

□ Paraphrase theories of how toddlers develop concepts and scripts, according to Piaget, Vygotsky, Nelson, and Watson, as well as current researchers.

□ Describe the simultaneous or sequential progression of second language acquisition.

□ Describe the development of language skills, comprehension, production, and their relation to the beginnings of literacy, according to Chomsky, Brown, Snow, Gonzalez-Mena, et al.

□ Identify the patterns of communication and language unique to the toddler stage of development.

□ Explain how the responsiveness of adults influences cognitive and language development.

■ Analyze how the toddlers' increasing memory skills influence cognitive development and learning.

■ Research theories of toddlers' symbolic thought, problem-solving, concept of time, awareness of consequences, and pretending.

■ Research the benefits and/or challenges of simultaneous or sequential second language acquisition.

1.5.C. Emotional and Social Development.

□ Paraphrase theories of emotional and social development of toddlers, e.g., those of Erickson, Brazelton, Izard, and Piaget, as well as current research.

□ Explain how the responsiveness of adults influences social and emotional development, including the role of limit setting.

□ Explain the stages of emotional development and social development of toddlers.

□ Identify ways that toddlers indicate their struggle with independence and separation, and with conflict and shame.

□ Describe the toddlers' development of internalized and expressed emotions such as: guilt, pride, shame, and embarrassment.

□ Describe how awareness of others changes during the toddler years and contribute to the development of pro-social behavior including empathy.

□ Explain why giving toddlers choices assists in their emotional and/or social development.

1.4.E. The influence of environmental factors on infant development.

□
Explain how various environments may affect the responses of the infant.

□
Develop ways to provide appropriate physical spaces for the infant's safety and health needs at various levels of development.

■
Create ways to prepare the environment to support all domains of the infant's development.

■
Research how an individual infant's temperament may be influenced by the environment and adult interactions.

■
Determine ways to create an age, individual, and culturally appropriate environment for infants.

■
Investigate the safety and developmentally effective qualities of materials, experiences, and equipment for infants.

■
Study and discuss how a caregiver's ability to synchronize his/her interactions with the infant's social/emotional cues influences the infant's development.

1.5 Growth & Development of the Toddler

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of physical/motor development, cognitive/language development, and social/emotional development of toddlers.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how a variety of factors influences the development of toddlers and their sense of self (autonomy).

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

1.5.A. Physical/motor development.

□
Explain physical development milestones including the sequence of gross- and fine-motor skills that occur in the toddler period.

□
Explain how the physical/motor development of toddlers affects their mobility, motor skills, and relationships.

□
Explain how the responsiveness of adults influences physical/motor development.

■
Investigate how the development of the brain and nervous system affects the toddler's sensorimotor development.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

■
Discuss the development of, and factors influencing, a sense of self (autonomy) in toddlers.

■
Study and describe how the individual toddler's sense of self (autonomy) affects his/her behavior.

■
Examine why play and social interaction is important

to the social development and emotional development of toddlers.

■ Investigate the stages in the development of play, according to Parten, Howes, Vygotzky and Piaget.

■ Evaluate examples of how toddlers demonstrate levels of play, using Partern's categorizations.

■ Investigate how offering choices to toddlers serves to enhance the toddlers' social and emotional development, as well as the adult/child relationship.

1.5.D. Socio-cultural aspects of toddler development.

□ Explain how the responsiveness of adults influences socio-cultural development.

□ Describe the role of modeling in the toddler's understanding of social norms and routines.

□ Explain how culture may influence caregiving practices and toddler individual and group behavior, e.g. values, communication, attitudes, styles.

■ Develop criteria for creating a culturally responsive environment for toddlers.

■ Discuss how economic conditions affect toddlers' development and socio-emotional functioning.

■ Examine the influence of economic conditions on families and on their behaviors, e.g., research of Payne.

1.5.E. Developmentally effective approaches for toddlers.

□ List what adults can do to create an enriching environment that promotes and supports the toddler's well-being and development in all domains.

□ Select strategies to promote play that contributes to the toddler's development.

□ List appropriate toddler activities that foster different types of play.

□ Relate the importance of individual understanding and response to differences in development, including application to toddlers with special needs.

■ Analyze the importance and impact of developmentally effective approaches.

■ Determine strategies for supporting toddlers' developing sense of self (autonomy).

■ Examine developmentally effective guidance strategies that promote self regulation, problem-solving, and relationship building.

■ Discuss ways to facilitate the many transitions that toddlers experience in their daily lives.

1.6 Growth and Development of the Preschooler

Professional Standard, Level I:

Demonstrate knowledge of physical/motor development, cognitive/language development, and social/

emotional development of preschoolers.

Professional Standard, Level II:

Demonstrate knowledge of how a variety of factors influence the development of preschoolers and their self-concept.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

1.6.A. Physical/motor development.

□ Identify milestones of physical development, including the sequence of gross and fine motor skills, in preschoolers.

□ Paraphrase the theories of the preschooler's physical development, e.g., those of Gesell, et al.

□ Explain how the responsiveness of adults influences physical/motor development.

■ Compare individual differences to norms of physical/motor development of the preschooler and the genetic and environmental factors that may influence these differences.

■ Discuss recent research findings that indicate the need to focus on physical fitness for preschoolers.

1.6.B. Cognitive/language development.

□ Explain brain development research as it relates to the preschooler.

□ Define characteristics of the language skills of preschoolers, e.g., according to Brown, Chomsky, Vygotsky, Gonzalez-Mena, Stephen Krashen, Jim Cummins, Patton Tabors, James Crawford, and current research.

□ Describe how the preschooler demonstrates major concepts: classification, conservation, ordering, space, and causality, acquired at the preschool stage of cognitive development.

□ Describe the effects of cultural and socio-economic factors on language development.

□ List and describe guidance strategies, e.g. offering applicable choices, limit setting, logical and/or natural consequences, etc., which are consistent with the cognitive development of preschoolers.

□ Explain how the responsiveness of adults influences cognitive and language development.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

■ Compare and explain theories of cognitive development, e.g., those of Hunt and Piaget.

■ Compare and contrast language acquisition, according to Chomsky, Vygotsky, Brown, Hart and Risley, and current research.

■ Research the benefits and challenges of simultaneous or sequential second language acquisition.

1.6.C. Emotional and social development.

☐ Explain the theories of emotional and social development for the preschooler, e.g., those of Erikson, Kagan, and current research.

☐ Define the elements of a responsive relationship, including the role of limit setting, offering applicable choices, and follow through.

☐ Describe the development of self-concept in preschoolers, e.g., Maslow, Rogers, and Glasser.

☐ Outline how preschoolers develop social awareness, including gender roles and extended social roles, e.g., Freud, Piaget, and Erikson.

☐ Paraphrase theories of moral development, specifically the sense of right and wrong, e.g., those of Gilligan, Kohlberg and Piaget.

☐ Identify guidance strategies consistent with emotional development of preschoolers.

☐ Explain how the responsiveness of adults influences emotional and social development and the development of more effective social skills.

■ Investigate stages of friendship development, according to Asher, Renshaw, Hymel, and current research.

■ Discuss how you would assist a child with behavioral challenges, including withdrawal behaviors and acting out, to develop pro-social skills.

1.6.D. Socio-cultural aspects of preschooler development.

☐ Describe the role of adult modeling in the preschooler's understanding of social norms and routines.

☐ Explain how culture may influence caregiving practices and preschooler's individual and group behavior, e.g., values, attitudes, communication styles, sexual identity, and gender roles.

☐ Propose criteria for creating a culturally responsive environment for preschoolers.

☐ Tell how economic conditions affect preschoolers' development and socio-emotional functioning.

■ Examine the influence of economic conditions on families and on their behaviors, e.g. Payne, and current research.

1.6.E. Play and creativity.

☐ Describe the characteristics of the developmental stages of play (see Parten, et al.).

☐ Explain the relationship of pretend/symbolic play to cognitive and language development.

■ Relate social skill development to activities and play opportunities in the preschool environment.

■ Analyze the relationship between physical development and play.

■

Assess the social skills a child may be learning in the various stages of play.

■ Examine the role of creativity in the preschooler's development, e.g., Kellogg, Piaget, and current research.

■ Discuss how preschoolers use objects and define roles in their dramatic play.

1.6.F. Developmentally effective approaches for preschoolers.

□ List some suggestions for working effectively with preschoolers in language/literacy development.

□ Identify what adults can do to create an enriching environment that promotes the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social well-being of preschoolers and supports development in all domains.

□ Explain how classroom equipment and arrangement of space address the major areas of development.

□ Explain the importance of process versus product for a preschooler.

□ Describe the kinds of interactions that establish positive relationships with children.

■ Determine how adults can foster development of creativity in preschoolers through activities and play opportunities.

■ List and discuss materials, furniture, and equipment appropriate for the preschooler that would foster creativity.

■ Determine strategies for facilitating play and a child's sense of purpose, e.g. how a child can be a contributing member of the group.

■ Investigate strategies to facilitate transition: activity to activity, from home to preschool setting, within program levels, and from preschool to elementary school.

■ Discuss the value of implementing developmentally effective approaches with preschoolers and how they are utilized in the classroom.

■ Compare and contrast the value of interaction concepts such as "being present with children", teachable moments, direct instruction, facilitating learning, etc.

SeCTIon 1.0 Child Growth and Development

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

1.7 Growth & Development of the Primary-age Child

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of physical/motor development, cognitive/language development, social development, and emotional development of primary-age children.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how creative self-expres-

sion and problem solving affect t the development of primary-age children.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

1.7.A. Physical/motor development.

☐ Identify fundamental gross motor skills refined during this period.

☐ Describe the primary-age child's fine motor skills at various ages.

☐ Tell about the role of sports and games in the primary-age child's development including the perception of and importance of rules.

■ Compare and explain individual uniqueness to norms of physical development for primary-age children.

1.7.B. Cognitive/language development.

☐ Define Piaget's "5 to 7 shift" and the stage of concrete operations.

☐ List concepts that the primary-age child is able to comprehend, e.g., mathematical concepts, information processing and cognitive science.

☐ Identify language development characteristics of the primary-age child, e.g., syntax, vocabulary, and pragmatics.

☐ Link language/communication development with cognitive development.

■ Paraphrase and contrast recent ideas about cognitive development, i.e., metamemory, metacognition, and metacommunication, with those of Piaget, Chi, Koeski, Beddard, and Price.

■ Contrast approaches to literacy acquisition, e.g., phonemic awareness, isolated skill development, and invented spelling.

■ Discuss why fostering creativity in music, art and creative movement is important to primary-age children.

■ Explain the stages of language acquisition and issues that accompany them for second language learners.

1.7.C. Emotional and social development.

☐ Describe the functions that peers/friends serve for primary-age children.

☐ Illustrate the impact of the primary-age child's expanding social world on his/her development.

☐ Identify the changing roles of family members, siblings, and peers in the primary-age child's social development.

☐ Explain moral development of the primary-age child, according to Erikson, Kohlberg, Piaget, Kagan and current research.

■ Examine characteristics of the primary-age child's self-concept.

1.7.D. Socio-cultural aspects of primary-age children's

development.

□ List the socio-cultural factors that affect behavior of the primary-age child.

□ Outline the factors that contribute to social development, e.g., socio-cultural context, the nature and quality of child-adult relationships, and increasing social interactions.

□ Describe how economic conditions affect the primary-age child's development and social/emotional functioning.

■ Develop criteria for creating a culturally responsive environment for primary-age children.

1.7.E. Problem-solving and creative expression.

□ Define the role of play and indicate play preferences for the primary-age child and how play can affect creative expression.

■ Examine the functions of peers for the primary-age child, as he/she learns to solve problems.

■ Discuss the merits of cooperative vs. competitive play for the primary-age child.

■ Determine how adults can foster positive peer relationships among primary-age children as they engage in problem-solving activities.

■ Explore how adults can assist primary-age children in adapting social rules and games for development appropriateness, as a problem-solving activity.

■ Discuss the importance of primary-age children being given opportunities to make choices and decisions to facilitate their learning to become independent.

■ Create and/or research developmentally appropriate problem-solving activities.

■ Brainstorm effective means of providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for the primary age child to creatively express him/herself.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

SeCTIon 1.0 Child Growth and Development

■ Examine the relationship between exploration and experimentation, and the development of divergent thinking in the primary-age child.

1.7.F. Developmentally effective approaches for primary-age children.

□ Identify indoor activities and outdoor space needs for the primary-age child.

□ Select and paraphrase various guidance approaches for the primary-age child according to age the appropriateness of physical, cognitive, emotional, and social needs.

□ Describe an environmental plan that addresses the developmental needs of a primary-age child.

□

Locate materials and equipment that will facilitate the development of primary-age children.

■ Explore the use of technology for primary-age children in various settings including, but not limited to computers.

