

Selecting an Approach to Governance: Choices and Considerations Related to Form, Function, and Durability

Part I: Cross-State Analysis
Part II: Individual State Case Studies

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Part I: Cross-State Analysis

As states engage in the critically important work of building an early childhood system, inevitably there are decisions that need to be made about the governance of such a system and its attendant elements. These decisions are undergirded by a state’s cultural context, its political climate, and the history of services and funding for young children. Comprising the foundation for governance, context and climate in states have informed important choices about the *form* that its governance structure will take, about the *functions* accorded to that structure, and about the *durability* of that structure. In this analysis, we present findings from an exploration of six states’ approaches to governance: Arizona (AZ), Colorado (CO), Iowa (IA), Pennsylvania (PA), Maryland (MD), and North Carolina (NC).

Each of these states’ approaches to governance falls into one of two categories. Two states—Maryland and Pennsylvania—have chosen a state-level consolidated approach to governance, where most functions related to the early childhood system fall under one administrative structure. The remaining four states—Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, and North Carolina—have chosen a regional approach to governance, whereby most of the functions of governance are decentralized and, thus, authority for early childhood programs and services is devolved to sub-state entities, and administered by these entities at the regional level. We found that the differences in states’ approaches to governance results in different amalgamations of funding-streams and programs, differences in the scope of services covered by each governance entity, different degrees of local involvement in governance, and differences in how programs are implemented. Each of these differences embraces a set of issues that any state or region interested in developing an approach to governance might want to consider as it tailors its governance structure to its context and needs.

The intent of this cross-case analysis is not only to inform others about what has been happening and continues to happen in states regarding governance of early childhood, but to leverage the “lessons learned” from each state for the purpose of providing information on governance options and issues to consider in the governance decision-making process. Given these purposes, we have organized this document thematically, rendering different “considerations” resulting from our analysis of the approaches to governance that exist in these six states.

I. Definitions

Governance itself is a concept that remains rather cloudy to many in the field of early childhood. The term “governance” is used in many different contexts: for example, it has been used in a narrow context to refer to the management of an individual early childhood program or set of programs, like Head Start; more broadly, governance has been used to describe the actions of groups of stakeholders who serve in an advisory capacity over a program or system, as in

many states' Early Childhood Advisory Councils. We define governance here as the mechanism through which a state ensures that programs and funding streams are managed to promote the efficiency, equity, and quality of early childhood services (Kagan & Kauerz, 2008). Governance has three main characteristics, each of which combines to constitute a state's *approach* to governance. The first characteristic is *form*, otherwise known as the structure of the administrative entity or entities that are imbued with the authority and responsibility for managing a set of programs and funding streams (note that graphic depictions of each state's form have been included with each individual case study in Part II of this document). The second characteristic is *function*, which we define as the actions and roles that a particular governance entity is charged with carrying out. Functions of governance include, for example, the authority to allocate and distribute funding; or, the ability to collect and analyze data on a particular program or system element, like professional development. The third characteristic of governance is *durability*. We define durability as the degree of permanency of the structure and its functions. Stated simply, a state's approach to governance is durable if it has the ability to withstand shifts in the political and economic climate in a particular state. States' approaches to governance are considered durable, for example, if they are instantiated in legislation.

In exploring the approaches to governance selected by the six states profiled in this analysis, we have noted that we distinguish between two types of approaches. The first type is a *consolidated* approach to governance wherein, as we noted above, functions are centralized at the state-level and are subsumed under the authority of one administrative entity. The second type is a *regionalized* approach to governance, in which the functions are decentralized and split across entities that exist at different levels (i.e., some functions occur at the state-level, others occur at the sub-state level). Figure 1 provides an illustration of governance as we have defined it for this analysis.

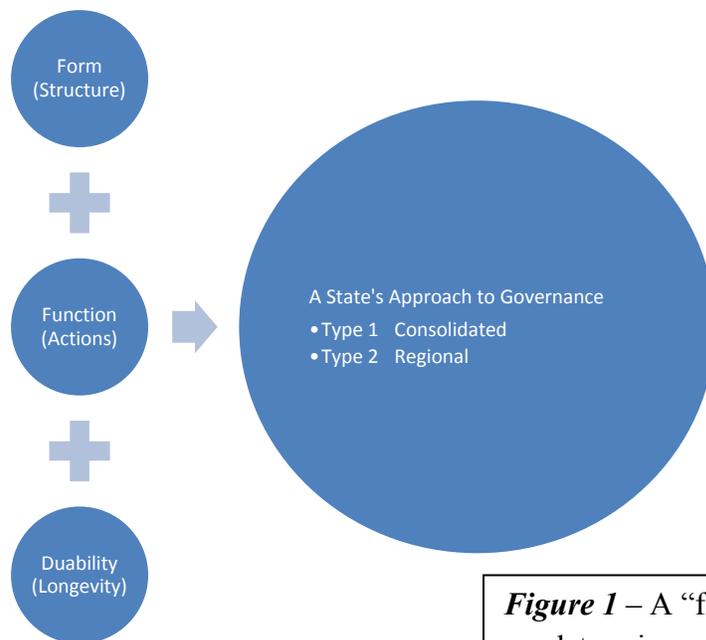


Figure 1 – A “formula” for how we determine a state’s approach to governance

II. Considerations Regarding State Culture and Values

In many states, the choice to focus on governance was undergirded by several contextual factors. These factors included: (i) a political climate that was favorable for creating a coherent approach to early care and education (ECE) governance, as was the case in Pennsylvania and Arizona; (ii) the culture and values regarding the role of government in providing services to young children and their families, as was the case in North Carolina and Iowa; and (iii) the historical context of early childhood programs and services in the state, as was the case in Maryland. These contexts dictated, as we illustrate here, the decision to focus on governance, as well as choices about the type of approach that would best suit the state.

A. The Importance of the Political Context

In Arizona and Pennsylvania, the political context was the key factor in successfully implementing a governance approach in each state. Though these two states have different types of approaches, they are similar in that they each had leaders who capitalized on the political context of the time in order to push governance as an important issue for the ECE field. In Arizona, the foundation for First Things First (FTF) was laid by Governor Napolitano, when she created a state-level council for early childhood. This council sparked interest among those in the business community regarding early childhood which led to the ballot initiative for FTF that was spearheaded by a prominent business-leader. Similarly, in Pennsylvania, Governor Rendell, who, as mayor of Philadelphia, had a history of supporting early childhood, was already aware of the benefits of investing in early childhood and, thus, was open to the idea of strengthening ECE service-provision statewide via the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL).

B. The Importance of the Cultural Context

North Carolina and Iowa's regional approaches to governance grew out of a long history of democratic localism and a commitment to grassroots advocacy. These traditions of community engagement at the local level are not only applicable to ECE in these states, but are also indicative of North Carolinian and Iowan values about government generally. In North Carolina, for instance, our interviewee stressed the importance of the county as a jurisdictional unit of government. Services are largely carried out at the county level, including the court system, school systems, and law enforcement. As such, when developing Smart Start, its approach to governance, North Carolina chose a regionalized structure, which devolved many of its functions for early childhood to the county-level. North Carolinians felt that a more centralized approach to governance would create too much distance between those doing the work of governing and the programs and systems that they were trying to manage. Over time, these functions have become more regionalized, but the regional partnerships were originated at the county-level. Similarly, in Iowa, the Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) Boards, which are the primary unit through which ECE services are governed, exist at the county-level. Some Area Boards comprise several counties, but the emphasis is on local governance as a way of keeping

services efficient and as “non-bureaucratic” as possible. Stakeholders involved in developing ECI felt it was important to create an approach to governance that allowed for high levels of local engagement with the public and with the legislators.

