

Creating a Comprehensive State Early Childhood Advisory Council

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Summary

In most states, early childhood coordinating entities have been created to advise governors, legislators, and/or agency administrators on how to best meet the needs of young children and their families.¹ While these entities vary in size, scope, and authority, they all have a similar mission to improve the coordination of programs and services for young children and their families. They exist as Early Learning Councils, Task Forces, Children's Cabinets, and Interagency Cabinets, and they are collectively referred to as early childhood advisory councils (ECACs) by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center).

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 required governors to designate or establish a State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care to improve the quality, availability, and coordination of services for children from birth to school entry.² This list of FAQs answers common questions about creating a new council or designating an existing entity to meet the requirements of the 2007 Head Start Act, including:

- What are the federal requirements for the council?
- Why is a coordinating council needed?
- What is the scope of the council's activities?
- How should the council be established?
- Who should be on the council?
- What resources are available to support the development of ECACs?
- What does the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act mean for state councils?

In addition to the questions listed above, examples of state ECACs are included in the appendix.

What are the federal requirements for the council?

To be eligible for federal grant funding, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 requires governors to create or designate an entity dedicated to improving the coordination and quality of programs and services for children from birth to school entry. The text of the Head Start Reauthorization legislation referring to the councils begins on page 49 of [Pub. L. No. 110-134](#).

* This issue brief was written in consultation with Helene Stebbins, HMS Policy Research.

¹ 31 of 36 states that responded to an NGA Center survey in December 2007, indicated at least one early childhood coordinating entity.

² 42 U.S.C. § 9837b (2007 through [Pub. L. No. 110-134](#)).

According to the legislation, the minimum required council membership includes, to the best extent possible, a representative from the following:

- State agency responsible for child care;
- State educational agency;
- Institutions of higher education in state;
- Local providers of early childhood education and development services;
- Head Start agencies, including migrant, seasonal, and Indian Head Start programs;
- State Director of Head Start Collaboration;
- State agency responsible for programs under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
- State agency responsible for health or mental health care; and
- Any other agencies determined to be relevant by the governor.

The legislation indicates the ECAC is responsible for the activities listed below, in addition to any additional responsibilities designated by the governor.

- Conduct periodic needs assessment of the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs, including an assessment of the availability of high-quality pre-k services for low-income children in the state;
- Identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among federally funded and state-funded programs and agencies responsible for child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services;
- Develop recommendations for increasing participation of children in existing federal, state, and local child care and early education programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;
- Develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the state;
- Develop recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood educators in the state;
- Assess the capacity and effectiveness of two- and four-year public and private institutions of higher education in the state toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or prekindergarten program; and
- Make recommendations for improvements in state early learning standards and, where appropriate, develop high-quality comprehensive early learning standards.

Why is a coordinating council needed?

Young children need multiple supports to grow into strong, healthy, productive adults. They need stable families, access to good health care, positive early learning experiences, and early intervention services for those with special needs. In most states, the programs that provide these supports are spread across government agencies, funded through different sources, and delivered through multiple public and private providers in communities.

An early childhood advisory council is one strategy to bring together top decision makers for collective discussion about how to better coordinate services so that young children have the supports in place that they

need. Councils can play many roles. They can inform the governor’s early childhood priorities, drive policy and legislative change, and/or manage (and administer) public spending on early childhood programs.

The following list identifies common activities that are emerging among state ECACs. These activities cut across multiple programs that serve young children—including early care and learning, health care, and family supports—with the goal of improving the coordination and quality of services offered to young children.