SeCTIon 2.0 Health, nutrition and Safety

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

2.1 ensuring the Physical Health and Well-being of Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, and Primary-age Children to Promote optimal Physical, Dental, emotional/Social, and Cognitive/Language Growth

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of universal precautions.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of an environment and procedures that prevent illness and promote children's health and well-being.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

2.1.A. National, state and local regulations, standards, procedures, policies, and practices that promote and protect young children's physical and dental health.

□ List and explain necessary immunizations as recommended for children's various ages by the American Academy of Pediatrics or the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

□ Show the importance of proper oral hygiene and routine, preventive dental care, as recommended by the American Dental Association.

□ Define requirements for the administration of medication, including parent's written permission, physician's written order, pharmacy-labeled container, appropriate storage, RN training, and properly completed medication log (see Rules Regulating Child Care Centers issued by the Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services).

□ Compare and contrast CPR techniques for infants with those for older children.

□ Demonstrate knowledge of First Aid practices.

□ Identify universal health precautions and procedures.

□ Name the symptoms of common childhood infections, diseases, and life-threatening illnesses.

□ Identify and explain common food intolerances and other possible allergens, and appropriate action steps.

□ List examples of early childhood health practices that can be promoted in the early childhood environment.

□

State the method and necessity of contacting the health department when a communicable disease is present in the child care program.

□ Identify and demonstrate standard hand-washing techniques, disinfectant procedures of diapering areas, and other mandated universal health protection procedures.

□ Check the regulations regarding the availability, age, and condition of first-aid supplies.

□ State the requirements regarding health and safety environmental practices. (See Rules Regulating Child Care Centers issued by the Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services).

■ Develop an early childhood hygiene plan, including instructions in routine care and preventive practices.

■ Analyze a current, written health record for completeness, i.e., health evaluation by an approved health care resource completed within 6 months prior to enrollment, immunization record, list of current medications, emergency contact information, list of persons authorized to call for a child, information on allergies and other pertinent chronic conditions, and developmental issues (see Rules Regulating Child Care Centers issued by the Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services).

■ Examine physical space and arrangement of equipment for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

■ Formulate a certified training plan for pediatric first-aid training (including emergency management of choking for infants and for older children).

■ Create a policy for attendance of ill children and adults, including the procedure for parent notification, use of emergency numbers, and protection of well children.

■ Discuss written policies for providing medical attention or services to children and adults.

■ Analyze an infant, toddler, preschool, and primary-age program, listing the components that provide for the health and well-being of the children.

■ Assess an early childhood program using an environment rating scale for compliance with state licensing requirements and/or the Colorado Quality Standards.

2.1.B. Developmental issues that affect young children's health and emotional well-being.

□ List the physical and psychological conditions which might adversely affect young children's health and emotional well-being.

■ Evaluate and determine the children's daily health status, including emotional well- being, using developmentally appropriate charts, forms, and practices.

■ Examine how role modeling health practices serves to enhance a child's learning experience and healthy

habits.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

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SeCTIon 2.0 Health, nutrition & Safety

2.1.C. Community resources for promoting children's health and emotional well-being.

□ Tell about developmentally appropriate health education that focuses on teaching children to be responsible for their own health and emotional well-being.

□ Identify developmentally effective curricula that focus on teaching children to be responsible for their own health and emotional well-being.

□ Locate and identify resources for developmentally effective activities that promote health, including emotional well-being.

□ Propose and explain appropriate field trips and in-house presentations by community partners that promote health including emotional well-being, e.g. resiliency, esteem building, stranger awareness, abuse prevention, etc.

□ Locate and use a variety of diverse health-oriented pictorial materials.

□ Identify dental resources in the community.

■ Determine and compile lists of community resources for referral of young children and their families.

■ Formulate and implement health education activities, in collaboration with parents and appropriate practitioners, which meet the health needs of individual children, e.g. dental, medical, psychologist, social worker, dietitian, etc.

■ Research resources to evaluate the supplemental food programs available locally, e.g., Women, Infants, and Children, local food banks and distribution centers, Commodity Supplemental Food Program, food stamps, etc.

■ Develop a process for professional consultations for a child's dietary needs.

■ Study and discuss resources for promoting the growth and development of a child who might be at risk.

2.2 Meeting the nutritional needs of Young Children to Promote Their Physical, Social, emotional, and Cognitive Development

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the nutritional needs of young children for optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of policies and practices needed to supply infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and primary-age children with adequate nutrition.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

2.2.A Food storage and handling.

□ Identify safe and sanitary food handling practices.

□ List types of food contamination and poisoning.

■ Develop a schedule and method for cleaning, food storage, handling, and preparation areas.

■ Generate a policy for routine inspections of food storage, handling, and preparation areas, in accordance with the guidelines established by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

■ Develop a system for the monitoring of food during transportation.

2.2.B. Meal and snack preparation.

□ Locate a sample cycle menu plan for young children and check it for compliance with Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations.

□ Discuss situations where individual considerations would need to be taken for meal planning for cultural, family preferences or children with special needs.

□ Explain how proper nutrition is important for dental health including periodontal health.

■ Create meal service plans, in collaboration with parents and appropriate professional personnel that meet Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations.

■ List age appropriate portions for each food group as set by Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations.

■ Design meal service plans that implement special dietary restrictions and cultural requirements.

■ Compile resources for safe and simple cooking activities that are appropriate for toddlers, preschool-age children, and primary students.

■ Discuss methods and techniques for including all children in mealtime preparation.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

2.2.C. Nutrition education.

□ Write an educational plan to instruct young children in healthy food selection.

□ Illustrate and make use of a plan to engage children in nutritious meal and/or snack preparation.

□ Discuss the relationship of child nutrition to physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.

□ Discuss benefits of breast feeding and breast milk.

■ State and discuss the essential nutrients, recommended quantities, and their functions.

■

List strategies to encourage families to adopt healthy nutritional habits.

■ Examine and discuss the USDA's Food Group Systems, i.e., My Pyramid.

■ Explore the various components of the FDA regulated food labels and the benefits/shortcomings of food labeling.

■ Make a chart sorting food into categories based on the concepts of moderation and adequacy.

■ List strategies to encourage families to adopt healthy nutritional habits.

■ Search for resources which provide examples of types and quantities of food children may bring from home. Distribute the findings to parents.

■ Research strategies to promote continued breast feeding, i.e., lactation lounge, proper storage, scheduling, resources for supplies and education, etc.

■ Evaluate the relationship between a lack of proper nutrition to behavioral and emotional challenges.

2.2.D. Mealtime considerations.

☐ Explain the relationship of infant feeding to bonding and physical, cognitive, and emotional development.

☐ Account for the need for feeding on demand for infants.

☐ Offer suggestions for feeding/mealtimes as vocabulary expansion opportunities for young children.

☐ Explain the importance of appropriate size of chairs, tables, and eating utensils in relationship to the development of young children.

■ Discuss eating patterns and habits and the interrelationship of adult modeling and interaction.

■ State reasons that show family-style meals promote children's self-help and positive eating habits.

2.3 A Safe environment that Prevents or reduces Injuries to Children and Fosters optimal Growth and Development through opportunities for Play, exploration, and Learning

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of routine care and maintenance of materials and equipment, and of risk management.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of routines and physical environment (including space, lighting, and arrangement) on a child's behavior and safe development.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

2.3.A. Safe, developmentally effective learning materials and equipment.

☐

Select and name learning materials that are safe, washable, and too large for infants and toddlers to swallow.

□ Identify learning materials and equipment for sturdiness and durability, as well as for safe surfaces and edges.

□ Select and restate a policy for facilitating children learning the rules and regulations for the safe use of equipment and materials.

□ Adopt maintenance and repair schedules for learning materials and equipment.

■ Identify and discuss materials and equipment which provide a variety of developmentally effective learning experiences.

■ Compare and contrast learning materials that are intended for independent play with learning materials that are designed to be supervised.

■ Discuss developmentally appropriate (i.e. age, individual, and disability appropriate) child restraint devices in vehicles.

2.3.B. Safe Practices.

□ List and implement provisions for a safe arrival and departure process for all children, allowing for parent-staff interaction.

□ Review and practice safety management procedures, including an appropriate emergency evacuation plan.

□ Restate and expand upon an accountability procedure that is implemented when a child is lost.

□ Choose various types of safety infractions and/or incidents to discuss.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

□ Explain the safe positioning of mobiles so that infants may see them, but not reach them, including when the mobiles need to be removed.

□ Find and practice fire prevention and an evacuation plan.

□ Identify and practice a plan of preparedness and action in case of a tornado or other weather emergency.

■ Identify the procedure for appropriate storage and administration for all medications.

■ Create an accountability procedure which is implemented when a child fails to arrive at the program.

■ Discuss the written agreements between parents and providers for sign-out policies which allow older, primary students to leave the program independently.

■ Develop and discuss accident and incident forms.

■ Develop and discuss the written agreement between parents and providers for field trips.

■ Compile a list of resources for safety education in the home; distribute the list to parents.

■ Create and evaluate natural disaster and other emergency plans including fire, weather, terror threats, etc.

■ Review and summarize CDHS regulations regarding transportation.

■ Explain the developmental appropriateness/effectiveness of field trips for different age groups.

■ Identify and outline a field trip safety plan.

■ Analyze how keeping a child physically safe may negatively influence his/her physical/motor and cognitive development.

2.3.C. Environment and space.

□ Draw and explain a floor plan which incorporates clear pathways for children to move from one area to another without disturbing other children's activities.

□ Draw and explain a floor plan which allows for pathways of sufficient width both to meet licensing regulations and to accommodate the equipment of those with disabilities.

□ Check the outdoor play area for protection against access to streets.

□ Select and explain a policy regarding admitting and monitoring strangers to the child care setting.

□ Identify potentially hazardous electrical threats (e.g., electrical cords and uncovered outlets) to young children and discuss corrective action.

□ Outline a plan to ensure that children are appropriately dressed for specific/various indoor and outdoor activities.

□ Identify and document potential safety hazards pertinent to various groups/populations of children.

□ Describe rationale for correcting safety hazards and taking appropriate action.

□ Outline an educational plan to instruct young children about safety hazards.

□ Identify a procedure for safe storage of personal items.

■ Determine a schedule which allows different age groups of children to use the same space (indoor and outdoor) at different times.

■ Create a floor plan that is conducive for effective supervision of children.

■ Divide space into safe, identifiable areas which encourage active involvement, initiative, responsibility, creativity, and a child's growing sense of autonomy.

■ Discuss ways to provide an environment which is predictable, yet flexible.

■ Analyze and discuss physical modification of the

learning environment to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

■ Discuss the importance of appropriate lighting, temperature control and ventilation.

■ Compile and distribute a list of poisonous plants, toxic chemicals, and fire hazards.

■ Examine and evaluate indoor and outdoor equipment and space for safety.

■ Determine which animals are appropriate and inappropriate in child care programs.

2.3.D. Activities.

□ Propose a plan for routine cleaning, sterilizing, and maintaining learning materials and equipment.

□ Explain and utilize rules for safe interactions for all children.

□ Describe the importance of constant supervision.

■ Create a variety of opportunities to develop skills that promote safe interactions and activities.

■ Assess a daily routine/schedule for balance of active/quiet, rest/sleep, adult-directed, and child-initiated times to promote a safe learning environment.

■ Analyze and evaluate the importance of fully preparing the environment daily for children, prior to their arrival.

2.3.E. Child abuse and neglect.

□ Identify indicators of child abuse/neglect, including the overt and subtle indicators of: neglect, physical and sexual abuse, emotional abuse, abuse/neglect.

□ Locate and put into your own words the laws and state-mandated procedures for documenting and reporting a suspected incidence of child abuse or neglect even if it is done anonymously.

□ Review center policies and procedures on documenting and reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

□ List and role play reporting procedures for child abuse.

■ Determine how to provide a supportive environment for all children including victims of child abuse or neglect.

■ Examine the types of abuse, including neglect, and their effects on the child, family, and staff.

■ Review and evaluate current literature and resources dealing with child abuse and neglect.

■ Identify local child abuse resources and discuss their adequacy, potential, and limitations.

■ Research and compile a list of possible support systems for parents.

■ Discuss and weigh the ethical and legal issues involved

when dealing with young children who may be or have been abused.

■ Study and discuss factors that increase and/or decrease the risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

SeCTIon 3.0 Developmentally effective Approaches

3.1 Developmentally effective Approaches: An overview

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally effective approaches as related to age, the individual, and family culture.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of the four guidelines for constructing and implementing developmentally effective approaches: curriculum, adult-child interactions, relations between the program and the family, and the observation and developmental assessment of young children according to NAEYC guidelines currently in use.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

3.1.A. Sources of information on Developmentally Effective Approaches (DEA).

□ Review the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs, Revised Edition, Editor Sue Bredekamp, 1997.

□ Read and review the Colorado Department of Human Services' Child Care Rules and Regulations.

■ Evaluate a program using "Section B. Curriculum" of the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services, November 1994.

3.1.B. Rationale for DEA in early childhood programs, birth through age eight.