C. The Importance of the Historical Context

Historically, early childhood services in Maryland were plagued by a great deal of fragmentation, scarce funding, and lack of broad-based supports for improving the quality of early childhood programs in the state. After a series of deep cuts to early childhood services within the Department of Human Services took place in 2003 and 2004, advocates and ECE practitioners pressed the state to focus on governance. Advocates specifically supported a consolidated state-level approach to governance, where all functions for ECE were subsumed under the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), because the Chief State School Officer (CSSO) had historically been supportive of ECE in the state. Additionally, advocates thought that subsuming all ECE services under the MSDE would more closely align ECE with K-12 services, creating a seamless system for all children, birth through grade 12. The combination of the challenging historical context for ECE and a CSSO who had expressed interest in and support for strengthening ECE in the state, then, was the impetus for consolidation.

Colorado has had regional councils that focused on issues related to young children and their families for a little over a decade. These regional councils first came into existence in 1997, and they have been instrumental in moving forward the amount and quality of early childhood services in the state. Our findings from Colorado indicate that these councils catalyzed local interest and investment in early childhood and, as a result, began to advance the field of early childhood in the state (Early Childhood Councils Act, 2007). When Colorado began to focus on its state-level apparatus for governance of ECE, these councils were identified as an important pillar of the ECE field, and as a vehicle for enabling the delivery of local services and funds to young children and their families.

As evidenced by these states’ choices about governance, the context in which ECE exists in the state—cultural, political, and historical—matters. These contexts matter not only in determining how and when to push governance as an issue, but also in selecting the best approach to governance for the state.

III. Considerations Regarding Form/Structure

In developing an approach to governance, it is important to think about form; considerations about what the administrative entity (or entities, if it is a regionalized approach) will look like, where within state government it might be housed, and whether governance will consist of non-governmental entities in addition to governmental entities, are all important decisions to be made. We divide considerations regarding form into two categories. First, we attend to issues related to federalism, otherwise known as the allocation of authority between

state and regional entities. In the four states with regional approaches to governance, authority is split between the state-level entities and regional structures; this suggests that as states consider their governance options, important decisions need to be made about which level of government will be imbued with the authority to make decisions. Second, we attend to issues related to scope, or the services and programs for which the administrative entity will have responsibility. States have made different decisions regarding scope, but we found that the consolidated approach to governance yielded a wider scope of services and regional approaches yielded a more narrow scope of services.

A. Federalism

Federalism is defined as the allocation of powers between levels of government, and is germane to states that have chosen or are thinking about adopting an approach to governance. A political concept, federalism can also be understood as a covenant among a group or groups of individuals with a representative “head.” States that have adopted either a regional or consolidated approach to governance have imbued the state-level administrative entity with the authority to act as that representative “head.” Issues related to federalism (e.g., at which level of government to allocate authority, where within government the representative head will lie, and how much authority the head will have) apply to both types of governance approaches, though it is markedly more apparent in regional approaches to governance, where some functions are maintained at the state-level and others have been devolved to the sub-state level. While still present in states with consolidated approaches to governance, the distribution of authority between state and sub-state entities is much less pronounced; in these states, the form of governance dictates that the authority for most of the functions is housed at the state level. Still, a state’s approach to governance determines how much authority the “head” will have to represent and govern the ECE system and its constituents; as such, federalism and the allocation of powers are important to think about irrespective of which approach to governance a state might choose.

In determining the approach to governance a state might take, considerations about form are essential and very much tied to issues of federalism. If a consolidated approach to governance is chosen, states need to consider how services to their constituents will be carried out and how access to those services will be provided at the local level. Regional approaches to governance lower the distance between the representative head and its constituents by allocating powers to sub-state entities and charging them with the responsibility of service delivery. If a regional approach to governance is chosen, states will need to think about what the structure of governance will look like at the state level, what the structure will look like at the sub-state level, and what the relationship between these two levels of structures will be. Furthermore, in developing a regional approach to governance, states will need to decide at which level of government which precise functions of governance will be carried out.

In the states we examined that had adopted regionalized approaches to governance, the form these approaches have taken is similar, delineating clearly between state-level structures and their associated functions, and the sub-state structures and their associated functions. There is also a formal connection between the state and sub-state entities, in that the state-level structures carry out functions related to oversight of the sub-state entities.

State-Level Structures. Each of the four states with regional approaches to governance has a state-level structure that provides oversight to the sub-state structures. Arizona, Iowa, and North Carolina each have two entities that operate at the state level and both entities are responsible for the oversight of several sub-state entities. In Iowa and Arizona, the two state-level entities are (1) a state board, which is supported by (2) a within-government office. In Iowa, the Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) state board is supported by the state's Office of Empowerment; and, in Arizona, the First Things First (FTF) board is supported by the First Things First state office, which is composed of individuals who are employees from other state offices. In these states, there is a horizontal organizational structure, in which the state board and the state office both report to the governor and legislature. More specifically, the state offices support the boards, but do not report directly to these boards. The state office staff in Iowa report to the governor and the legislature, whereas in Arizona the state office staff report to the governor only. In both cases, the state offices also provide technical assistance and funds directly to the sub-state entities, making more pronounced the horizontal structure.

North Carolina's Smart Start also has two entities responsible for governance at the state level. The North Carolina structure, however, is slightly different from that of Arizona and Iowa in that there is a vertical relationship between the state board and the state office. The state board is accountable to the legislature and governor, and provides oversight to the state office, the North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC), which is a non-governmental agency. Furthermore, the board has the authority to distribute funding only to the NCPC, and the NCPC office distributes funding to the sub-state entities; as such, there is no interaction between the state board and the sub-state entities in North Carolina.

Colorado's structure differs from the structures adopted by Arizona, Iowa, and North Carolina in that there is no state-level board devoted to oversight of the sub-state entities. Rather, the Office of Early Childhood and Youth Development (OECYD) is a state-level governmental entity that oversees the sub-state entities. The OECYD is located within the Colorado Department of Human Services, which falls under the governor's purview. In addition to providing oversight of and technical assistance to the sub-state entities, the OECYD is charged with oversight of seven programs and their associated funding streams. These programs are targeted in nature, and do not encompass all of the ECE functions or funding streams in the state. They, for example, provide child care subsidies to families, early childhood mental health supports, and regulatory oversight of ECE programs.

Sub-state Structures. In Colorado, Iowa, Arizona, and North Carolina, the sub-state entities are the primary operational entities, in that they receive funds from the state level, and then use these funds flexibly within a set of parameters authorized by the state entities. In Colorado, the sub-state entities are called Early Childhood Councils. In Iowa, the sub-state entities are called Area Boards; in Arizona, they are called Regional Councils; and in North Carolina, they are called regional Smart Start Partnerships. In all four of these states, the sub-state entities are responsible for service delivery to their designated catchment area; these catchment areas are geographically organized and consist of two or more counties. In each state, these regional entities have the authority to make decisions regarding how to use the state and federal funding that they have been awarded, and are empowered to engage in local capacity-building and quality-improvement activities. For example, the Regional Councils and Regional Partnerships in Arizona and North Carolina oversee the implementation of the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System, and in Iowa, the Area Boards provide professional development to the early childhood workforce. In Colorado, the Early Childhood Councils oversee several services related to early childhood including, for example, parent engagement activities. In each state, the sub-state entities are designed to maintain a short distance between the governance entity and those whom it is designed to serve.