- *Strategic Planning:* In **Utah**, the Early Childhood Commission’s role is to provide strategic direction to state and community leaders. Through a collaborative process culminating in a Governor’s Summit on Early Childhood in April 2008, the commission created a five-year state action plan that will inform Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr.’s early childhood priorities, steer policy directions of executive agency leaders, and spur action among private sector and community level stakeholders.
- *Data-Informed Decision Making:* In 2005, the **Illinois** Early Learning Council members asked for information on the status of young children and the existing programs that serve them. Inadequate, disconnected data systems made it impossible to answer those questions. To answer those questions, Illinois developed the [Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map](#), which combines data from multiple state agencies to provide a more “transparent” way to award funding for early childhood programs. The Council now has a data work group focused on fulfilling the Head Start Act’s requirement to develop recommendations for a unified data collection system, and to connect that system to the state’s longitudinal data system. Even with IECAM, Illinois, like most states, does not have the comprehensive and timely data needed for well-informed early childhood policymaking.
- *Accountability for Progress:* In 2006, **Connecticut** Governor M. Jodi Rell asked the Early Childhood Policy and Research Council to monitor the progress of the Children’s Cabinet in achieving the outcomes in its early childhood strategic plan. In addition, the Cabinet utilizes a Results-Based Accountability framework in partnership with the CT General Assembly for all of its accountability work.
- *Quality Improvement:* Defining what quality looks like, and how to encourage it, are two challenges many councils face. One priority of the **Arizona** Early Childhood Development and Health Board, known as *First Things First* (created in 2006), has been to build the infrastructure needed to implement a statewide quality improvement and rating system for child care (known as [Quality First!](#) in Arizona). A common rating system is an easy way to communicate the quality of care to parents seeking child care and to provide a common set of standards across different types of care, such as child care, Head Start/Early Head Start, and state-supported prekindergarten.
- *Sustainability:* Once established, sustaining the progress of the councils can be a challenge for states. Councils that plan with sustainability in mind are in a better position to succeed when there is an economic downturn or change in political leadership. One priority for the **Pennsylvania** Early Learning Council is to focus on a full range of strategies for sustainability that builds shared ownership and responsibility throughout the early childhood system, such as:
 - Creating a comprehensive plan for meeting the needs of children and families that does not rely on a single program or funding stream;
 - Maintaining cross-sector monitoring and accountability mechanism;

- Fostering the development of new early childhood leaders; and
- Developing unified communications and messaging strategies.

What is the scope of the council?

Creating a higher quality, more coordinated system of services to support early childhood development is a daunting challenge in most states. Every state is unique—from the population of young children, to the policies and funding in place to support their early development, to the history of coordination among existing supports and services. Effective councils are clear about their purpose and have clear guidance from governors on their role.

While unique characteristics will influence the work of the councils, there are several key questions all councils must consider.

- *How does the council define early childhood?* Some ECACs start during the prenatal stage with pregnant mothers, and others include children through age eight to ensure strong linkages to the public school system. There are good reasons to expand the definition of the early childhood years, but the years between birth and age five are critical. The 2007 Head Start Act defines the age range as birth through school entry.
- *What promotes healthy early childhood development?* A consensus is growing within the early childhood field that young children need a range of supports that include health care, early learning, and parenting supports. While the full scope of these services may be too large for one council to manage, strong services in one area can be undermined by weak services in another. For example, a focus on improving the quality of prekindergarten programs can be undermined if children have vision, hearing, or dental problems that impede their learning. At a minimum, the council should be clear about defining its scope and articulating how it links to the full, comprehensive set of services that young children need. In **Oregon**, the [Early Childhood Matters](#) framework, developed for Governor Kulongoski's Summit, identifies three areas for action: early learning matters, health matters (including mental health), and family matters. This framework provides a shared early childhood vision and guides state and local implementation of action strategies.
- *How should the council prioritize its work?* The governor and council members can benefit from engaging in an inclusive process to define the scope of the council. Consulting with state agency administrators (e.g., health, mental health, child care, education, foster care, early intervention, and social services); legislators; judges; business leaders; parents; and advocates will lead to a more informed decision about the council's priorities. In **Michigan**, the [Early Childhood Investment Corporation](#) developed a set of recommendations prior to Governor Jennifer Granholm's Early Childhood Summit. At the summit, more than 150 members of state government and the early childhood community revised and ranked the recommendation, and the governor pledged to adopt the resulting recommendations as part of her early childhood policy agenda for the next legislative session.
- *How does the council relate to other entities?* ECACs are not the only structures states may employ to coordinate programs and services for young children. Effective ECACs should complement and coordinate with existing efforts, such as children's cabinets, P-20 councils, public-private partnerships, and/or other early childhood entities. Councils also need to determine how they relate to the

governance structures that exist within the state government. These include the stand-alone departments for early childhood, such as the early childhood agencies in **Georgia**, **Massachusetts**, and **Washington**, as well as the multiple offices, divisions or departments that exist within the education, public health, and human services agencies in other states.