□ Read NAEYC's position statement on DEA. Write a rationale statement for developing programs to meet the needs of children, rather than expecting children to adjust to a specific program.

3.1.C. Developmentally effective (age, culture, and individual) approaches.

□ Describe the look, feel, and sound of a developmentally effective learning environment.

■ Examine strategies and techniques used in observing children.

■ Define, discuss, and analyze the concept of developmental effectiveness in three dimensions: age, culture and the individual.

■ Observe, record, and compare age effective activities in two different early childhood programs.

■ Observe, record, and compare culturally effective ac-

tivities in two different early childhood programs.

■ Observe, record, and compare individual effective activities in two different early childhood programs.

■ Recognize and discuss that curriculum is based upon the child's total development and the staff's ability to integrate that knowledge into the learning experiences which are provided.

■ Observe a DEA early childhood program and identify three activities which are developmentally effective to the functioning level of one child. Determine the effectiveness of these activities.

3.1.D. The Developmentally Effective Learning Environment.

□ Locate and observe a program using DEA. Observe the staff, physical environment, learning centers and activities, and indicators of parent involvement. Summarize your experience.

■ Discuss the importance of developmentally effective curriculum being designed from the view that each child is unique with his/her own personality, learning style, and family background.

3.1.E. Developmental Assessment of Children.

□ Describe the best practices, according to NAEYC, in the assessment of young children.

■ Explain the use and limitations of standardized instruments in early childhood programs.

3.1.F. Program Elements.

□ Locate and review a child's developmental learning plan.

□ Determine how the learning plan is implemented by a collaborative team, including teaching staff, family members, specialists and/or others requested by the family or program.

□ Obtain a daily schedule for a child. Through observation, tell if it provides a balance of activities in several different dimensions (See Standard B-4, 4a and 4b of the Colorado Quality Standards).

□ Explain how a child's family impacts his/her learning behavior.

■ Obtain and critique a program's philosophy and goals for children served.

■ Observe two children and analyze any differences that may exist in their learning behaviors.

■ While at a program, randomly check print material for cultural responsiveness, inclusive of multi-racial, non-sexist, and non-stereotyping pictures, and document findings.

■ Determine how parents are included in the philosophy and goals of a program.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

3.2 Guidelines for Developing and Implementing Developmentally effective Approaches

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge that curriculum is based upon the child's total development in the family and the community, as well as upon the program's ability to integrate that knowledge into the learning experiences which are provided.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of ways to modify curriculum to meet a child's needs.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

3.2.A. NAEYC's guideline for developing and implementing DEA: curriculum, adult-child interactions, relations between home and the program, and the observation and developmental assessment of young children.

□ Read and outline NAEYC's material (Bredekamp, 1997) regarding guidelines (pp. 16-22).

□ Observe and identify developmentally appropriate practice that is dependent upon a partnership among the family, community, and the program. Explain the effect of this involvement on a child's ability to function and develop.

□ Describe the importance of parent involvement in an early childhood program.

■ Obtain and critique sample learning plans for young children with special needs. Determine whether or not the plans meet guidelines for developmentally effective approaches.

■ Examine and critique several group learning plans for young children. Determine if the plans meet guidelines for developmentally effective approaches and examine ways to modify the plans to meet a child's specific needs.

■ Develop ways to modify curriculum to meet a child's needs.

3.3 Developmentally effective Approaches for Children, Birth to Age Three Years

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally effective approaches for children, birth to age three years.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how social relationships in the context of routine activities are part of the child's developmental learning experiences, in the areas of gross- and fine motor development, cognitive and language development, social development,

emotional development, and aesthetic development.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

3.3.A. Unique characteristics and needs of children, birth to age three years.

□ Explain how infants and toddlers learn by experiencing their environment through relationships, their senses, and by physically moving around.

□ Visit an infant and/or toddler program and list the activities observed that help enhance a sense of self-esteem and autonomy.

□ Observe groups of infants and toddlers in developmentally effective early childhood programs and identify how they use their senses and engage with others.

□ Describe interactions, materials, and activities that are developmentally effective for children, birth to age three years.

□ Chart the developmental progression of a young infant, a mobile infant, and a toddler. Record the differences in their behavior. Based on your findings, what environmental modifications would you make for these children? With whom would you discuss these changes if you were on the staff?

□ Visit an early childhood program. Identify developmentally effective approaches for infants and young children.

■ Examine the basic caregiving activities that are part of infant and toddler programs.

■ Determine the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical learning that takes place and the skills that are being acquired during social relationships in the context of routine activities.

■ Define and discuss self-esteem and autonomy. Relate these concepts to the emotional care and nurturing of infants and toddlers.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

3.3.B. Selection of appropriate materials/equipment.

■ Examine how you would create a socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically safe and healthy learning environment for infants and toddlers, based on your knowledge and observation of those age groups.

■ Review and discuss the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services, Standard B5b-c: Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment for infants and toddlers."

3.3.C. State standards and NAEYC accreditation criteria for children, birth to age three years.

□ Tell how a responsive and nurturing early childhood professional stimulates and enhances a child's development.

■

Observe and analyze how developmentally effective approaches determine child-adult interactions, ratio, and staff qualifications. Examine Colorado's standards for early childhood programs, i.e., Colorado Department of Human Services' Child Care Rules and Regulations and the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services. Examine the NAEYC accreditation criteria.

3.3.D. Determinants of program quality.

- ☐ Describe how adult-child interactions, curriculum, family involvement, and assessment influence program quality.
- ☐ Explain how developmental assessment affects program development and implementation.
- ☐ Obtain and review the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services, Standard B-7A through B-10, which identify adult-child interactions.
- ■ Discuss how social relationships in the context of routine activities influence pro-social development in infants and toddlers.
- ■ Determine the elements of a prepared environment for infants and toddlers and how it contributes to quality.
- ■ Describe what is meant by an integrated system of language development and literacy and how this approach can be facilitated in early childhood programs.
- ■ Visit a program to observe staff involvement in implementing content that is integrated into meaningful activities. Examine and discuss observations.

3.3.E. Continuity of programs and child transition.

- ☐ Investigate ways in which transition can be eased for families as a child moves from one program to another.
- ■ Explore and discuss the factors which facilitate and enable continuity between programs.
- ■ Determine how participation by staff members in professional organizations can benefit parents and children.

3.4 Developmentally effective Approaches for children, ages Three through Five Years

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally effective approaches for children, ages three through five years.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how social relationships in the context of routine activities are part of a child's developmental learning experience and knowledge of the importance of developmentally effective activities and experiences in the family, program, and community in the areas of gross- and fine motor development; cognitive and language development; social, emotional, and moral development; and aesthetic development.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

3.4.A. Unique characteristics and needs of children, ages three to five years.

□ Explain how three to five year olds learn by experiencing their environment through relationships, their senses, and by physically moving around.

□ Visit a program for three to five year olds and list the activities observed that help enhance a sense of self-esteem and autonomy.

□ Observe groups of three to five year olds in developmentally effective early childhood programs and identify how they use their senses and engage with others.

□ Describe interactions, materials, and activities that are developmentally effective for children, ages three to five years.

□ Chart the developmental progression of a three year old, four year old, or a five year old child. Record the differences in their behavior. Based on your findings, what environmental modifications would you make for these children? With whom would you discuss these changes if you were on the staff?

□ Visit a program for ages three to five years. Identify developmentally effective approaches for three to five year old children.

■ Examine the basic care-giving activities that are part of programs for three to five year olds.

■ Determine the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical learning that takes place and the skills that are being acquired during social relationships in the context of routine activities.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

■ Define and discuss self-esteem and autonomy. Relate these concepts to the emotional care and nurturing of children ages three to five years.

3.4.B. Selection of effective materials/equipment.

■ Examine how you would create a socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically safe and healthy learning environment for three to five year old children, based on your knowledge and observation of those age groups.

g Review and discuss the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services, Standard B-5b to B-5c: Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment for children ages three to five years."

3.4.C. State standards and NAEYC accreditation criteria for children, three through five years.

□ Tell how a responsive and nurturing early childhood professional stimulates and enhances a child's development.

■ Observe and analyze how developmentally effective approach determines child-adult interactions, ratio, and staff qualifications. Examine Colorado's standards for early childhood programs, i.e., Colorado Department of Human Services' Child Care Rules and Regulations and the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services. Examine the NAEYC accreditation criteria.

3.4.D. Determinants of program quality.

□ Describe how adult-child interactions, curriculum, family involvement, and assessment influence program quality.

□ Explain how developmental assessment affects program development and implementation.

□ Obtain and review the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education Services, Standard B-7a to B-10, which identify adult-child interactions.

■ Discuss how social relationships in the context of routine activities influence pro-social development in children.

■ Determine the elements of a prepared environment for 3 to 5 year olds and how these elements contribute to quality.

■ Describe what is meant by an integrated system of language development and literacy and how this approach can be facilitated in early childhood programs.

■ Visit a program to observe staff involvement in implementing content that is integrated into meaningful activities. Examine and discuss observations.

3.4.E. Continuity of programs and child transition.

□ Investigate ways in which transition can be eased for families as a child moves from one program to another.

■ Explore and discuss the factors which facilitate and enable continuity between programs.

■ Determine how participation by staff members in professional organizations can benefit parents and children.

3.5 Developmentally effective Approaches in the Primary Grades for Children, Ages Five through eight Years

Professional Standard, Level One:
Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally effective approaches as related to age, culture and individual.

Professional Standard, Level Two:
Demonstrate knowledge of the five guidelines for constructing and implementing developmentally effective approaches: curriculum, child-child interactions, staff-child/youth interactions, relations between the program and the family, and observation and evaluation of the program.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested

Supporting Activities:

3.5.A. Sources of Developmentally Effective Approaches information.

□ Review the National School Age Care Alliance's Standards for Quality Primary-age Care, Editor Janette Roman, 1998.

□ Outline the Colorado Department of Human Services' Rules Regulating School-age Child Care Centers and child care homes.

■ Evaluate a program using the School Age Care Environment Rating Scale (Harms, Jacobs, White).

3.5.B. Developmentally effective (age, culture, and individual) approaches.

■ Examine observation strategies and techniques.

■ Define, discuss, and analyze the concept of developmental effectiveness in three dimensions: age, culture, and individual.

■ Observe, record, and compare age effective activities in two different primary-age/ youth programs.

■ Observe, record and compare individually effective activities in two different primary-age/youth programs.

■ Observe, record, and compare culturally effective activities in two different primary-age/youth programs.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

■ Recognize and discuss that curriculum is based upon the child's /adolescent's total development and the staff's ability to integrate that knowledge into the experiences which are provided.

■ Observe a primary-age/youth program and identify three activities which are developmentally effective for the functioning level of the children/youth. Determine the effectiveness of these activities.

3.5.C. The developmentally effective setting.

□ Locate and observe a program using developmentally effective approaches. Observe the staff, physical environment, activities, and parent involvement. Summarize your experience.

□ Discuss the importance of developmentally effective activities designed from the view that each child/youth is unique with their own personality, learning style, and family background.

3.5.D. Program.

□ Explain how a child's family can have an impact on his/her behavior.

■ Obtain and critique a program's philosophy and goals for children/youth served.

■ Observe two children/youth and analyze any differences that may exist in their behaviors.

■

While at a program, randomly check print material for cultural responsiveness inclusive of multi-racial, non-sexist, and non-stereotyping pictures, and document findings.

■ Determine how parents can be included in the philosophy and goals of a program.

3.6 Appropriate Assessment

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of terms such as screening, informal and formal assessment, evaluation, and testing.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of informal assessment procedures and an awareness of community resources for formal diagnostic procedures.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

3.6.A. Assessment.

□ Define screening, informal and formal assessment, evaluation, and testing.

■ Contact your local school district, a children's hospital, an interagency assessment team, or a private practitioner to determine which terms they use and their applications.

■ Compare and contrast informal assessment strategies.

■ When possible, study a formal diagnostic instrument and observe its administration.

■ Investigate the strategies for accessing community resources for diagnostic procedures.

3.7 Developmentally effective Approaches and Children experiencing Developmental Variations and/or Physical Challenges

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and other planning methods for accommodating children's needs.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of an awareness of early identification through screenings and community resources.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

3.7.A. Terminology.

□ Define and describe planning methods, IFSP, IEP, ADA, IDEA, and section 504.

□ Explain how sensitivity to the child's needs enables an early childhood professional to develop a program that is responsive to the family and the community.

3.7.B. Overview.

□ Identify variations in children's development that may

be recognized in early childhood settings.

□ Paraphrase NAEYC/DEC's policy on inclusion. Why is integrating children experiencing developmental variations and/or physical challenges into the mainstream considered important for all children1

□ Explain the implications of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), IDEA, and Section 504.

□ Describe some of the characteristics or behaviors of gifted young children.

□ List coping strategies for families with children who have developmental variations and/or physical challenges.