It is important to note that the design, the *form*, of these regional approaches to governance creates a multi-level structure that accords most of the governing authority to the sub-state level; the decentralized structure enables them to provide services to the local community more quickly and to make decisions that take into account local context and needs. While these entities can deliver services quickly, it is important to emphasize that their jurisdiction is limited, rather than comprehensive. This is perhaps because the scope of the regional governance approach in these four states is narrower than in those states with state-level consolidated approaches to governance.

B. Scope and States' Choices of Creating Internal or External Structures to Manage Different Degrees of Scope

The issue of scope is essential to consider when thinking about the form a state's approach to governance will take. While the scope of services provided by each of the six states we include in this analysis differs, we find that consolidated state-level approaches to governance tend to have a larger set of responsibilities resulting from a larger domain of purview over the ECE system, while regional approaches tend to have a narrower scope of services. We also note that consolidated state-level approaches to governance attend to the issue of scope by creating *internal* sub-structures which carry out different functions. Regional approaches, in contrast, have created the *external* sub-state structures we describe above to carry out the designated functions.

In the states with consolidated approaches to governance, the scope of programs and funding streams housed within the administrative structure is broad and encompasses most of the

services related to early childhood. In Pennsylvania, for example, the “hybrid” structure of OCDEL, through which the office is accountable to both the Secretaries of Education and Welfare, means that all early childhood services and funding streams that were once fragmented in each Department have now been funneled into a single structure which has internal sub-structures, each with different domains of purview. The creation of sub-structures within the consolidated structure seems to enable states to carry out a wider scope of functions, while still maintaining clear lines of authority and accountability for these functions.

Within OCDEL, there are four bureaus and one fiscal unit. The bureaus, or the internal sub-structures of OCDEL, are the Bureau of Early Learning Services, the Bureau of Certification, the Bureau of Early Intervention, and the Bureau of Subsidized Services. Each Bureau has a different domain of authority and carries out different functions. The Bureau of Early Learning, for example, is responsible for oversight of several aspects of the ECE system, including oversight of the QRIS, data collection on child outcomes, and setting the levels of qualification necessary for the ECE workforce. The Bureau of Certification oversees the licensing functions, insuring regulatory compliance of ECE programs in the state with health and safety regulations. The fiscal unit is responsible for monitoring the distribution and use of funds by each of the Bureaus. The fact that each of these bureaus is housed *within* OCDEL means that OCDEL oversees virtually all early childhood functions in the Commonwealth. Maryland’s governance structure is similarly broad in scope and has its own set of internal sub-structures; all early childhood services within the state, with the exception of early intervention, are housed within the Division of Early Childhood in the State Department of Education.

The forms that typify a regional approach to government tend to have a smaller scope of services, with “governance” for early childhood comprising some functions (e.g., QRIS, subsidy administration, parent engagement, or gap-filling) but not others. Interviewees from Iowa, Arizona, and North Carolina acknowledge that the scope of services allowed by these governance structures was indeed narrower, but that this was done by design. There is a feeling in these states that a narrower scope of services is more pragmatic, and enables a higher degree of efficiency and effectiveness at the local level. Furthermore, in Iowa and Arizona, interviewees note that, during the phase in which the state was developing the vision for governance, many individuals felt that the preexisting structures, through which services like subsidy administration and early intervention were delivered from the state-level to the local-level, were working well. Thus, there was no need to create a super-structure to override already effective sub-state structures.

Another important consideration related to scope is that the scope of the governance structure may change over time. We found that this occurred in all of the states on which we focused, regardless of the type of approach to governance that was adopted. In Pennsylvania, for example, the original structure of OCDEL did not include the Bureau of Early Intervention, but as OCDEL began its system-building work, it became apparent that Early Intervention services were still siloed and not well-coordinated at the state and local levels. OCDEL staff believed

Early Intervention services would improve if the Bureau were integrated into the OCDEL structure. OCDEL now has purview over the range of services provided to children birth through age five. In Arizona, every two years, the FTF state board develops strategic priorities and examines the boundaries of each regional council. These two activities could very well determine the scope of governance if, for example, additional strategic priorities are identified, or if councils need to be added, reorganized, or dissolved.

IV. Considerations Regarding Function

We have discussed the functions of governance as being the roles and actions carried out within the governance form. The functions of governance can be described in a series of action verbs: the purpose of governance is to *monitor* programs, to *allocate* funds and *authorize* spending, to *collect* data, and so on. In exploring the governance functions of the states included in this analysis, we observed that each type of governance approach rendered one of two ***conditions*** in which functions would be carried out; these conditions helped or hindered certain governance functions: proximity or consistency. The conditions created by regional approaches include a high degree of proximity between those providing the service and those being served. Consolidated approaches, on the other hand, render conditions that afford a higher degree of consistency in how functions are carried out.

A. Condition Created by Regional Approaches: “Proximity”

The regional approach to governance yields, in Arizona, Iowa, and North Carolina, a low level of distance between the governance apparatus and those it purports to serve. Interviewees stated that this low level of distance or, as one interviewee called it, “proximity,” was important because it enabled the governance functions to be carried out with a great deal of responsiveness and efficiency. Rather than having to navigate a large bureaucratic structure, or determine how to carry out functions for an entire state, the regional approach enables the councils/boards/partnerships to execute governance functions with a great deal of flexibility, responsiveness, and efficiency. Moreover, the regional approach empowers local control and decision-making in terms of fiscal and programmatic management, while freeing up the state-level entities to work on things that do not require a great deal of “proximity,” like monitoring or evaluative activities.

Low distance or proximity also yields greater degree of public and, in some cases, like North Carolina and Iowa, political will. Legislators in these two states are in favor of a regionalized approach to governance and service delivery, because they can see directly the impact of the services on their constituents. This visibility, in turn, creates greater local support for governance and for the ECE system overall.

B. Challenges Related to Decentralizing Functions of Governance

It is important to note that there are certain challenges raised by an approach to governance that devolves functions to the sub-state level. First, there is a great deal of unevenness in how sub-state councils approach their work and on which programmatic and fiscal management functions they focus. Some councils, for instance, focus largely on issues related to child health, while some are focusing on building their professional development system and improving the quality of their workforce. In Arizona, this ability to divert funds to a particular area of need is part of the intent of the state's regionalized approach to governance, but it has created so much inconsistency that the state board is actually developing benchmarks to bring regional councils into alignment (i.e., the state board is now striving to replicate the consistency that is inherent in many of the consolidated approaches to governance). Furthermore, one interviewee in Arizona noted that the diversity among councils in the functions carried out has created silos of the councils rather than encouraging systems-thinking and collaboration among the councils.

A second challenge of a regional approach relates to collaboration and cooperation among regional councils and across sectors. One of the functions carried out by state-level consolidated governance structures is to assure that there is collaboration among the various sectors for whom the entity has oversight. Collaboration, both among councils and with other organizations and service providers within each council's region, continues to be difficult to achieve.

C. Condition Created by Consolidated Approaches: "Consistency"

While the regional approach to governance enables functions to be carried out quickly, and imbues the governance structure with a great deal of flexibility in choosing how functions are operationalized, the consolidated approach creates the conditions for a high degree of consistency in implementation of programs and services.

The consolidated approaches to governance in Pennsylvania and Maryland have yielded a great deal of consistency in how functions are carried out, and this has resulted in a greater capacity of the governance apparatus to carry out functions like data collection and evaluation. For instance, OCDEL, in carrying out its function as a standard-setter for the state, has created sets of standards for children, standards for ECE programs, and standards for teacher qualifications. Using these standards as a baseline for programs, OCDEL has now begun to collect data on each of these three groups (children, programs, and teachers) via its statewide data collection system, PELICAN. The state uses the data collected to hold programs accountable and to divert funding where it is needed (e.g., additional investment in workforce supports to help teachers meet the minimum qualifications). The consistency in the data collected statewide results in an increased capacity to meet the needs of those served by the governance apparatus.