Governors can enhance the effectiveness of the councils by defining a vision, articulating action steps that will help achieve the vision, and monitoring the progress of the council. In **Arizona**, with leadership from the Governor's Office, the School Readiness Board created a five-year action plan in 2005 to ensure that all children start first grade safe, healthy, and ready to succeed. When a voter initiative to increase funding for early childhood was passed in 2006, this new board was charged with continuing to carry out the priorities of the action plan. Every year, the *First Things First* board makes a progress report to the governor and the legislature.

Governors can ensure that an early childhood advisory council becomes an effective tool for improving supports and services for young children by asking the councils to define and measure progress. Ideally, councils will identify and track the state progress toward desired systems outcomes as well as desired outcomes for children and families. Using clearly defined indicators makes the progress (or lack of progress) easy to understand and communicate to stakeholders.

How should the council be established?

The 2007 Head Start Act designates the governor as the person who will establish or designate the advisory council. Even if the governor decides to build on existing entities, the Head Start Act is an opportunity to show leadership by improving on what already exists. For example, **Utah** Governor Huntsman issued an executive order in June 2007 to establish the Governor's Child and Family Cabinet Council, which includes the Governor's Early Childhood Commission.

Governors can establish councils through executive order, statute, or a memorandum of understanding (MOU). While it may be more expedient to issue an executive order or expand the mission of existing entities through an MOU, it also means the council may not exist beyond the tenure of the current governor. Working with the legislature to codify the council in law may give it permanency and help sustain its work.

Regardless of the mechanism, the authorizing language must convey the authority the council will need to work across organizational structures to promote a coordinated system of early childhood development. Some of this authority will stem from where the council is located. Turf battles are common, so governors will want to carefully consider whether to designate a lead agency, designate co-leads, create a public-private partnership, keep the council within the governor's office, or some combination of these options. In **Michigan**, the power of the public-private Early Childhood Investment Corporation comes from a formal agreement between the state's human service agency and participating local school districts.

Who should be on the council?

As the chief executive officer of state government, governors are in a unique position to promote collaboration across state agencies. Leadership from the governor can be the decisive factor for ensuring that top administrators are actively engaged as members of the council from the start. Leadership from key agencies is critical for producing a more coordinated and comprehensive system of supports for young children.

The authorizing mechanism of the ECAC should define the membership of the council, and it should represent all services and agencies that touch the lives of young children. Unfortunately, the list of stakeholders can be overwhelming. Membership on existing councils ranges from a core group of 8-10 individuals, to more than 30 representatives. Members can include health/mental health; education (Head Start, child care, early intervention, prekindergarten, and K-12); social services (TANF, foster care, home visiting, family resource centers, parenting education); the judicial system; legislators; business leaders; child care or Head Start providers; parents; and advocates. The 2007 Head Start Act identifies a minimum of nine individuals but also acknowledges that the governor may want to add additional members.

While there are many early childhood stakeholders, councils that are too big can be difficult to manage. Effective councils find a balance between being inclusive and keeping the size manageable (no more than 30 people). Some of the larger councils have developed an extensive subcommittee structure and a small leadership team that reports to the governor. In **Illinois**, the Early Learning Council created five subcommittees and two “cross-committees” that work across the subcommittees.³

Finally, the authorizing mechanism for the council should define who will staff the council and allocate appropriate resources for the task. Good communication is the foundation of effective collaborations. Staff is needed to schedule meetings, take and distribute meeting minutes, and perform the work necessary to inform the decisions made by the council. Some state agencies already have staff who can be a resource for the council—such as the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grantee or the Interagency Child Care Coordinating Committee Chair. Sharing the staffing responsibilities among agencies or divisions may even encourage cross-systems collaboration. Regardless of where staff sit, having staff dedicated to the day-to-day functions of the council will improve the communication necessary for effective collaboration. In **Arizona**, up to 10 percent of the *First Things First* tax revenue may be used to support administrative costs, including staff positions for the oversight board.