SeCTIon 3.0 Developmentally effective Approaches

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

■ Respond to the following statement: "The inclusion of young children with special needs and disabilities necessitates a team approach."

■ Develop a statement that explains how inclusion helps all children.

■ In your Local Education Agency (LEA) investigate services available to support the child, family, and program's staff, e.g., Child Find, Community Center Boards, Pediatricians, and Health Department.

■ Compare two comprehensive screening tools.

1*Division for Early Childhood, Department of Exceptional Children: Position on Inclusion, adopted April 1993, endorsed by NAEYC April 1994. (See NAEYC Position Paper book.)*

3.7.C. Family Involvement.

□ Identify the benefits brought by family involvement in the planning and implementation of IEP's and IFSP's.

□ Develop practice samples of written IFSP's or IEP's. Review the documents and assess for effectiveness.

□ Explain the statement: "Caregivers work in partnership with parents, communicating daily to build mutual understanding and trust and to ensure the welfare and optimal development of the infant. Caregivers listen carefully to what parents say about their children, seek to understand parents' goals and preferences and are respectful of cultural and family differences." (NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs - Revised Edition, Editor Sue Bredekamp, p. 80).

■ Develop a guide to community resources for parents in your area.

■ Develop a plan to increase parents' understanding of developmental processes and the ability to advocate for their children.

3.8 Approaches for Developing emotional and Social Competency

Professional Standard, Level I:

Demonstrate knowledge regarding interactions and

activities that promote a safe, secure environment and encourages pro-social behaviors in children.

Professional Standard, Level II:

Demonstrate knowledge of how to provide children with skills to develop a sense of connectedness and belonging with other children and adults, resolve conflicts, and solve challenges they incur.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

3.8.A. Social and Emotional Competency

☐ Explain ways to engage children in every day conversations and interactions.

☐ Identify a wide range of feelings and how to effectively express them with others.

☐ Define milestones and characteristics of social and emotional development.

☐ Recognize the influence of physical settings, schedules, routines and transitions on children and the importance of adapting these factors as necessary to support children's development and learning.

☐ Model pro-social behavior for children and encourage its age appropriate use, e.g., positive outlooks, healthy social habits, encouragement.

■ Plan activities that foster children's social-emotional development.

■ Analyze and articulate current theories and research on promoting social development, while being responsive to family and culture.

■ Research patterns of behavior and contexts for unique behaviors.

■ Determine patterns of behavior before implementing specific interventions or guidance techniques.

■ Develop a plan to request assistance from a mental health specialist to meet the exceptional social and/or emotional needs of children and families.

■ Demonstrate knowledge of creating a rich environment of relationships.

■ Examine how children develop meaningful and expressive connections with others, what specifically facilitates safe attachment, and what the outcomes are of young children experiencing relationships.

■ List other fields that contribute to children's holistic health, e.g., early education therapists, directors, pediatricians, and describe their roles.

■ Investigate stressors that impact social and emotional health and ways to mitigate that stress in both self and children.

■ Articulate the process in developing and maintaining successful family partnerships that support young children's social and emotional needs.

■

Create a plan for early care and education settings to prioritize self-wellness and professional development opportunities for staff.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

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SeCTIon 4.0 Guidance

4.1 The Foundations of Guidance

Professional Standard, Level I:

Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of guidance theories and a range of guidance techniques.

Professional Standard, Level II:

Demonstrate knowledge of the relationship of guidance to the development of young children and the value of helping children learn self-regulation skills.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

4.1.A. Guidance theorists and approaches.

□ Outline views of developmentalists, behaviorists, and maturationists.

□ Describe different parenting styles, including authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and indulgent.

□ Define responsive relationship.

□ Identify external factors that would affect a child's behavior.

■ Discuss pro-active techniques of guidance, e.g., responsive relationship, redirection, positive reinforcement, encouragement, logical consequences, clear limits, and modeling.

■ Explain how external factors in a child's life necessitate individual guidance approaches, such as changes in home life, changes in caregiver, abuse, neglect, hunger, overburdened parents and/or caregiver.

■ Develop a written personal philosophy of guidance in early childhood care and education.

■ Analyze the foundations of a responsive learning community.

4.1.B. Direct Guidance.

□ Observe situations that give examples of pro-active guidance; report your findings.

□ Explain the importance of observing and recording children's behavior objectively.

■ Study children's behavior using a variety of methods and techniques of observation and recording.

■ Determine strategies, responsive to children's needs that can be incorporated into daily practices, e.g. understanding natural development providing a balance of challenge and success, engaging children in purposeful activities.

■ Examine the relationship of pro-social guidance to each of the following:

a. Communication

b. Adult-child ratio
c. Modeling
d. Curriculum adaptations
e. Adult attitudes, beliefs, and values

4.1.C. Indirect Guidance.

□ Define indirect guidance.

□ Explain how the environment (e.g., space, light, fresh air, room arrangement, daily preparation, work climate, daily routines, transitions and schedules) affects the behavior of children and staff.

■ Examine how external factors may influence the need for different guidance techniques.

4.1.D. Responsive Care.

□ Define responsive care.

■ Observe and analyze a caregiver's interactions with a child, and identify responsive care.

■ Investigate different guidance techniques used for children from birth through school-age, including children with disabilities and chronic conditions.

4.2 Child Guidance: Discipline and Communication

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of communication techniques for guiding young children.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of effective approaches to guiding young children toward self-direction and self-regulation.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

4.2.A. Discipline.

□ Define and explain discipline and punishment.

□ Describe expectations of discipline that are developmentally effective for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and primary-age children.

□ Explain the importance of appropriate responses to children's behavior.

□ List the various ways of helping parents and staff respond to children's differing behavior with peers.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

■ Observe and record a group of children at play. Compare and contrast problem-solving techniques used by children and early childhood professionals.

■ Examine examples of developmentally effective approaches to guidance for each age group: infants, toddlers, preschool, and primary age.

■ Contrast discipline, guidance, and punishment.

4.2.B. Verbal communication.

□

Define the characteristics of verbal communications (e.g., voice, style, tone, and volume) as it relates to guidance.

☐ Identify words and phrases used for guiding young children.

■ Discuss various verbal communication guidance techniques.

■ Develop and demonstrate the use of verbal communication as a tool for conflict resolution and self-direction.

■ Select a characteristic of verbal communication (e.g., voice, style, volume, and tone) and discuss how it impacts children.

4.2.C. Non-verbal communication.

☐ Describe how body language is used as a means of positive or negative communication.

☐ List examples of positive non-verbal communication techniques.

■ Develop observation skills in recognizing non-verbal communication techniques.

■ Investigate the role non-verbal communication plays in guidance and problem-solving.

4.2.D. Group dynamics.

☐ Explain factors that may influence behavior in a group setting.

■ Evaluate techniques used to promote pro-social relationships within a group.

4.3 Guidance: The Role of Staff

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the role that staff plays in facilitating the development of self-regulation and self-discipline in children.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of positive responses, modeling, and prompting techniques used to facilitate positive interactions within the environment.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

4.3.A. Understand the range of adult responses that support the development of children's internal control of their own behavior.

☐ Locate and read sections pertaining to "guidance and the role of staff" in the Colorado Quality Standards (B-7a-B-7c), Colorado Department of Human Services' Minimum Rules and Regulations, and NAEYC's Developmentally Effective Approach.

☐ Identify direct guidance techniques that influence the development of self-regulation and self-discipline in children.

☐ List examples of modeling, redirection, positive reinforcement, encouragement, clear limits, logical consequences, stress reduction strategies and responsive relationships for the development of self-

regulation in children.

□ Explain the importance of consistency in guidance situations.

■ Discuss positive responses that support the development of children.

■ Identify attuned practices adults can use to create and maintain emotionally responsive connections with children, e.g., check in daily with child.

■ Investigate factors that may result in a negative self-image among children.

■ Discuss factors that may influence the treatment of children in guidance situations (e.g., gender, developmental characteristics, age, and individual circumstances of the child).

■ Observe the self-regulation abilities of the adults in the environment and how these correlate to the children's abilities to self-regulate.

■ Examine current research on developing responsive relationships and pro-social skills, e.g., Wittmer & Peterson, Bailey.

■ Analyze practitioner values and biases that influence guidance approaches and techniques and the direct treatment of children.

■ Evaluate strategies used in parent-teacher conferences to discuss and explain appropriate and effective guidance techniques.

4.3.B. Understand strategies for promoting children's social and emotional development in the context of pro-social and self-regulating skills.

□ Describe two conflict resolution strategies appropriate for young children.

□ Identify the value of teaching children to deal with their conflicts.

□ Identify the characteristics of a reciprocal relationship, e.g., child-child, child-teacher.

□ Explain the importance of teaching children pro-social skills.

□ List social courtesies/manners that children learn through role modeling and role play.

□ Observe how children develop socially and emotionally through their play and interactions.

■ Discuss factors that may inhibit adults from teaching children to deal with their conflicts.

■ Analyze adult behaviors that promote reciprocal relationships with children e.g., responding to children's cues such as hunger, active listening, respecting their needs.

■ Investigate specific strategies that lead to the development of pro-social skills.

■

Analyze the application of appropriate strategies to help children understand and modulate their emotions.

■ Compare how adult supportive and non-supportive responses affect children's behavior.

4.4 Team Approach to Guidance

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of organizing teams and of fostering partnerships.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of team roles and responsibilities in problem-solving for guidance purposes.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

4.4.A. Teamwork.

□ Identify the members of a team and the purposes of a team approach.

□ Explain advantages and disadvantages of the team approach for guiding young children and assisting parents.

■ Design a team that includes professionals, community members, children, staff, and parents. State the purpose of the team and classify the roles and responsibilities of its members.

■ Analyze the effectiveness of the team approach in various guidance situations.

4.4.B. Teamwork as a problem-solving mechanism.

■ Review problem-solving models and adapt one to a simulated dispute.

■ Analyze appropriate and effective problem-solving strategies in child, parent, and/or staff behavioral issues.

4.4.C. Teamwork as a guidance technique.

■ Explain the rationale for promoting the use of specific guidance strategies to team members.

■ Discuss how parents and staff benefit from guidance-oriented meetings.

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Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

SeCTIon 4.0 Guidance

5.1 The Foundations of the Family System in the United States

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of family structures in meeting the needs of its members.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how the family system has impacted individual thought and early childhood practices for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and primary-age children.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

5.1.A. The historical, philosophical, and social founda-

tions of the family system in America.

□ Define family.

□ Identify types of family structures.

■ Analyze the impact, strengths and challenges of various family structures in meeting the needs of its members.

5.1.B. The impact of "parenting" theories on the family system.

□ Identify the role of mothers, fathers, and other primary care givers in the child's life.

■ Examine the research on the impact of specific and essential roles of fathers and mothers and how those roles are uniquely different.

■ Analyze the impact of "parenting" theories and literature on the family system in the United States, e.g., Spock, Brazelton, White, Perry, Macaby, Martin, Bronfenbrenner, and Sameroff.

■ Discuss the challenges that families may face and the impact on early childhood practices.

■ Analyze the risk and resiliency factors and the importance of caring adults in a child's life.

5.1.C. Sources and types of family stress and their impact on children.

■ Examine possible sources and types of stress and/or disconnects that families may experience.

■ Investigate and discuss the possible consequences of family stress on young children.

5.2 The Dynamics, Roles, and Relationships among Families, Communities, and early Childhood Professionals

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of how significant groups can contribute to the well-being of the family and to the achievement of specific goals through partnerships and collaborative efforts.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of the legal and social responsibilities of the early childhood professional.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

5.2.A. Appreciation of the family as the most important influence on their child's learning, success, and well-being and ways to involve families and utilize this rich resource.

□ Explain valuing the family as their child's most valuable teacher.

□ Describe how to utilize the family as a major resource to the program.

□ List and describe ways families can become involved

as partners in all aspects of the program.

■ Develop a process for on-going family-staff relationships to achieve the best results for the child, the family, and the program.

■ Analyze the institutional and individual barriers to family-staff relationships.

5.2.B. Family challenges involved in caring for children with special needs or disabilities.

□ Survey families of children with special needs to identify the families' challenges and goals. Compile and summarize findings.

■ Determine any challenges that impact families' ability to access developmentally effective systems of care for their young children (e.g. health, education, therapeutic services).

5.2.C. The impact of the early childhood care and education setting on the family system.

□ Illustrate the effect of developmentally effective approaches on parenting styles or techniques.

■ Analyze how different early childhood programs may or may not meet families' needs.

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Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

5.2.D. The extended family, institutions (commercial, recreational, educational, social, religious, and medical), and other groups that comprise the "community."

■ Assess the concept of the early childhood program being an integral part of the "community", and impacting the lives of many families.

■ Analyze the impact of the broader definition of community on the child and on the early childhood setting.

5.2.E. The importance of early childhood professionals using a team process that solicits participation from and collaborates with family and the greater community.

□ Locate and explain "Family-Staff Partnership," (Standard C-1 through C-5) in the Colorado Quality Standards.