Another benefit rendered by consistency is equity. Young children in Maryland and Pennsylvania benefit by getting similar experiences in early education settings. These experiences are undergirded by a uniform set of standards (i.e., early learning standards, program standards, and standards for teacher qualifications) and expectations. States often struggle with balancing equity of ECE services (i.e., increasing access to ECE experiences) with quality (i.e., improving the quality of those ECE services). The data from states with consolidated approaches to governance illustrate that they support a dual focus of increasing access to ECE programs and services while also improving the quality of such programs and services (Kagan, Gomez, & Friedlander, 2010; OCDEL, 2011).

As illustrated by our discussion regarding governance functions, different approaches to governance will yield different conditions in which these functions will be carried out. States will need to weigh the desire for proximity and flexibility that results from a regional approach against the desire for consistency and the increased statewide capacity that results from a consolidated approach to governance.

V. Considerations Regarding Durability

We note in our section on definitions the importance of durability to the effectiveness of governance. Our analysis yields two different dimensions of durability—direct and indirect—through which an approach to governance can be imbued with durability. Direct durability can be achieved by mechanisms that legally insure the longevity of a governance approach, like legislation. Indirect durability can be achieved by building public support or political will that is substantial enough that it would be difficult to dismantle the governance structure without sparking a public outcry. While direct durability is preferable, in that it insulates the governance structure from political pressures, as it has done in Arizona, Iowa, North Carolina, and Maryland, indirect durability is also useful, as is the case in Pennsylvania.

Direct mechanisms for ensuring durability include a legislative mandate, as was done in Iowa, North Carolina, and Maryland; or a ballot initiative, as was done in Arizona. These two approaches, while being highly durable, do take time and effort. Less durable, though faster and requiring less broad-based support, is the option to create the governance structure using a third direct mechanism—the executive order, as was done in Pennsylvania. Perhaps the least durable approach, as was taken by Colorado, is to engage in an administrative reorganization at the state-level with permission from the governor, but without any official executive order (though notably, the sub-state structures are instantiated in legislation, making these very durable).

Indirect mechanisms also can foster durability. Indirect mechanisms catalyze public and political support for governance that is substantial enough to make it politically impractical to dismantle the governance structure. In Pennsylvania, for example, OCDEL has used the ample data on the improvement in child outcomes, program quality, and the reduction of the number of

children “at risk” in each county as a mechanism to garner support for OCDEL from the legislature and those working within the governor’s office.

Interviewees acknowledge the importance of direct durability for governance, but tended to emphasize the importance of the indirect dimension of durability to the success of their governance approach. For example, interviewees from each of the states that have adopted a regional approach to governance noted that one asset of the regional approach is that the effects of governance are highly visible to those individuals who may work for or receive services from the governance apparatus in each region. In Arizona, for example, when the legislature tried to dismantle FTF via a ballot initiative, there was a tremendous outcry from the public, because so many people are “touched” by FTF. The ballot initiative was easily defeated, securing the continued operation of FTF. In Iowa and North Carolina, interviewees noted that the regional approach means that legislators can see the effects of governance on their constituents and they, therefore, continue to support ECI and Smart Start. In considering an approach to governance, it is important to think about ways to imbue that approach with durability. It is also important, however, to weigh the need for durability against the time it takes to instantiate the governance structure in legislation. Colorado’s state-level structure is not durable, but the permission given by the governor to reorganize enabled the state to act quickly to create a state-level administrative structure for ECE. Pennsylvania’s structure is also less durable overall than those of states whose administrative structures are instantiated in legislation, but the executive orders under which these governance approaches were created enabled them to get up and running very quickly. Another consideration is related to indirect durability; many of the consolidated state-level approaches to governance have less visibility among those served at the local level. Regional approaches, as illustrated by Iowa, North Carolina, and Arizona, are highly visible at the local level, and this may help bolster the indirect dimensions of durability in addition to any direct durability these approaches may have.

VI. Considerations Regarding the Involvement of the Private Sector

Engaging business leaders, philanthropists, and other individuals working in the private sector has been a strategy many states have used to push governance as a politically viable option for improving the well-being of young children and families. We note two time periods when private sector involvement has been important in creating and sustaining approaches to governance: involvement at start-up and involvement over time.

North Carolina’s engagement with the private sector for the purposes of successfully creating Smart Start is a prime example of ways that support from the private sector is instrumental at start-up. When North Carolina’s former Governor Jim Hunt went to the state legislature to provide testimony in support of Smart Start, he brought with him several CEOs from the banks headquartered in the state. After Hunt’s testimony, each banker presented the legislature with a check for one million dollars. The legislature then voted on the Smart Start legislation, and the legislation passed unanimously. Notably, Smart Start is mandated to have a

10% match in private dollars each year in order to continue operating; the fiscal support of the bankers enabled Smart Start to exceed that match at the outset. Perhaps more important than the monetary investment in Smart Start, however, was the private sector's support for the state's proposed regional approach to governance.

In some states, like Arizona and Pennsylvania, the business and philanthropic community spearheaded the press for adopting governance. In Arizona, as we have mentioned, a prominent business leader was the person who successfully created the ballot initiative for First Things First. In Pennsylvania, philanthropists from the William Penn Foundation and the Heinz Foundation not only offered funding to support start-up costs for new initiatives run by OCDEL, but these foundations used their relationships with local politicians to garner support for OCDEL within the legislature. This support was, and continues to be, particularly important because of OCDEL's lack of direct durability.

Interviewees from each state noted the importance of engaging individuals in the private sector over time. One interviewee from North Carolina noted that in the 20 years since Smart Start was created, the composition of the business community has changed; the business leaders that were supportive of Smart Start at its outset are no longer working in the state. This means that cultivating new relationships in the private sector is particularly critical to the survival of Smart Start—not only for the purposes of helping Smart Start achieve its 10% match, but also in continuing to make sure the private sector is aware of the important work being done as a result of North Carolina's regional governance approach. In Arizona, one interviewee stated that business leaders have taken note of the lack of a skilled workforce in the state; as such, they are aware and supportive of First Things First and its continued existence. Members of the private sector in Arizona believe that without investing in young children and their families over the long-term, the status of the state's workforce will not change. For this reason, the private sector continues to advocate in support of First Things First.

VII. Conclusions

Selecting an approach to governance requires thoughtful consideration about a number of factors, but, first and foremost, the state's culture and the values of its residents. The cultural, historical, and political contexts will, inevitably, inform the choices related to the form of the governance approach, the functions accorded to the governance entity, and the durability of that entity. As we have illustrated in this analysis, the states we profile each adopt an approach to governance that falls into one of two categories: a regional approach to governance or a consolidated approach to governance.

Each governance type has different characteristics and enables states to provide services to the early childhood field, young children, and their families in different ways. Ultimately, the choices a state makes regarding the scope of governance will dictate where the powers of governance will lie—at the state-level, sub-state-level, or both—and, thus, the form of the

governance structure. These choices will, in turn, inform how the governance functions are carried out. We have also articulated considerations regarding the importance of imbuing a governance approach with durability; neither the form nor the functions of governance will make a difference to those it purports to serve if it does not have staying power. Finally, we discuss the importance of engaging the private sector in the work of selecting and adopting an approach to governance, as well as ensuring that that approach is sustained over time. Overall, we feel that each of the points we have raised regarding governance are issues with which any state or group of individuals who are interested in governance will need to grapple in order to develop an approach to governance that fits the culture, context, and values of the state.