What resources are available to support the development of state councils?

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act passed in 2007 includes one-time startup grants to be awarded on a competitive basis to fund the activities of the council. Funding for the start-up grants resulted from increases to the Head Start appropriation, which happened with the \$1.1 billion increase through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In May 2009 the Department of Health and Human Services released letters to the nation’s governors detailing the process for states to apply for federal grant funding to support the councils. The deadline for these one-time start-up grants is August 1, 2010 and state applications will be available at: <http://www.grants.gov/>.

The federal share of these grants will be no less than \$500,000 per state or 30 percent of total funding for the council. As a result, states must provide a 70 percent match to receive the federal funds. There is no waiver authority for this requirement. The non-federal match amount may be in cash or in-kind contributions, including but not limited to: investments in early childhood education and development programs, professional development of the early childhood workforce, in-kind contributions of real property, equipment and supplies, as well as services provided by state employees, consultants, and ECAC members with direct and tangible benefits for the ECAC.

³ For more information and the charges and expectations of the committees, see “New Illinois Early Learning Council Committee Priorities and Structure” at http://www.illinois.gov/gov/elc/reports/ELC_New_Committees.pdf.

The three year grant application must include:

- A statewide strategic report addressing the activities of the ECAC;
- A fiscal planning document that details, for each year of the proposed grant, how the state will improve school readiness through developing or enhancing programs and activities that are consistent with the statewide strategic plan;
- A description of the state's early learning standards and the goals for increasing the number of children entering kindergarten ready to learn;
- Identification of the agency or joint interagency office and the individual designated by the Governor to lead the ECAC; and
- A description of state sustainability planning after the duration of the grant.

To be eligible for grant funds, the governor shall designate or establish a council to serve as the ECAC for children from birth to school entry and identify an individual to coordinate the activities of the ECAC. The governor may designate an existing entity in the state to serve as the ECAC and is encouraged to include as many members as identified in the legislation as possible.

What does the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act mean for the councils?

The increase in funding for Head Start in the 2009 ARRA means funds are now available for the one-time startup grants to establish councils. In order to be eligible for funding, governors will have to establish a council in order to comply with the requirements outlined in the Head Start Act. For more information on the requirements, see "*What are the federal requirements for the council?*"

In addition to providing funding for the councils, ARRA provides new opportunities for councils to better coordinate services so that young children have the supports in place that they need. For example, governors can use the councils to:

- *Invest stimulus funding strategically.* Data collected from statewide needs assessments, and aligned to a state's comprehensive vision for healthy early childhood development, can help identify where the biggest gaps in early childhood programs exist and inform strategic allocation of funding.
- *Reinforce the importance of collaboration.* The ECAC can identify and oversee early childhood investments that complement state efforts to develop a coordinated cross-sector system of supports for young children. Leadership from the governor can be the decisive factor in ensuring the ECAC utilizes stimulus dollars in ways that do not simply strengthen traditional funding and program silos. ECACs can work closely with their state departments of Education, Health, and Human Services to coordinate the use of provisions in programs such as Title I, Part C of IDEA, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), Medicaid, and child welfare services (Title IV-E and IV-B). State ECACs can play a critical role in promoting collaboration across the agencies that administer these programs.
- *Identify sustainable investment strategies.* Governors can charge the ECAC with ensuring funds are invested in a manner that is sustainable beyond the next few years. For example, investment in infrastructure that promotes quality, such as professional development systems, and quality rating and improvement systems.

Some states have created or designated agencies, task forces, or offices to oversee the use of all stimulus funds. ECACs should have a clear channel of communication with these entities to ensure accountability and transparency of stimulus spending in early childhood. Taking time in the immediate future to ensure there is clear communication among these entities can promote wise investment decisions in the long-term.

Appendix

As reflected in the state examples below, there is no one-size-fits-all model for creating an early childhood advisory council (ECAC). The best model will depend on the unique characteristics of the state, including the current organization of early childhood programs within state agencies, the history of existing early childhood advisory bodies, the leadership of key policymakers, and the motivation for all entities to collaborate.

Arizona, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Utah are four of many state examples of effective ECACs.