□ Use the evaluation forms from the Colorado Quality Standards while observing in an early childhood setting. (Standard C-1 through C-5).

■ Examine the dynamics of team composition and the process of goal-setting to help ensure collaboration.

■ Discuss the dynamics of the team process in relation to different family structures, and social and cultural backgrounds.

5.2.F. The dynamics of relationships formed between children within an early childhood setting.

□ Interpret the different relationships observed among children in a group.

■
Discuss how pro-social relationships can be encouraged and enhanced among children in a group.
■
Compare various responses to gender differences in a learning environment.

5.2.G. The legal requirements for family involvement.

■
Discuss legal responsibilities (e.g., enrollment contracts, waivers, and individualized learning plans) in relation to self, program, and others.
■
Analyze a legal challenge involving a family that an early childhood professional might encounter.

5.3 effective Communication in Building Relationships

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of effective communication skills when dealing with children, families, staff, other professionals, and community helpers.
Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate oral and written communication skills that reflect cultural competence and children's individual needs.
Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

5.3.A. Recognition and knowledge of communications models.

□
Identify and explain specific communication models, e.g., humanistic and "win-win."
□
List and describe the common components of different communication models, including the role of listening.

5.3.B. The impact of effective and ineffective communication skills when dealing with diverse populations, e.g., families, children, staff, and contracted specialists.

□
Arrange to attend and observe two family conferences to determine if the concerns of the family were respected, if the curriculum and the child's progress were communicated effectively, and if the early childhood professional supported the family in decision-making.
■
Analyze several media sources for effective communication which pertain to the following topics: parental rights, cultural competence, and staff relations.
■
Investigate the impact of bias, parental rights, and communication techniques on the family/staff relationship.
■
Research the concepts of family-centered versus program-centered communication with families.
■
Recognize the difference between "power over" and "power with" in relationships with families.

5.3.C. The dynamics, roles, and range of relationships among families, communities, and early childhood professionals.

□
Review and critique an informal discussion between an early childhood professional and a parent.
□

Identify and explain specific techniques that can be used by an early childhood professional to enhance communication and community relations.

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Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

SeCTIon 5.0 Family and Community Relationships

■

Analyze and discuss individual perceptions of what was communicated by the parties involved in the above discussion.

■

Research the connection between a successful program and quality relationships with families.

5.4 Resources Which Support Children and Families

Professional Standard, Level I:

Demonstrate knowledge of processes for evaluating appropriate resources for families.

Professional Standard, Level II:

Demonstrate the ability to select resources that will assist a family in achieving a specific goal for their child.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

5.4.A. Categories of resources.

□

Identify categories of resources that include accessibility, cost, types and quality of service, versatility, and consumer friendliness.

■

Research categories of resources from the community, e.g., food, safety, shelter, clothing, medical and dental care, transportation, and mental health services.

■

Compile a directory of community resources for children and families regarding basic physiological and security needs.

5.4.B. The role and importance of a comprehensive support system for children and families.

□

Identify a variety of community agencies and services which offer assistance in working with families and children.

□

Review the literature to identify exemplary programs in the state and the community that provide services for families, as well as for young children.

■

Investigate the unique responsibilities of, and resources available, in caring for children with special needs or disabilities.

■

Interview a family and document what steps they went through to access diagnostic procedures.

■

Research the implementation of the resource provisions required in early childhood settings by IDEA, ADA, and Section 504.

5.4.C. The influence of familial norms, and socio-economic variables on the use and non-use of available resources.

□

Provide examples to illustrate influences on resource

utilization by families.

■ Identify barriers that get in the way of families using resources.

■ Develop strategies to assist families and staff in overcoming barriers.

—

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

SeCTIon 5.0 Family and Community Relationships

6.1 The Recognition of Diversity in Society

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate awareness of the various types of cultural diversity existing within society.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how personal values, attitudes, beliefs, and biases impact relationships.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

6.1.A. The historical, philosophical, and social foundation of cultural and individual diversity in America and in the world.

□ Identify and define respectful terms used in multicultural dialogue.

□ Review the foundations for understanding culture and diversity in society.

■ Research and discuss the following topics:
a. The historical experiences of one cultural group in the United States.
b. The philosophical perspectives that led to discrimination against specific groups in the United States.
c. Social factors that restrain or limit the cultural competence of individuals and/or groups.

■ Review factors/ideas of major theorists and social leaders that impact beliefs and practices in the early childhood profession.

6.1.B. The socialization process.

□ Identify race, ethnicity, gender, economic status and children with disabilities.

□ Document and explain the impact of each of these categories of socialization in an early childhood setting.

□ Review and paraphrase the literature on the impact of social class on self-esteem and child development.

■ Analyze the barriers to the socialization process.

6.1.C. The recognition of personal biases and their impact upon one's ability to care for all children equitably.

□ Explain how negative stereotypes prevent children's healthy development and ill-equip them to interact effectively.

■ Examine and summarize the different values, beliefs, and forms of bias that staff members bring to an early

childhood setting.

■ Research developmentally effective strategies (using play and concrete learning materials) that will shape or modify the attitude and/or behaviors of young children toward diversity. Include race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and special needs in early childhood settings.

6.2 Family Involvement in early Multi-cultural Learning

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate awareness of how the family can help young children understand and appreciate different cultural traditions.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how parents and other family members can be resources in multicultural learning

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

6.2.A. The identification of the family unit and its role and importance to the young child.

□ Define family.

□ Identify types of family units.

■ Analyze family structure in meeting the needs of their members.

■ Discuss the role of the family in sharing one's cultural heritage and its value.

■ Address implications for the young child when the learning environment (setting) negates the home's influence.

6.2.B. The enlistment of parents' help and support in identifying appropriate meaningful goals and activities for family involvement in multicultural learning.

□ Illustrate how the staff can be involved in parents' cultural awareness and gain their support and involvement.

□ Identify strategies for working with children whose family's cultural traditions and beliefs do not allow them to participate in certain activities.

■ Plan and implement an orientation meeting for parents in which the importance of the multicultural curriculum and activities is explained. Examine and document the responses of parents attending the meeting.

■ Outline a plan for an enrollment meeting with families to determine their goals for their child and how they can be involved in sharing their culture with the children.

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Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

6.2.C. The development of multicultural curriculum in which family members take part.

□ Explain how the learning environment and curriculum

can reflect and affirm all family cultural traditions and heritage.

□ Review and explain the Colorado Quality Standards for Early Childhood Care and Education, Section B-7h, regarding respect for cultural diversity.

■ Identify and assess materials and activities that can increase staff's, families' and children's multicultural awareness.

6.2.D. The role of family as resource persons.

□ Describe the implications of children developing ideas about other cultures as early as three years of age.

■ Meet with families to assess and discuss cultural resource items (e.g., magazine pictures, family games, dramatic play props, family experiences, stories, and artifacts) they can share with young children.

■ Research and discuss the importance of including family members (both nuclear and extended) to share their fields of expertise. Ask culturally diverse parents to find areas of similarity.

■ Examine the role that family plays in the early development cited above.

■ Plan and implement ways in which families, as resources, can ensure that respectful attitudes are formed.

6.3 An Anti-bias Curriculum in early Childhood Programs

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the criteria for evaluating a curriculum's anti-bias content.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how to infuse anti-bias awareness throughout all content areas of the developmentally effective early childhood curriculum.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

6.3.A. The recognition and incorporation of diversity into developmentally effective approaches.

□ Review and explain the theoretical basis for a developmentally effective approach.

□ Identify and review the research on patterns of interaction between adults (teachers/staff) and culturally diverse children. Paraphrase these findings.

□ Observe and report incidents that illustrate the perpetuation of gender stereotypes by early childhood staff.

□ Observe and report incidents that illustrate the perpetuation of familial stereotypes by early childhood staff.

■ Compare and contrast selected traditions that are different from those of the majority culture, or a common experience with a different cultural meaning. Discuss new awareness gained from this exercise.

■ Discuss the role of cultural competence in developmentally effective approaches.

6.3.B. The practice of adaptation and infusion of developmentally effective curriculum with a culturally competent perspective.

□ Become familiar with and develop strategies to implement the principles set forth in NAEYC's anti-bias handbook written by Derman-Sparks.

□ Describe the different developmental progressions for children in forming identity and individuality, and the impact these progressions can have on curriculum design.

□ Use an evaluation checklist to check existing materials for inclusion and cultural competence.

■ Research and discuss how to infuse cultural competency into curriculum design and implementation.

■ Research and synthesize current literature on the significance of ethnic, family, racial, linguistic, religious, and gender identity in childhood.

■ Strategize methods for incorporating the above findings into the curriculum.

■ Develop an in-service staff professional development program with an early-childhood expert in cultural competency.

■ Conduct a study group using Janet Gonzales-Mena's model of curriculum for multicultural education.

6.3.C. The inclusion of young children who have special support needs in one or more of the developmental domains.

□ Find and paraphrase Parts B and H of The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) and the position of NAEYC on the inclusion of young children with disabilities.

□ Explain how children with disabilities and their peers have more similarities than differences in their development.

□ Explain the importance of inclusive settings.

■ Determine the rationale and value for inclusive settings and legislation.

■ Compile a list of experts in early childhood intervention, including the family, and analyze their roles in supporting children and their programs.

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Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

SeCTIon 6.0 Cultural and Individual Diversity

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

■ Discuss possible issues around children with disabilities who are also diverse in at least one other area.

■ Interview professionals to determine what interventions provide age-appropriate and individually appropriate services. Prepare a written report on these findings.

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7.1 The Foundations of the early

Childhood Profession

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the scope of the early childhood care and education profession.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of early childhood care and education in relation to historical and current early childhood education philosophy and practice.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

7.1.A. The historical, philosophical, and social foundations of the early childhood profession.

☐ Define the profession of early childhood care and education.

☐ Recognize and correctly use key concepts of the early childhood profession, such as growth, development, relationship, family involvement, inclusion, guidance, cultural competency, assessment, and developmentally effective approaches.

☐ Identify the various roles found within the early childhood care and education profession.

☐ Outline the historical, philosophical, and social foundations of the early childhood profession.

■ Analyze the impact of the foundations of the early childhood profession on current professional thought and practice.

7.2 Public Impact on the early Childhood Profession

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the federal, state, and local standards, policies, regulations, and laws which impact young children, programs, and early childhood professionals.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of compliance of early childhood settings using a variety of regulatory and quality standards.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

7.2.A. Federal/state/local standards, policies, regulations, and laws, as well as relevant past and pending legislation.

☐ Identify federal/state/local standards, policies, regulations, and laws.

■ Assess an early childhood program using standards from professional organizations and/or from federal/state/local regulatory agencies.

■ Applying the Colorado Quality Standards, evaluate an early childhood program.

7.2.B. Standards of professional organizations.

☐ Identify and paraphrase the mission statements of national and state early childhood professional organizations.

■
Evaluate and discuss the standards of early childhood professional organizations.

7.2.C. Issues, innovations, and trends in early childhood education.

■
Develop a personal position on current public policy based on issues, innovations, and trends in early childhood care and education.

7.3 early Childhood ethics and Codes of Conduct

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of NAEYC's "Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment."

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how to apply the ideals and principles of NAEYC's "Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment" to situations in the delivery of service to young children, families, community, and society.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

7.3.A. Standards of ethical behavior and codes of conduct.

□
Identify and paraphrase standards of ethical behavior and codes of conduct.

■
Using the "Code of Ethical Conduct," identify and evaluate ethical dilemmas, then apply the appropriate ethical ideals and principles to each dilemma.

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Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

7.3.B. Ethical issues and dilemmas in the early childhood profession.

□
Obtain and review literature on ethical behavior in the early childhood profession.

■
Assess ethical and policy issues related to educational, social/emotional, and health services for young children and their families (e.g. child denied enrollment due to educational, social/emotional, and/or health special needs).

7.4 early Childhood Professional Development

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the value of early childhood professional development and career options.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of accessing or creating resources for career development and planning.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

7.4.A. Career development, i.e., professional development options and choices.

□
Identify quality professional development options and choices.

■ Develop, implement, and evaluate an individual professional development plan.

■ Create, evaluate and implement a quality personal professional development plan.

7.4.B. Literature, activities, policies, and positions of professional organizations.

□ Identify and describe literature, activities, policies, and positions of professional organizations.

■ Evaluate the impact of current public policies on the early childhood field and more specifically, on your career and professional development (e.g. changes in rules and regulations).

7.5 The Collaborative Team Process

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of the collaborative team process in working with young children, families, colleagues, and the community.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of the principles and strategies necessary for an effective collaborative team process.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

7.5.A. A process for effective partnerships with families, other professionals, and community representatives in the delivery of education and services.

□ Define some of the key elements of the collaborative process, such as listening, empathizing, and creating attainable options.

■ Develop a set of guidelines for working effectively within groups.

7.5.B. Principles for effective collaborative processes.