VIII. References

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Part II: Individual State Case Studies

Regional Approaches:

Arizona

Iowa

North Carolina

Colorado

Consolidated Approaches:

Maryland

Pennsylvania

Arizona First Things First

Arizona's approach to governance, commonly called Arizona First Things First, is a regional approach to governance, in which most of the services for young children and their families are overseen by regional entities. First Things First consists of a state office, a state-level board, and a number of regional councils. Together, these entities are authorized to oversee programs and funding designated for Arizona's youngest residents.

I. Political and Cultural Context for Early Childhood Education in Arizona

The ethos regarding education and young children being cared for outside of the home in Arizona is characterized by the dynamics of race and class; in particular, immigration status colors many policymakers' perceptions of which services should be provided for which children. Additionally, the legislature in Arizona has a track record of being unresponsive to pressing social issues within the state, like services for young children and their families. Given this reality, the most productive policy tool is the ballot initiative. Indeed this is how much of Arizona's social policy is made, including Arizona's approach to governance, First Things First (FTF).

II. Historical Context out of which First Things First Evolved

First Things First was preceded by former Governor Janet Napolitano's efforts to invest in early childhood by creating a School Readiness Board (created in 2004), and a grassroots effort to promote additional public investment in early childhood headed by a prominent Phoenix businesswoman. This business-leader spearheaded a campaign to create FTF via a ballot initiative. This ballot initiative failed the first time it was presented to the voting public, but passed the second time. FTF was created in 2006 with the successful passage of Proposition 203 (the name of the second ballot initiative). Proposition 203 advocated the creation of a quasi-governmental agency, with a state agency to manage 31 regional partnership boards that would oversee the delivery of services to young children birth through age 5 and their families in Arizona communities. Prop 203 also mandated that all monies collected as a result of the tobacco tax be used to support the activities of FTF. Notably, Prop 203 passed by the second largest margin in Arizona history, with only the proposition to legalize Native American-run casinos garnering more support.

III. Structure of First Things First

First Things First is a quasi-governmental governance structure that exists at both the state and regional levels. A graphic depiction of FTF's structure is provided on page 25. The structure consists of a state office, state board, and regional councils. The state FTF office is a governmental entity, and is staffed by three individuals who are employees from various State Departments. At present, one staff member focuses on state policy, one on operations and local

policy, and the other focuses on administering FTF's Quality Rating and Improvement System, which is scheduled to be implemented statewide in the fall of 2012. The FTF state office also provides technical support to the state FTF board, which is the primary entity authorized to provide oversight to the FTF regional councils.

The FTF state board is the entity imbued with authority for the FTF local councils. The board is composed of nine individuals, each of whom is appointed by the governor and serves for one 6-year term. Appointments are made according to both geography and political party – the board must comprise four Democrats, four Republicans, and one Independent. The state board is accountable to both the governor and the general assembly.

At the local level, the 31 councils comprise 11-member boards, and each board is required to adhere to the following member-composition: two at-large members; one public health representative (child-focused); one parent of a child age birth to 5; one representative from the medical field, either a pediatrician or dentist; one ECE practitioner; one child care program administrator or family child care owner; one public school representative; one person representing private business; one member of a faith-based organization; and one philanthropist. Individuals interested in serving on a regional council submit an application to the state board; the state board interviews and appoints qualified individuals to the regional councils. One interviewee noted that the highly specific composition of regional council boards makes board positions extremely difficult to fill.

The 31 regions are divided according to geography and the number of young children in a particular area. Tribal nations can choose to join the regional council in which their tribe falls or to remain a distinct entity; most tribes in Arizona have chosen to maintain their own region. In regions governed by tribes, tribal law supersedes Arizona state law.

IV. Functions Accorded to First Things First

The governance functions for early childhood are split among the state FTF board, the state FTF office, the Department of Education, Department of Health Services, Department of Economic Security, and the Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families (BUILD Initiative, 2010). The Department of Economic Security administers CCDF and TANF, early intervention, and child abuse prevention programs; the Department of Education administers pre-kindergarten, Head Start, and teacher certification; and the Department of Health Services administers child care licensing, immunizations, and health screenings. The Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families focuses on child abuse and neglect prevention efforts. The state FTF office is responsible for insuring that coordination among these five entities occurs. In order to accomplish its coordination function, the FTF board created a set of strategic priorities, and determined on which functions FTF would take the lead, for which functions it would be a convener, and to which state agency other functions would be accorded.

One critical function of FTF is fiscal management. The state board acts as a fiscal pass through for the funding collected by the tobacco tax, allocating funding to the state office and local FTF councils. FTF is legislatively mandated to use 90% of its funds on direct services; the remaining 10% can be used for administrative costs. FTF also coordinates and oversees the activities of each of the 31 regional councils, setting parameters for how funds can be used by the regional councils, and holding them accountable for fiscal and programmatic management within these parameters.

The FTF state office is charged with improving the quality of early childhood services, and does so in three ways (BUILD Initiative, 2010). First, FTF is responsible for oversight of a voluntary QRIS. Second, the FTF state office oversees the Arizona Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Scholarship program, an integrated approach to improving the quality and stability of the ECE workforce, where teachers who achieve certain levels of educational attainment receive additional compensation when they commit to staying in their jobs for a certain period of time. Third, the FTF state office oversees the REWARDS program, which provides one-time salary bonuses for teachers who have gone back to college. FTF provides state level oversight to these programs which are administered locally by the regional councils.

V. Durability of First Things First

The FTF approach to governance is extremely durable, evidenced by the fact that the legislature has tried twice to dismantle the FTF structure and reallocate its funding and functions to other state agencies, and has been unsuccessful in both attempts. In the first attempt, the legislature voted to dismantle FTF and reallocate the revenues from the tobacco tax. This effort was challenged in the State Supreme Court, and the Courts ruled the legislature's actions to be unconstitutional. In the second attempt, the legislature crafted a ballot initiative, Proposition 302, to dismantle FTF and reallocate the tax funds. This ballot initiative was defeated by a wide margin, illustrating that FTF has tremendous public support and is highly visible. In part, this visibility comes from the very diffuse regional structure, one that employs and serves a substantial proportion of Arizona's population.

VI. Conclusions

Arizona's approach to governance provides food for thought regarding the utility of a governance approach that has tremendous political will and high public visibility. FTF is, as we have illustrated, a multi-level governance structure that has decentralized many of its functions to the regional level. Extremely durable, FTF is mandated by law, has a dedicated funding stream, and has withstood challenges from within the legislature and the judiciary. States looking to create a durable structure with a great deal of local control can look to Arizona for guidance.