Arizona

ECAC Name

[Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board/*First Things First*](#)

Authorization

Ballot initiative (Proposition 203, *First Things First for Arizona's Children*)

Role and Authority

In November 2006, Arizona voters passed Proposition 203, also known as *First Things First*, a citizen's initiative that funds quality early childhood development and health through a new 80-cent tax on tobacco products. The proposition created a new state-level board known as the Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board/*First Things First*, which will oversee the distribution of an estimated \$150 million in tax revenues each year. The mission of *First Things First* is to increase the quality of and access to early childhood programs that ensure children entering school arrive healthy and ready to succeed. At least 90 percent of the funding will support grants to regional councils to meet local needs and statewide grants to support the infrastructure for early childhood quality and professional development.

The Early Childhood Development and Health Board/*First Things First* integrated the Arizona School Readiness Action Plan, previously developed in 2005 by the Arizona School Readiness Board (SRB), into their framework for action and convened workgroups on health, professional development and quality to pick up where the SRB workgroups left off. *First Things First* has already implemented statewide initiatives for a quality improvement and rating system, child care health consultation, professional development scholarships, parent kits for families of newborns, and a public awareness campaign to build support and commitment for early childhood. Regional initiatives include strategies for home visitation programs and other family support programs, expansion of access and improved quality in early care and education settings, and preventive healthcare and screenings.

Membership

The nine governor-appointed voting members of the Early Childhood Development and Health Board represent early childhood policy, higher education, philanthropy, the judiciary, business, and tribal communities. There are also three ex-officio members representing the state departments of Health, Economic Security, and Education. Stakeholders from child care, public schools, the faith community, the medical community, parents, philanthropy, business, and advocacy are represented on the 31 regional councils statewide.

Staffing and Funding

Up to 10 percent of the *First Things First* tax revenue may be used to support administrative costs, including staff positions for Executive Director and Deputy Director, and administration, communications, finance,

evaluation, policy and research and regional council administration. The remaining 90 percent support regional and statewide grants.

Connecticut

ECAC Name

[Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet \(ECE Cabinet\)](#)

[Governor’s Early Childhood Research and Policy Council \(ECRP Council\)](#)

Authorization

ECE Cabinet: Legislation (2005); *ECRP Council:* Executive order (February 2006)

Role and Authority

ECE Cabinet: In 2005 Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell championed legislation creating an Early Childhood Education Cabinet charged with developing a multiyear early childhood investment framework (“Ready by Five, Fine by Nine”) and plan (“CT Early Childhood Investment Plan, Part I”). The ECE Cabinet also has statutory authority to develop a comprehensive early childhood system for young children; a results-based accountability plan; and plans for an Early Childhood Information System, ECE workforce development, and preK facility expansion.

ECRP Council: In February 2006, Governor Rell issued an executive order to create the Governor's Early Childhood Research and Policy Council, a 31-member panel consisting of public and private leaders. The ECRP Council was charged with cost-modeling the investment priorities from the cabinet’s investment framework and monitoring the state’s progress toward its goals. The ECRP Council also advises the ECE Cabinet on research findings, policy solutions, and strategic financing opportunities related to early childhood investments. It develops cost scenarios and possible financing strategies and will set a research agenda through the Early Childhood Research Network.

Membership

ECE Cabinet: Members of the ECE Cabinet include the governor’s designee; leaders of the major state agencies and the state Office of Policy & Management; four legislators; and one representative each from the Connecticut School Readiness Council, the Connecticut Commission on Children, and the Head Start Association. The cabinet is co-chaired by the governor’s designee and the commissioner of education.

ECRP Council: The governor appoints the ECRP Council’s 31 members who represent philanthropy, business, higher education, K-12, municipal leadership, the workforce and economic development sectors, and the legislature’s appropriations and finance committee. Four members of the cabinet also serve on the council. The council is co-chaired by the president of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, the executive director of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, and the commissioner of higher education.