□ Identify and explain appropriate principles and processes for collaboration, as they relate to young children, families, colleagues, and the community.

□ Determine strategies to implement a collaborative team process in an early childhood program.

■ Synthesize the principles and processes of collaboration, working with other professionals and the family, to develop a child's individualized learning plan.

■ Reflect on your own values, beliefs, and attitudes and how the impact your teaching and interactions with families.

7.6 early Childhood Advocacy

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of organizations that advocate for early childhood professional, families, and programs.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of how to advocate for early childhood professionals and quality programs for young children and families.

SeCTIon 7.0 Professionalism

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Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

7.6.A. Contemporary literature on advocacy and advocacy groups and activities.

□
Define early childhood advocacy.

□
Identify and describe advocacy groups, their activities, and contemporary literature on advocacy.

■
Participate in two activities which enhance advocacy for early childhood professionals, young children, and families. Compare and contrast your experiences.

■
Analyze the effectiveness of the Colorado Quality Standards as an advocacy tool.

7.6.B. Strategies to address economic issues, and to enhance the professionalism and working environment of the early childhood field.

□
List current efforts to enhance the status and working environment of early childhood professionals, using journals and materials obtained from professional organizations, e.g., Center for the Child Care Workforce.

■
Develop strategies to use in advocating for the enhanced professionalism of the early childhood field

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Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

SeCTIon 7.0 Professionalism

8.1 Administration of early Childhood Programs

Professional Standard, Level I:

Demonstrate knowledge of the legal and other regulatory systems which guide Colorado's early childhood programs.

Professional Standard, Level II:

Demonstrate knowledge of planning, developing, and evaluating an early childhood program.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

8.1.A. The systems which govern Colorado's early childhood programs.

□
Identify the legal and other regulatory systems which govern Colorado's early childhood programs.

■
Explain specific applications of Colorado's legal and other regulatory systems to early childhood programs.

8.1.B. Labor, anti-discrimination, e.g., ADA, confidentiality, and other laws which affect early childhood programs.

□
Explain the importance of working with legal counsel regarding the laws affecting custody issues, confidentiality, labor and anti-discrimination laws, liability issues, health rules, and the basics of contracts.

□

Outline appropriate hiring practices, including the processes for application and interview.

□ Review the law regarding mandated reporting of suspected child abuse.

■ Evaluate a legal situation that might be encountered by an early childhood program and prepare an action plan to address the situation.

■ Investigate the law regarding mandated reporting of suspected child abuse and NAEYC's Position Statement on the Prevention of Child Abuse.

8.1.C. Marketing.

□ Identify the impact impressions make on consumers of early care and education and the role of the professional as an ambassador to the field.

■ Research and evaluate different marketing strategies.

■ Develop a marketing profile, including a needs assessment, target population, and cost analysis.

8.1.D. Administrative practices.

□ Paraphrase the requirements and importance of recordkeeping for various topics, such as organizational records about budget, organizational plans, registration, children's development, and personnel.

□ Distinguish between the types of records that are kept for legal reasons and those that are set up to help the program function smoothly.

□ Propose a checklist for an enrollment interview e.g., enrollment forms, the name of the party responsible for payment, health policies, tuition fees and payment schedules, and program schedule.

■ Create a program-focused professional development plan.

■ Develop a quality improvement plan for a program referencing resources such as: Colorado Quality Standards, Qualistar Early Learning Ratings, Environmental Rating Scales, Model Work Standards, Program Administration Scale and NAEYC Accreditation Criteria.

■ Compare and contrast two policies on the process of enrolling children, and how best to group children in the most developmentally effective manner.

8.1.E. Facility management and operation.

□ Establish and implement procedures to monitor and correct any building problems in order to comply with all codes, such as fire, health, building, zoning, and licensing regulations.

□ List policies and procedures for maintaining safe equipment and security practices.

■ Design and explain a floor plan to ensure effective use of space and code compliance.

■ Create cost-effective equipment and supply orders for one classroom (i.e. infant, toddler, preschool, or school-age) in a start-up program.

8.1.F. Classroom management.

□ Identify the roles of teaching staff in maintaining an optimal early care and learning environment.

□ List events that may impact the daily routine of a learning environment.

■ Evaluate all aspects of managing an early care and learning environment, including the daily schedule, curriculum design, group size, staff-child ratios and enrollment practices.

■ Investigate behavioral issues that impact an early care and learning environment.

■ Research strategies for effectively and respectfully responding to behavioral issues.

■ Examine how diversity enriches early care and learning practices.

Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

8.1.G. Organizational, vision, and mission development.

□ Define the organizational structure of a program.

□ Interpret a program's existing mission statement and explain it to staff and parents.

■ Research processes for developing an applicable mission statement for an early childhood organization.

■ Analyze strategies for establishing and implementing organizational goals and objectives.

■ Develop a mission statement and management strategies based on teamwork, ongoing evaluation, and strategic planning processes.

■ Compare and contrast a variety of business structures, including financial leadership, public entities, for- and non-profit corporations, sole proprietorships, and partnerships.

8.1.H. Financial Management.

□ Describe the financial issues which may affect a program.

■ Analyze a variety of budget formats.

■ Research sources of funding within corporations, foundations, and the government.

■ Discuss the connection between program policy/ practice and the budget.

■ Investigate and discuss fee schedules, including registration, tuition, and field trips.

■ Describe the cost and coverage, including restrictions, of liability insurance for early childhood programs.

■ Determine and discuss other sources of revenue and support for the program, such as donations,

philanthropy, and special program grants.

■ Develop a salary schedule which allows for a compensation system that rewards the staff for increased knowledge and skills.

■ Create a budget which provides realistic salaries more appropriate for the staff as they increase skills and professional knowledge.

■ Create a fee schedule which supports the budget.

■ Create a revenue sheet which supports the expense side of the budget, including fees as well as other sources of revenue.

■ Assess types of fundraising campaigns.

■ List and discuss detailed procedures for administering the following: billing, reimbursement, receipts, fiscal reports, and petty cash.

■ Research insurance policies needed to provide child care services, e.g. general liability, property coverage, auto coverage, workman's compensation, professional liability, etc.

8.1.I. Program development and evaluation.

□ Describe the unique characteristics of a quality program.

■ Interview directors of two early childhood programs to compare and contrast their educational curricula, children's routines, field trip procedures, and menus to determine developmentally effective approaches in meeting the needs of children.

■ Research appropriate assessment techniques for infants, toddlers and preschool children.

■ Research appropriate assessment techniques for English language learners.

■ Obtain and review three different child assessment instruments. Using current child development research, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the instruments.

■ Evaluate the methods used by families, staff, and the director for assessing a program.

■ Investigate different types of quality assessments for programs such as Qualistar Ratings, Environment Rating Scales, NAEYC Accreditation, NAFCC Accreditation, National AfterSchool Association Accreditation, Program Administration Scale, etc.

8.1.J. Personnel practices.

□ Review a policy that presents the value of staff staying home when ill, similar to the policy regarding children staying home when ill.

■ Contrast the job descriptions from three different sources for the same position.

■ Prepare and critique interview questions for an early childhood care and education position that adhere to legal guidelines and are culturally appropriate.

■
Interview three child care professionals about their on the job experiences.
■
Research the efficacy of Reflective Supervision, mentoring, and coaching in productive supervision practices.
■
Create a staff schedule for one full day classroom of 10 infant/toddlers or 20 preschool children the meets staff to child ratios at all times and provides staff breaks as required by law.
■
Compare a director's experience with staff termination with effective practice.
■
Develop a staff orientation session which promotes program goals.

SeCTIon 8.0 Administration and Supervision

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Level I activity □ ■ Level II activity

8.1.K. Community resources and referrals for professionals, children, and families.

□
Identify the agencies/resources that provide services or referrals to children, families, and professionals.
■
Generate a list of local agencies that provide services for a specialized need, e.g., Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), child or spousal abuse, parenting, job loss, affordable health care, and elder care.

8.2 Leadership, Supervision, and Staff Development

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of early childhood staff and professional issues.
Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of planning, implementing, and evaluating a program of personnel management and staff development.
Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

8.2.A. Models of supervision, mentorship, retention practices, and staff development.

□
Review NAEYC's position statements (http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions.asp) on Nomenclature, Salaries, Benefits, and the Status of the Early Childhood Profession. Based on the information, explain best practices for reaching the goal of enhancing the self-image and public perception of early childhood professionals.
■
Determine a supervisory plan for staff inclusive of orientation, ongoing support, annual evaluation, required training, termination, and exit interview.
■
Compare and contrast top down management with Reflective Supervision.
■
Discuss how to encourage and promote professional development activities, e.g., observing and giving

feedback, communicating expectations, mentoring, and modeling appropriate behavior with children, families, and staff.

■ Develop a plan with the staff for mentoring.

8.2.B. Interpersonal dynamics and communication strategies.

□ Identify and explain the interpersonal dynamics and communication strategies which foster positive and respectful relationships with families, staff, administration, other professionals, and the community.

■ Develop a plan for implementing effective communication principles into the structure of the organization.

■ Design a staff meeting that would maximize staff time.

8.2.C. Ethical Conduct.

□ Explain ethical responsibilities of co-workers, employers, and employees using NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment.

□ Explore how staff members with diverse backgrounds in the supervisory process, i.e. culture, age, gender, ability, and other variables, can strengthen and benefit a program.

■ Offer several solutions to an ethical dilemma discussed in a professional early childhood journal, list serve, or periodical.

■ Determine a strategy to educate the board/owner if it is found that a licensing rule is not being adhered to.

8.2.D. Advocacy.

□ Define advocacy as it relates to children, families, and early childhood professionals.

□ List local, state, and national organizations that promote advocacy for children, families, and early childhood professionals.

■ Compare and contrast the differences between advocacy and lobbying.

■ Analyze the roles an early childhood professional can play in advocating for young children.

■ Compare the missions of advocacy organizations, e.g., Worthy Wage Campaign, NAEYC, Smart Start Colorado Office of Professional Development, Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved, and Qualistar Early Learning.

■ Compare the missions of lobbying organizations, e.g. Colorado Children's Campaign, Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved.

■ Conceive an advocacy event that includes the details of the event, marketing, cost, collaboration with other professionals, and delegation of duties.

■ Research legislation affecting children and their families.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

8.3 Team Involvement

Professional Standard, Level I:
Demonstrate knowledge of how to work collaboratively within a team model.

Professional Standard, Level II:
Demonstrate knowledge of the administrative role in facilitating the team process.

Focus Areas of this Core Knowledge and Suggested Supporting Activities:

8.3.A. Role and responsibilities of teams and their members.

□ Define the function of a team and each member in the team.

□ Identify situations that necessitate a team approach.

■ Develop an organizational chart for an early childhood setting.

8.3.B. Strategies for assessing and meeting team building needs.

□ Plan a team building activity.

□ Explain how clear and respectful communication is integral to team building.

■ Analyze tools that identify team members' strengths and weaknesses, such as group activities and personality profiles. Examples: Kiersey Temperament Sorter and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

■ Compare and contrast the effects of different communication styles, i.e. verbal, non-verbal, written, and graphic.

8.3.C. Interpersonal processes and dynamics of teams.

□ List events that may affect team dynamics.

■ Research the processes of team dynamics.

■ Investigate how to use information about individual communication styles and personality characteristics from tools (such as Kiersey Termperament Sorter or Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) to positively impact team building.

Level I activity □ ■ **Level II activity**

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Section 1.0 CHILD GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT

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Section 2.0 HEALTH, NUTRITION, and SAFETY

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Appendix R

RFP Scope of Work for Development of Workforce Standards and Competency Framework

STATE OF COLORADO

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Date: 11/01/2011 **RFP Number:** DRAFT

Return all Sealed Bids/Proposals to:
Office of Lt. Governor
Early Childhood
Leadership Commission
225 E 16th Ave., Ste B 52
Denver, CO 80203

Purchasing Agent: Eva Reynolds
ereynolds520@comcast.net

RFP Opening Date: Due Date: **RFP Opening Time:** 12:00 p.m. (MDT)

All Proposals Shall be Quoted F.O.B. Destination unless Otherwise Specified

TITLE: RFP-ER-LGO-11-001 Consultant for the Development of Colorado Early Childhood Professional Competencies (ARRA)

Per the attached specifications, terms and conditions

F.E.I.N.: _____ **Payment Terms:**
Delivery Date: _____ **(Minimum of Net 30)** _____

Authorized Signature: _____
Typed/Printed Name: _____
Title: _____

Company Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____
Phone Number: _____ **Fax Number:** _____
Contact for Clarifications: _____
Title: _____
Phone Number: _____ **Fax Number:** _____
E-mail Address: _____

MPORTANT:

The title of the RFP (noted above) must be on the outside of the Response Return Envelope.