VII. References and Resources

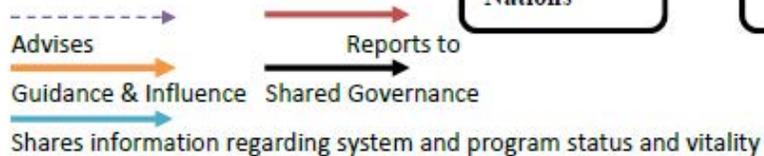
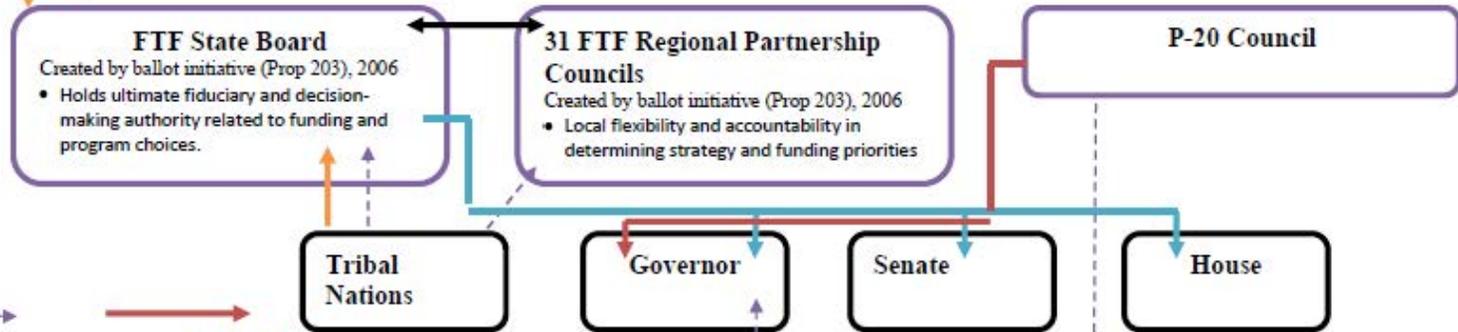
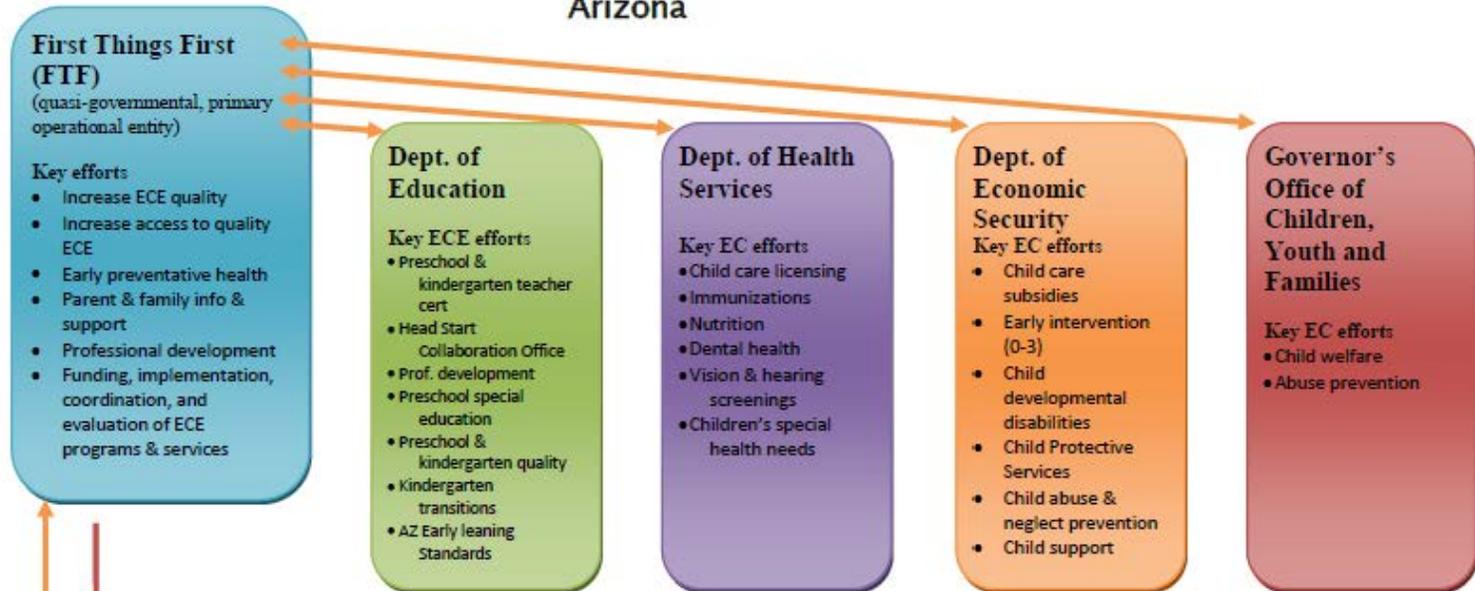
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Arizona

ECE Governing

Advisor



Early Childhood Iowa

Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) is a regional approach to governance. Decisions about early childhood funding and associated services are made at the regional level by regional governing bodies, called ECI Area Boards. These boards are held accountable for their work by a state ECI Board, while systems-building activities and strategic planning are conducted by the State Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The activities conducted by the ECAC are used to inform the work of the ECI State and Area Boards. This approach to governance has grown out of Iowa's long-standing tradition of democratic localism and commitment to grassroots activism. As illustrated in this case study, ECI is a regional approach to governance that hinges on a great deal of community involvement.

I. Historical and Political Context out of which Early Childhood Iowa Evolved

ECI was preceded by a fragmented and decentralized approach to service delivery. In the late 1990s, there was a press by advocates for additional funding for social services and early childhood education. In response, the state legislature passed legislation in 1997 enacting the Iowa Community Empowerment Boards (ICEB). The ICEBs were granted authority under the legislation to make decisions about county-wide and localized social services, including local ECE services, like child care subsidies. While most ICEB catchment areas corresponded to a particular county, some counties, particularly very rural counties, merged and took a more regionalized approach. A state board was created to advise the ICEBs, while administrative oversight was provided through a newly created Office of Empowerment, under the auspice of the Department of Management. This was thought to be a “neutral” location for the office, keeping it separate from other state-level departments so that the activities of the local empowerment boards would not become entangled in state politics. While the state provides some oversight, much of the decisions about service delivery were made locally, and there was a great deal of unevenness in how funds were distributed and services rendered.

During the early 2000s, many in the legislature and the ECE community became resistant to the idea of the ICEBs. This resistance stemmed from two factors. First, many within the ECE field in Iowa felt that there had been a “rocky history of accountability of the ECE community,” in that within the work of the ICEBs, there had been few efforts to work on building systems and cross-sector collaboration, as well as little transparency in distribution of funds. Second, over the past decade, in the context of No Child Left Behind and a growing national accountability culture, the State of Iowa had been consistently ratcheting up the level of accountability required for state-level funds and interventions. The ICEBs came under pressure to match that level of accountability for the funding decisions made and services provided within their catchment areas.

The pressure on the ICEBs to be more accountable for what they were doing came to a head in 2008. The Democrats in the legislature wanted more money for ECE services, but were not crazy about local control. The Republicans annually supported the local approach of the ICEBs, but wanted the increased accountability measures. Simultaneously, ECE advocates and state employees were working on systems-building efforts. State employees started looking at North Carolina's Smart Start model of local/regional/state integration and regional governance models, while the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) community started lobbying the governor and legislature for money to work on systems-building activities. The governor responded to the call for support by appropriating additional money for CCR&Rs from his discretionary budget to the empowerment boards.

In 2010, a group of stakeholders from the ECE community convened the ECE advocates, the CCR&Rs, and members of the ICEBs to work on systems-building activities, including re-thinking governance for early childhood services in Iowa. Using money from the State Early Childhood Systems-Building Grants offered by the Administration for Children and Families, this group created a new vision for governance in Iowa. The vision was to create an approach to governance that maintained local control while increasing accountability, transparency, and cross-sector collaboration. This vision informed both structure and function, and made use of the pre-existing ICEB, State Empowerment Board, and Office of Empowerment structure.

II. Structure of Early Childhood Iowa

Early Childhood Iowa is largely a regional approach to governance. The primary entities through which early childhood services are governed in Iowa are the ECI Area Boards, which were formerly the ICEBs. The Area Boards report to the ECI State Board and to the Office of Empowerment, housed within the Department of Management. The Office of Empowerment has about 30 staff members to manage the State Board and 58 Area Boards, each of which focus on pressing local early childhood issues. The ECI State Board reports to both the Governor's Office and the State Legislature. ECI's structure is depicted graphically on page 31.