Staffing and Funding

ECE Cabinet: The Office of the Cabinet employs three full time staff and engages several consulting organizations, all overseen by the governor’s designee. The ECE Cabinet’s current annual appropriation is \$4 million, of which \$400,000 funds ECE Cabinet support; \$100,000 funds council support; \$625,000 is allocated for community capacity grants and support for parent leadership; \$1.3 million is for early care and education quality improvement efforts; \$675,000 is for accountability, data improvements, and research; \$500,000 is for

preschool expansion support; and \$75,000 is for strategic communications development. In addition, the ECE Cabinet has leveraged private co-investment exceeding \$1.8 million in the current fiscal year.

ECRP Council: With funding from the ECE Cabinet, the nonprofit Connecticut Economic Resource Center staffs and provides technical assistance to the ECRP Council.

Pennsylvania

ECAC Name

The Early Learning Council
The Early Learning Investment Commission

Authorization

[Early Learning Council: Executive Order, September 11, 2008.](#)

[Early Learning Investment Commission: Executive Order, September 11, 2008.](#)

Role and Authority

Early Learning Council (ELC): The purpose of the Early Learning Council is to plan for the expansion of effective early learning and development services for young children and their families and make recommendations to ensure the plans are implemented successfully. The council provides input to the executive branch to coordinate delivery of federal and state programs that serve young children from birth through their entry into school and to ensure a smooth transition for those children into K-12 education and other programs serving older children.

Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC): The Early Learning Investment Commission engages Pennsylvania's business leaders and is designed to raise their awareness and action around the importance of early education for children, community, and the economy. This group also will stimulate communication about the importance of public investment in early childhood care and education among business stakeholders, business leaders, and Pennsylvania's elected officials. The commission recommends and carries out strategies for involving business and state leaders in early education planning and advocacy.

Membership

Early Learning Council: The Early Learning Council members include representatives of educational and early childhood organizations, higher education, local government, law enforcement agencies, and the media. Members of the council serve three-year terms. Early Learning Investment Commission members, also selected to serve three-year terms, will include business leaders as well as the secretaries of Education, Public Welfare, Community and Economic Development, Budget, and Planning and Policy. The chair of the ELC and the co-chair (the deputy secretary for OCDEL) also serve on the ELIC, see below, and likewise, the ELIC, appoints a member to the ELC.

Early Learning Investment Commission: Members serve three-year terms, are exclusively leaders from the business sector as well as well as the secretaries of Education, Public Welfare, Community and Economic Development, Budget, and Planning and Policy, and the deputy secretary, Office of Child Development and

early Learning, who is co-chair of the ELC and member of the ELIC. The ELIC appoints a member to the ELC.

Staffing and Funding

The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), which was established by Executive Board as a shared office of both the departments of Education and Public Welfare, is designed through the executive orders to provide staff and support services to both the Early Learning Council and the Early Learning Investment Commission. OCDEL has a staff of over 180 people, and oversees in excess of \$1.3 billion in appropriations for early childhood services in PA. The OCDEL deputy secretary is the co-chair of the Early Learning Council and a member of the ELIC. Additional staffing to the Early Learning Investment Commission is provided through a privately funded position.

Utah

ECAC Name

Governor's Early Childhood Commission

Authorization

Executive order ("Governor's Executive Order 2007")

Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr. issued an executive order in June 2007 to establish the Governor's Child and Family Cabinet Council, within which the Governor's Early Childhood Commission is housed.

Role and Authority

The Early Childhood Commission's role is to provide strategic direction to state and community leaders to achieve the vision that all children in Utah will have access to family support, community resources, and educational opportunities that promote positive and healthy development, academic success, and future economic stability. Through a collaborative process culminating in a Governor's Summit on Early Childhood in April 2008, the Early Childhood Commission created a five-year state action plan that will inform the governor's early childhood priorities, steer policy directions of executive agency leaders, and spur action among private sector and community level stakeholders. Governor Huntsman will hold annual Early Childhood Summits to chart the progress of the Commission.

Membership

Members of the Governor's Early Childhood Commission include leaders representing public education; higher education; the state departments of Health, Human Services, and Work Force Services; the business community; legislators; local government; private foundations; civic organizations; private advocacy groups; local providers; and the early childhood practitioner and child advocacy communities.

Staffing and Funding

The Governor's Early Childhood Commission is currently staffed through the governor's office and does not have a separate operating budget. However, new funding and staffing arrangements are under consideration.