Telegraphic or electronic bids (Fax, Western Union, Telex, e-mail, etc.) cannot be accepted directly in the Purchasing Office as a sealed bid. Offeros are urged to read the solicitation document thoroughly before submitting a bid/proposal. Show the following information clearly on the outside of the sealed package:[Offeror's Name]

- RFP # **RFP-ER-LGO-11-001 Consultant for the Development of Colorado** Early Childhood Teacher & Director Workforce Competencies **(ARRA)**
- Proposal Due: **(DATE 12:00 PM MDT)**
- Offeror's Email Address

Checklist:

- ✓ Confirm that you are aware that the award notice will be published on Colorado BIDS _____Yes
- ✓ My Company is registered on Colorado BIDS ____Yes ____NO
- ✓ List the Number of RFP Modifications that you have seen on the BIDS web site. _____
- ✓ Propriety Information: Included and as segregated pages _____Yes _____NO
- ✓ Registered with the Colorado Secretary of State. ____NO ____Yes, and #_____

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED, SIGNED AND RETURNED

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ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: State of Colorado Model Contract for Personal Services

Attachment 2: State of Colorado Supplemental Provisions for Contracts, Grants & Purchase Orders Using Funds Provided Under American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 – OSC 8/21/2009

Attachment 3: Contractor Non-Conflict of Interest Statement (Form)

Attachment 4: Offeror Disclosure Statement

Attachment 5: Guide for E-Verify and CDLE Program

Attachment 6: Notice of Participation (E-Verify)

Attachment 7: Contractor Affirmation Form (E-Verify)

Attachment 8: W-9 for Independent Contractors- State of Colorado Form

Attachment 9: Solicitation Terms for ARRA Acquisitions

Attachment 10: Exhibit IC of Contract for Personal Services, Independent Contractor Provision

Attachment 11: Purchase Order Terms & Conditions

Exhibit A: Consultant Experience and Demonstrated Capability Fact Sheet

SECTION 4 – STATEMENT OF WORK

4.1 Project Overview and Purpose

Description of early childhood teacher and director competencies:
Early childhood teacher and director competencies outline standards for competent practice, identifying what early childhood teachers and directors must know, be able to do, and care about to provide quality early care and education.

Purpose of Colorado's Early Childhood Teacher & Director Competencies:

- To provide a common, statewide early childhood teacher and director competencies designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes.
- To develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the competency framework.
- To improve the professional development opportunities for Colorado's early childhood workforce.
- To provide unifying competencies that are embraced by and embedded in programs and services (e.g. early care and education, home visitation, early intervention) across the comprehensive early learning system.

Criteria for Colorado's Early Childhood Teacher & Director Competencies:

- Must address the Eight Domains of Professional Competencies: (1) Health, Safety and Nutrition, (2) Understanding Child Growth and Development, (3) Partnering with Families and Communities, (4) Partnering with Families and Communities, (5) Learning Environment, (6) Effective Interaction, (7) Program Management, and (8) Teacher Qualifications and Professional Development;
- Must include the creation and definition of levels of competency achievement;
- Recognize and are responsive to variations in cultures, languages, and abilities.
- Recognize the unique aspects of infant and toddler development.
- Based on research and best or promising practices.
- Align with relevant state and national professional and workforce standards, program quality standards (curricula, materials and settings), and assessments.
- Build from and embed Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines.
- Complement and align with the Colorado's K-12 effective educator standards, as well as build from other relevant state and national initiatives.
- Drive personnel training and development across the early childhood system sectors.

4.2 Project Goal

The goal of this RFP is to solicit proposals to develop Early Childhood Teacher & Director Workforce Competencies that includes data collection, analysis, national and state review and input processes, drafting and finalizing guidelines and recommendations for implementation, and working with an advisory group.

4.3 Scope of Work

The following is the project's scope of work and consultant's responsibilities:

1. consultation with the advisory group throughout the project, with a minimum of two face-to-face meetings anticipated;
2. collecting, reviewing, and analyzing relevant Colorado and national documents as well as other leading state models;
3. analysis that results in the identification of themes, trends, common content, and format that is supported by research and best/promising practices as well as identifies gaps;
4. drafting the Colorado Early Childhood Teacher and Director Competencies;
5. align the Colorado Early Childhood Teacher and Director Competencies with the state's Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines, the state's QRIS as well as other relevant standards;
6. developing and implementing a state and national expert review process, as well as a Colorado stakeholder review process, for comment on the draft guidelines;
7. editing and finalizing the guidelines;
8. developing a draft dissemination and implementation plan for the guidelines; and
9. regular electronic communication and updates.

Additionally, the scope includes developing recommendations for strategies and plans to build awareness, engagement, and adoption across Colorado's early childhood community around these new competencies.

4.4 Consultant Qualifications

Below are the required mandatory minimum qualifications for this project. It is imperative that the offeror meet the mandatory minimum qualifications. **If these qualifications are not met in the initial evaluation the offeror will not proceed in the evaluation process.**

4.4.1 Mandatory Minimum Qualifications*:*

Education

- Masters degree in education, public health, early education, public policy, or a related field.

Skills and Experience

- Demonstrated experience in early childhood development
- Demonstrated experience in early childhood professional competencies
- Demonstrated experience in project research and development working with stakeholders across the early childhood sectors of health, early learning, mental health, and family support

4.5 Responsibilities

4.5.1 Consultant Responsibilities

- It will be the responsibility of the consultant to meet the scope of the project as stated in section 4, by providing appropriate information as well as adequate resources to ensure the successful implementation of project. Offeror shall adhere to existing structures and standards currently in use by ECLC.

- The Early Childhood Teacher and Director Workforce Competencies must be designed to align with the comprehensive vision outlined in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework http://earlychildhoodcolorado.org/inc/uploads/CO_EC_Framework.pdf* that encompasses early

learning, family support and education, social emotional and mental health and health. Therefore, following Colorado's uniquely integrated vision, these guidelines will be relevant to professionals who work across those system domains. An advisory group of Colorado content experts has been identified to work with the selected consultant, supply relevant Colorado context and resources, and review and approve all final deliverables.

- Location(s) of performance: All work shall be performed primarily at the consultant's office with Advisory Group meetings occurring in the Denver metro area.

It is the responsibility of the awarded offeror to ensure compliance with all ARRA regulations and requirements when receiving and/or awarding contracts/subcontracts using funds made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Pub.L.111-5 (ARRA or the Act). By accepting this project, the winning offeror affirms that it shall fully comply with all requirements as detailed by the "State of Colorado Supplemental Provisions for Contracts, Grants, & Purchase Orders Using Funds Provided Under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009" document, which is published with this solicitation as Attachment 2.

…

6.1 EVALUATION FACTORS

Based on the Statement of Work defined in **Section 4** and the Offeror's responses to **Section 5**; the evaluation will focus on services, tasks, and deliverables. The preliminary evaluation factors for the initial proposal and oral interview as follows.

The preliminary evaluation factors are:

- Meets the Mandatory Minimum Qualifications.

- Demonstrated experience and capabilities –

- Proposed project methodology -- Comprehensiveness and appropriateness of the work plan, realistic time estimates to complete activities and adequate response to the Statement of Work defined in Section 4.

- Experience and qualifications of key personnel and subcontractors.

- Cost Component

- The extent to which Offeror agrees to **Colorado's basic contract terms and required State Special Provisions** without seeking exceptions.

End of Section 6

Appendix S
Crosswalk of Core Knowledge and Standards, Community College Course Competences and NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards (Excerpt)

CROSSWALK OF CORE KNOWLEDGE STANDARDS, COMMUNITY COLLEGE COURSES COMPETENCIES AND NAEYC ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM STANDARDS

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
	Child Growth and Development		
	1.1 Child Development Theories and Methods of Research, and Their Effects on Early Childhood Practices in United States ***Level 2*** Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate guidelines for applying theories to professional practices.	Compare and contrast the historical and current theories of development. Identify and critique evidence-based research as it relates to child development. Analyze the interrelatedness and interaction of developmental domains including biological, environmental, and sociocultural	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** Students prepared in associate degree programs use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for all children. **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families:** Candidates know about and understand the goals, benefits and uses of assessment. They know about documentation and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence children's development and learning.

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
		factors. Identify the biological and environmental factors associated with prenatal development, including heredity, environment and risk factors. Understand general knowledge about development in physical, cognitive, language, emotional and social domains from birth-12 years. Identify atypical development and individual special needs. Investigate a variety of ways to gather in-depth information in all domains of development	

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
		and use them in observing children.	
	1.2 Conception and Prenatal Development ***Level 2*** Demonstrate knowledge of heredity predispositions and environmental dangers that may hinder children's optimal development.	Identify the biological and environmental factors associated with prenatal development, including heredity, environment and risk factors.	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families**
	1.3 Birth and Neonate ***Level 2*** Demonstrate how to assist and provide needed developmentally supportive interactions to parents of both	Analyze the interrelatedness and interaction of developmental domains including biological, environmental, and sociocultural	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families**

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
	premature and full-term neonates.	factors. Understand general knowledge about development in physical, cognitive, language, emotional and social domains from birth-12 years. Identify atypical development and individual special needs. Investigate a variety of ways to gather in-depth information in all domains of development and use them in observing children.	
	1.4 Growth and Development of the Infant ***Level 2***	Analyze the interrelatedness and interaction	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families**

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
	Demonstrate knowledge of how heredity, the environment, and sensorimotor progression affect the development of infants.	of developmental domains including biological, environmental, and sociocultural factors. Understand general knowledge about development in physical, cognitive, language, emotional and social domains from birth-12 years. Identify atypical development and individual special needs. Investigate a variety of ways to gather in-depth information in all domains of development and use them in observing	

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
		children. .	
	1.5 Growth and Development of the Toddler ***Level 2*** Demonstrate knowledge of how a variety of factors influences the development of toddlers and their sense of self (autonomy).	Analyze the interrelatedness and interaction of developmental domains including biological, environmental, and sociocultural factors. Understand general knowledge about development in physical, cognitive, language, emotional and social domains from birth-12 years. Identify atypical development and individual special needs. Investigate a variety of ways to gather in-	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families**

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
		depth information in all domains of development and use them in observing children.	
	1.6 Growth and Development of the Preschooler ***Level 2*** Demonstrate knowledge of how a variety of factors influence the development of preschoolers and their self-concept.	Analyze the interrelatedness and interaction of developmental domains including biological, environmental, and sociocultural factors. Understand general knowledge about development in physical, cognitive, language, emotional and social domains from birth-12 years. Identify atypical development	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families**

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
		and individual special needs. Investigate a variety of ways to gather in-depth information in all domains of development and use them in observing children.	
	1.7 Growth and Development of the Primary-age Child ***Level 2*** Demonstrate knowledge of how creative self-expression and problem solving affect t the development of primary-age children.	Analyze the interrelatedness and interaction of developmental domains including biological, environmental, and sociocultural factors. Understand general knowledge about development in physical, cognitive,	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families**

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
		language, emotional and social domains from birth-12 years. Identify atypical development and individual special needs. Investigate a variety of ways to gather in-depth information in all domains of development and use them in observing children.	
	Developmentally Effective Approaches		
	3.7 Developmentally Effective Approaches and Children Experiencing Developmental Variations and/or Physical Challenges	Identify and critique evidence-based research as it relates to child development Analyze the interrelatedness and interaction of	**Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning:** **Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families**

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
	Level 2 Demonstrate knowledge of an awareness of early identification through screenings and community resources.	developmental domains including biological, environmental, and sociocultural factors. Understand general knowledge about development in physical, cognitive, language, emotional and social domains from birth-12 years. Identify atypical development and individual special needs. Investigate a variety of ways to gather in-depth information in all domains of development and use them in observing	

ECE 238 (or PSY 238) Child Growth and Development	Core Knowledge and Credential Profession Standards	College Competencies	NAEYC Associate Degree Program Standards
		children.	

Appendix T
Teaching Strategies GOLD® Technical Summary

Please note that this file has been converted from a PDF to an image file. The quality may have been affected.

Outcomes Study

Core Standard

Reading Success 6000

Assessment System

Technical Summary

Submitted by Dr. Peggy Dwiggins, Project Director
The Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System

Technical Summary

Introduction

Selecting a Meaningful Assessment Instrument

When selecting an assessment instrument to administer to children, the most important considerations are the validity and reliability of the measure. Validity refers to whether the assessment tool measures what it claims to do. Reliability refers to the consistency of scores obtained for the same children when reexamined with the same assessment instrument on different occasions, with different sets of equivalent items, or under other variable assessment conditions.

To ensure that *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* is both valid and reliable, The Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation (CEME), The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, conducted extensive research with thousands of children and teachers. This document is a summary of the results obtained from that research.

Teaching Strategies *GOLD*® Overview

Teaching Strategies GOLD® is an authentic observation-based assessment system for children from birth through kindergarten. The system may be implemented with any developmentally appropriate curriculum. It blends ongoing observational assessment for all areas of development and learning with performance tasks for selected predictors of school success in the areas of literacy and numeracy. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® is inclusive of all children, including English-language learners, children with disabilities, and children who demonstrate competencies beyond typical developmental expectations.