The ECI State Board and Area Boards are advised by Iowa's Early Childhood Advisory Council, called the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance. The Stakeholders Alliance is strictly an advisory body charged with informing the work of the ECI State and Area Boards. The ECI Stakeholders Alliance comprises several "component groups," each of which is topical in nature and created to engage in strategic planning regarding six system elements: governance, professional development, accountability, financing, outreach and public engagement, and program quality. Reflecting Iowa's commitment to grassroots activism and democratic localism, anyone can volunteer to participate in the Stakeholders Alliance or its attendant component groups. The only requirement of composition is that there must be a 1 to 1 correspondence of state employees and non-state government members.

III. Functions Accorded to Early Childhood Iowa

The governance functions of Early Childhood Iowa are split between the State Board and Area Boards. Each year the legislature appropriates funding for the Area Boards; funding for the Area Boards comprises a mix of state dollars as well as some TANF money. This funding is funneled through the Office of Empowerment to the Area Boards, though the State Board makes decisions about how much funding is allocated to each Area Board and sets the parameters regarding the use of funds. The State Board is accountable to the Office of Empowerment, the Governor, and the Legislature regarding fiscal and programmatic management of the Area Boards. Upon receiving funding from the State Board, each Area Board is granted authority to make decisions about how to use this funding, within a certain set of parameters. Typically, Area Boards use this funding to administer three types of programs related to school readiness and early childhood: (i) home visiting programs; (ii) preschool support (e.g., transportation, after school care); and (iii) child care vouchers. Area Boards often use their funding to provide professional development for the early childhood workforce.

In addition to the oversight provided by the State Board, Area Boards also receive Technical Assistance (TA) from a team of individuals representing the Departments within State Government that provide early childhood services, including the Department of Education, the Department of Human Services, the Head Start State Collaboration Office, the Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Health. Notably, there is also a representative from the IA Economic Development Authority on this TA team, representing a business perspective. The goal of this TA is to help the Area Boards work on cross-sector collaboration, systems-building activities, and efficient fiscal and programmatic management. For example, when the Area Boards were first created, many of them were offering professional development sessions to the providers in their catchment area without collaborating with a nearby Area Board that was offering the same professional development, making these offerings duplicative. The TA team helps Area Boards think about advantageous cross-region and cross-sector partnerships.

IV. Durability of Early Childhood Iowa

The individual we interviewed regarding ECE governance for Iowa felt that ECI is a very durable structure. The ECI State Board, the ECI Area Boards, and the ECI Stakeholder Alliance are all durable in structure because they are ensconced in legislation. Individuals in Iowa, however, think about durability along two other dimensions – transparency and pragmatism. Individuals within state government and within the legislature feel this structure is much more transparent and accountable, and this makes ECI durable because individuals at all levels of government can see how the Area Boards are working. Additionally, the open structure of ECAC and link to ECI boards makes for a lateral structure that garners wide public awareness and support.

In discussing the state's choice of adopting a regional approach instead of a state-level, consolidated approach to governance, our interviewee felt that a pragmatic approach to governance would be more sustainable and ultimately more durable for Iowa. When developing ECI, stakeholders examined both types of approaches, and were "not looking to build a super-system that supersedes the pragmatic structure of individual systems like early intervention or Head Start" (T. Rendon, personal communication, August 15, 2012). Rather, the desired end for governance in Iowa was to develop a mechanism that would help Area Boards to coordinate and to make sure the work on the ground is integrated.

V. Conclusions

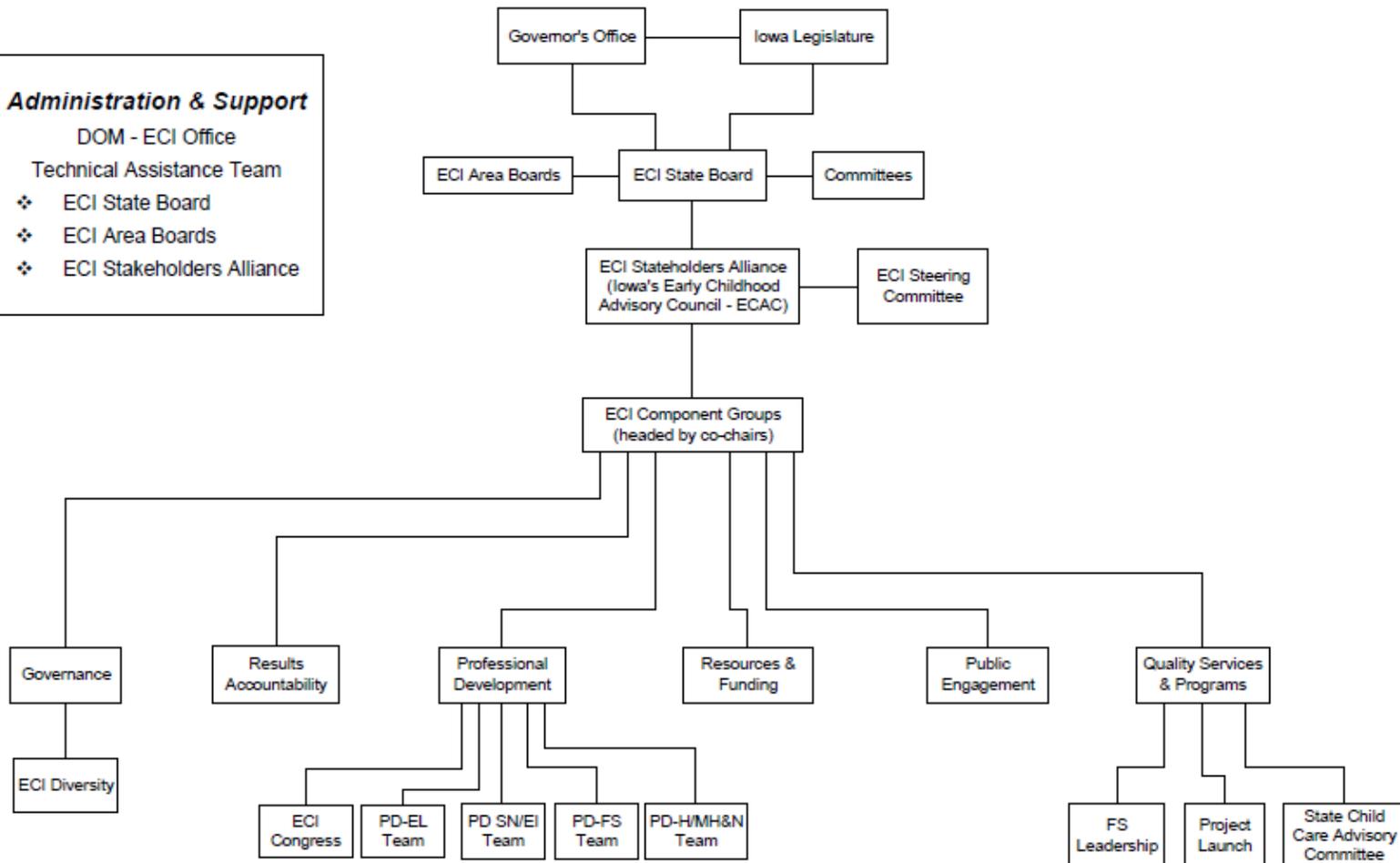
As illustrated by this case study, Iowa's approach to governance was designed with a great deal of intentionality – taking into consideration the state's desires to create a structure and associated functions that would insure transparency, efficiency, and accountability without sacrificing the rich local engagement afforded by the Empowerment Boards. The ECI Stakeholders Alliance insures that there is a mechanism for broad-based outreach to and engagement of the early childhood community in the state. The fact that this body is advisory in nature only means that this large group does not get bogged down in the work of governing. The authority for that work has been accorded to the Area Boards, which can tap into the strengths of each local community in a way that a state-level advisory body does not. Overall, ECI is a unique approach to governance that makes use of Iowa's values regarding and commitment to democratic localism.