Using Teaching Strategies *GOLD*®

The primary purpose of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® is to document children's learning over time, inform instruction, and facilitate communication with families and other stakeholders. It is important to remember that *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® is not intended as a screening or diagnostic measure, an achievement test, or a program-evaluation tool.

Objectives for Development and Learning

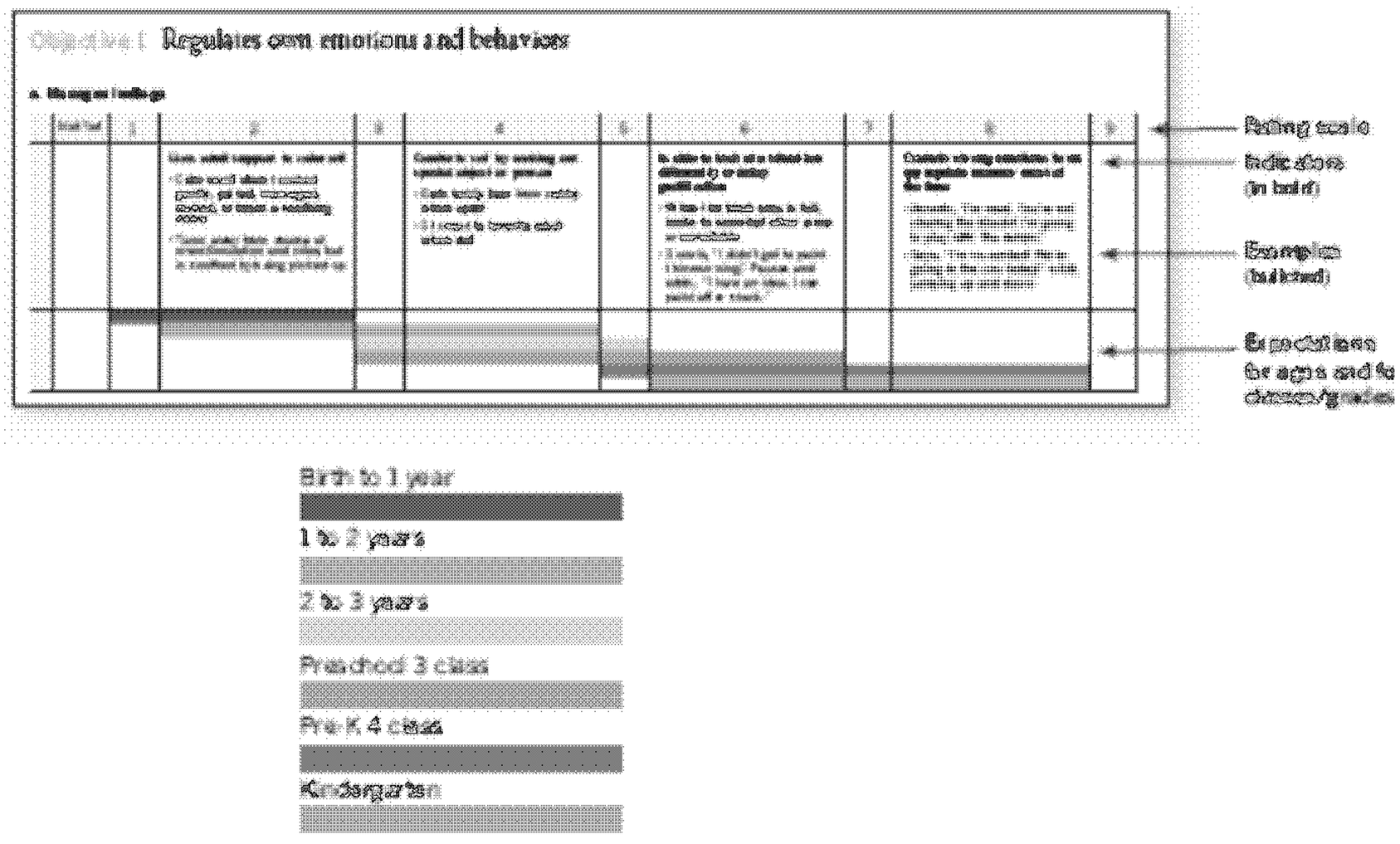
Teaching Strategies GOLD® enables educators to focus on and measure the knowledge, skills, and behaviors most predictive of school success. The tool has a total of 38 objectives. Two objectives are related specifically to English language acquisition, and the other 36 objectives are organized into nine areas of development and content-area learning. The areas are

- Social–Emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- The Arts

Teaching Strategies Gold® Progressions of Development and Learning

Teaching Strategies Gold® presents progressions of development and learning for objectives in the areas of social–emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and in the content areas of literacy, mathematics, and English-language acquisition. Indicators and examples enable tool administrators to rate children's knowledge, skills, and behaviors on a 10-point scale of "Not Yet" to level 9. Furthermore, with the exception of those for English language acquisition, the progressions use colored bands to show widely held expectations for various ages (birth–1 year, 1–2 years, and 2–3 years) and for various classes/grades (preschool 3, pre-K 4, and kindergarten). At a glance, these colored bands show educators and families which skills and behaviors are typical for children of a particular age or class/grade. The bands help teachers manage the complexity of young children's development, which *Teaching Strategies Gold®* recognizes as being uneven and rapidly changing. They also help teachers and families understand that expectations for a particular age or class often overlap expectations for another.

Here is the progression for Objective 1, Dimension a:



The Norm Sample

Determining the Sample

When determining the validity and reliability of an early childhood assessment instrument, it is important to identify a large sample of children who are representative of the nation's population of similarly aged children. Doing so allows teachers and administrators to assume that the instrument will be used equally effectively with children from all parts of the country: children in all types of instructional settings, and children with different backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and special needs.

CEME determined the norm sample from a total of 111,059 children rated by using *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. The total population was divided into 3-month age bands, for a total of 24 age bands ranging from 0-2 months to 69-71 months. Teachers answered questions about each child's background, race, and ethnicity that were identical to those employed by the U.S. Census Bureau. The goal was to represent each of the twenty-four 3-month age bands with 500 randomly selected children. This sampling procedure was used to match the U.S. Census Bureau 2009 estimates for children ages birth to 5 years, 11 months with respect to seven ethnic subgroups.

Final Sample

The final sample used to evaluate the validity and reliability of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* retained a total of 10,963 children. This extremely diverse group of children received educational services in 618 different programs at 2,525 different early childhood centers located across the United States. These programs included Head Start, private child care, and school-based sites. Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia were represented in the final sample. A total of 4,580 teachers was selected as raters to administer *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. Overall, the final sample used in this research was large, broad, and highly representative of young children in the United States.

Construct Validity

Construct validity refers to whether the assessment instrument measures the theoretical constructs (e.g., knowledge, skills, or behaviors) that it is intended to measure. To determine whether *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* is a valid tool for measuring early childhood development and learning, several analyses were conducted.

Factors Measured by *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*

The first step was to confirm the areas of development that *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* is intended to measure. Researchers examined a six-factor model that corresponded to the design of the instrument. This model evaluated each assessment item's "fit" within one of six areas: social–emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics. Statistically, the study's goal was to find a Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RSMEA) value of ≤ .06, a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value of ≤ .08, and a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value of at least .90. The overall results supported the six-factor design of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* with a RMSEA = .066, a SRMR = .033, and a CFI = .951. All of these analyses were statistically significant at $p < .001$, demonstrating that the assessment instrument reliably measures those six factors of child development (Social–Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, and Math).

Scale and Item Analysis

Researchers further conducted an analysis known as Rasch scaling to determine that the six areas of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*, and the items within those areas, measure one and only one factor (e.g. social–emotional but not language development.) This is also referred to as *unidimensionality*. For each of the six areas (social–emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics), the results of the analysis indicated that they are unidimensional, meaning they are distinct from one another and acceptably measure only one factor within the overall assessment. Furthermore, with the exception of one literacy item and one mathematics item, all individual objectives and dimensions within each area of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* are distinct and measure only one of the six areas.

Rating Scale Effectiveness

The items in *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* are measured on a 10-point scale from level 0 to level 9. Researchers evaluated the rating process for each of the six scales to determine whether teachers were administering the instrument in the way it was intended. Statistical analysis should ideally demonstrate that the average performance on the various scales strictly advanced as the individual ratings advanced, which was the case for the social–emotional, physical, and cognitive scales. For the language, literacy, and mathematics scales, two of the possible ratings on the scale (e.g. 0 vs. 1 and 7 vs. 8) overlapped, indicating that the descriptions of those particular ratings might have been somewhat redundant and therefore challenging for teachers to discriminate between when evaluating children.

Item Difficulty

Finally, researchers evaluated the specific items within the six factors of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* to determine whether they progress in difficulty as expected for typically developing children. Results confirmed that the six factors (social–emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics), or scales, consisted of items that increased in difficulty and align with accepted developmental milestones. According to the CEME researchers, the developers of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* were "very successful in creating measures that offer a developmental pathway of sequential milestones that agree with developmental theory."

Reliability

Several analyses were conducted to determine whether *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* is a reliable measure of development and learning. These included person and item reliabilities, internal consistency reliability, and interrater reliability.

Person and Item Reliabilities

High person and/or item reliability means that there is a high probability of replicating the instrument's results. Specifically, person reliability estimates the likelihood of children performing the same across other items measuring the same constructs of child development as those measured by *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. Similarly, item reliability estimates the likelihood that the instrument's items would follow the same developmental progression if administered to another sample of children with similar abilities. Person and item reliabilities

of .8 and higher are considered strong indicators of reliability. Across the six scales of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*, person reliabilities ranged from .95 to .98, while item reliabilities were .99 for all six scales. These values indicate very high person and item reliability for *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*.

Internal Consistency Reliability

Internal consistency reliability refers to the consistency of children's responses to all items within each area of the instrument. The more homogeneous the domain measured, the higher the internal consistency reliability should be. Researchers measured the internal consistency of the items within each area of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*. They determined internal consistency reliability estimates ranging from .957 for the physical scale to .980 for the cognitive scale. These values represent extremely high internal consistency reliability.

Interrater Reliability

Interrater reliability refers to the consistency of scores obtained when two different people administer the same instrument to the same child. If the tool is reliable, the results should be the same (or nearly the same) regardless of the user. Researchers conducted an interrater reliability study by examining the correlations between the ratings of a *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* master teacher/trainer and the ratings of teachers to whom the assessment system is new. This study was conducted by first having a master teacher/trainer rate the skills of 18 children on all items of the instrument. Next, a sample of 557 teachers examined video clips of the same children and provided their ratings for all assessment items. Each teacher rated the skills of only those children who matched the age-group he or she worked with, meaning that no teacher rated all 18 children. Researchers determined the correlations at the area level (e.g. physical, cognitive, language, etc.) between the teacher ratings and the master teacher/trainer ratings. Correlations were very high, with all but one being above .90 and the lowest correlation still being high at .80. The highest level of agreement between the master teacher/trainer and the new teachers was found in the literacy scale. This is very strong evidence of interrater reliability for *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*.

Scale Scores and Age Bands

Scale scores are generally considered more reliable and meaningful than raw scores when analyzing assessment data. Researchers determined scale scores for *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* by using strategies common in both educational and psychological testing. Children's ability estimates were rescaled to conform to a normal distribution with a mean of 500 and standard deviation of 100. Scores three or more standard deviations below the mean were given a value of 200, while values three or more standard deviations above the mean were given a value of 800. Data was analyzed by separating children into 3-month age bands based on their age in months at the time of the first assessment checkpoint in October 2010.

Results indicate that the mean for each scale score is appropriately occurring around age 36 months, which is the middle age range for which *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* is intended. Scale scores correlate moderately strongly with age, suggesting that teachers are generally giving higher scores to older children and lower scores to younger children. Since *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* is meant to measure progress across skills that follow a developmental progression, these results are positive and promising. Furthermore, mean scores for the age bands increase with age at a steady pace. This finding indicates that *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* can be used to track and monitor the developmental progress of children from year to year.

Differential Item Analysis

Assessment instruments should ideally be valid and reliable with all populations of children, including those with disabilities and those for whom English is not a home language. Researchers used differential item analysis to determine whether any items of *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* were operating differently for different populations of children. Three age-groups (3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds) were selected for this study. Data was analyzed according to each child's primary language and disability status, forming three groups of interest: children with disabilities, English-language learners (ELLs), and Spanish-speaking children. There is strong evidence that the items in *Teaching Strategies GOLD®* are operating the same way for different groups of children, meaning that the assessment instrument is equally valid and reliable for children with special needs and for those whose home language is not English.

Conclusion

The *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® assessment system yields highly valid and reliable results. The results of the current research strongly validates that teachers are able to use *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® to make valid ratings of the developmental progress of children across the intended age range from birth through kindergarten. Future analysis will focus on the variance in the ratings that can be attributed to child age, within teacher variability and between teacher variability. Additional evidence of concurrent validity will be released in fall 2011.