VI. References and Resources

Early Childhood Iowa website: <http://www.state.ia.us/earlychildhood/>

Early Childhood Iowa

Administration & Support
 DOM - ECI Office
 Technical Assistance Team
 ❖ ECI State Board
 ❖ ECI Area Boards
 ❖ ECI Stakeholders Alliance



North Carolina Smart Start

North Carolina's Smart Start is a regional approach to governance, built on a particularly strong structure of county-level government in the state. Perhaps the oldest approach to governance in the nation, Smart Start was created nearly 20 years ago by the legislature and championed by former Governor Hunt. Decisions about early childhood services are made at the regional level, via regional boards, and these boards are provided oversight by a state-level entity, called the North Carolina Partnership for Children. The goal of Smart Start, at its conception, was to create a coordinated approach to improving the quality of early childhood education in North Carolina. 20 years in, it has accomplished this and more.

I. Historical Context out of Which Smart Start Evolved

North Carolinians believe that the county is the ideal unit of government and organizational life. Like much of the southeastern United States, the North Carolina court system, jurisdictions for law enforcement, social service agencies, public health agencies, and school districts are all county-based. There are 100 counties in North Carolina, and the Smart Start governance structure is built on those counties. In 1993, under the leadership of then Governor Jim Hunt, the North Carolina general assembly created the state-level public-private partnership called Smart Start/North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) and county entities, called Smart Start Local Partnerships. These entities were created to administer funding and programs that would focus on children from birth to age 5.

In 2001, the North Carolina general assembly exerted pressure on the existing county-based local partnerships to partner with adjacent counties and create a more regionalized service delivery approach. This idea was met with much resistance from the public; individuals from counties with different economic and/or cultural foci did not partner effectively because of these differences, despite geographic proximity. One example of the challenges social service agencies faced when trying to create cross-county partnerships comes from two very rural counties in North Carolina: one whose economic focus is tobacco-farming, the other whose economic focus is pig-farming. Not only were the economies of scale of these counties virtually incompatible, but the families living in these counties perceived children very differently, and had different ideas about which young children should receive services. Given these differences, mandating partnerships based solely on geography did not work. Gradually, over the past decade, Smart Start has worked to create more organic partnerships, and this has resulted in the regional approach that exists currently.

II. Structure of Smart Start

Smart Start's structure is a multi-level governance structure; this structure is depicted graphically on page 37 of this document. Smart Start is the term used to refer to the entire

structure – which includes a state level board, a state office, and regional partnership offices. Smart Start’s state board, is appointed jointly by the governor and general assembly, which provides oversight to a state office, called the NCPC. The NCPC is a non-governmental entity, which provides oversight to the regional Smart Start partnerships. As of July 1, 2012, there are 14 multi-county partnerships. Most partnerships in the state consist of two counties working together, but there is one three-county partnership, one five-county partnership, and one seven-county partnership. The seven-county region is extremely rural, has a long history of working together on infrastructural issues, and is an example of a regional partnership that makes sense logistically, politically, and culturally.

III. Functions Accorded to Smart Start

The primary function of the state NCPC office, as authorized by the general assembly, is to allocate funds and make decisions about how these funds should be used to serve young children and their families. The NCPC, however, has what one interviewee called permissive authority to devolve these spending decisions to the regional partnership boards. This approach provides even more flexibility for local governance; decisions can be made quickly and these regional partnerships can get services and monies out to families even as quickly as a week’s time.

Because Smart Start is a non-governmental entity, it has a much greater level of flexibility in determining who is eligible to receive funding. This flexibility is in contrast, for example, to the regulations that govern how the State Division of Child Development distributes federal child care subsidies and TANF support. Families receiving support for the DCD have to meet specific eligibility requirements. Smart Start, on the other hand, can choose to serve families whose children have aged out of TANF, but who still need assistance with child care.

One of Smart Start’s primary charges at its inception was to improve the quality of the child care market. This function is carried out via Smart Start’s rated license. Beginning as a voluntary program that is now mandatory, programs are awarded a Star rating of one through five. All programs receive technical assistance, and programs that have achieved a four or five-star rating receive a cash bonus. As with the management of subsidy dollars, the NCPC office has devolved authority for awarding bonuses and providing technical assistance to the regional boards. The Smart Start state office has set parameters and given county boards authority to make decisions about use of quality dollars within those parameters. These decisions are made at the local level, and this approach to governance has garnered a lot of support from the public. Indeed, 68% of all child care centers in North Carolina have received a rating of four or five stars, strong evidence that this approach to governance is working.

Since the Smart Start NCPC has devolved the authority for funding and programmatic-decisions to the regional boards, the primary functions of the NCPC at present include: system-building activities, including creating strong state and local networks; increasing public

awareness about the importance of ECE; providing oversight to and holding the regional partnerships accountable; and coordinating and awarding grants to local partnerships.

IV. Durability of Smart Start

Certainly, the Smart Start approach to governance is highly durable, having been instantiated in legislation for over 20 years. It should be noted that in North Carolina, it is difficult to get rules made or programs created via the administrative structure. As a result, much of ECE programs and policy reside in legislation. This makes these programs and funds very durable, but also makes it difficult to create new programs or to revise or remove existing programs and funding streams. Smart Start has also been around for 20 years, and has gotten a lot of national press, which is appealing to the general assembly; this helps ensure durability.

One individual with whom we spoke in North Carolina felt that while Smart Start's legislative mandate did impose a measure of durability, there were more important ways of thinking about durability for governance of ECE in North Carolina. Her definition of durability includes flexibility, as we described above. The high amount of flexibility drives services, and successful service provision builds public and political will. Additionally, the regional approach provides a nimbleness that state-level entities cannot provide, as well as providing a good match for the strong ethos of county-level and local government in the state. Finally, her definition of durability also includes proximity: as we have noted, the regional structure is not only predicated on geographical proximity but also infrastructural and cultural proximity. Infrastructural proximity has to do with creating partnerships according to regions that have adequate infrastructure to sustain these partnerships. For instance, some coastal towns are geographically adjacent to one another but it is difficult to get between the two, so these towns may be in different regions. Cultural proximity means that in order for the governance structure to thrive, counties within these regions must be aligned culturally.

V. Public-Private Partnerships

As we have articulated in our description of the Smart Start approach to governance, the approach is built on a set of public-private partnerships. The NCPC state board consists of representatives from various state agencies, business, education, nonprofits, religious organizations, child care providers, parents, and members of the General Assembly. In addition to the public-private composition of the state board, state agencies are directed to collaborate with the NCPC office and the regional partnerships. The aim of these partnerships is to ensure that "the needs of young children and their families are addressed locally and that federal, state, and local funds can all be used strategically to maximize every dollar" (BUILD Initiative, 2010, p. 13).

In addition to the operational public-private partnerships, Smart Start is legislatively mandated to annually achieve a 10% match in private funds. As such, partnerships with the business community in North Carolina are critically important. Governor Hunt, in his original

testimony to the assembly in support of the pending legislation to support Smart Start, brought with him to the hearing many of the heads of the banks that resided in North Carolina at the time. At the end of his testimony, each banker committed a \$1 million check to the Smart Start effort, thus enabling Smart Start to exceed its match even before it was authorized. Smart Start continues to reach out annually to businesses in North Carolina for the purpose of garnering private investments in ECE and meeting its 10% mandatory match.

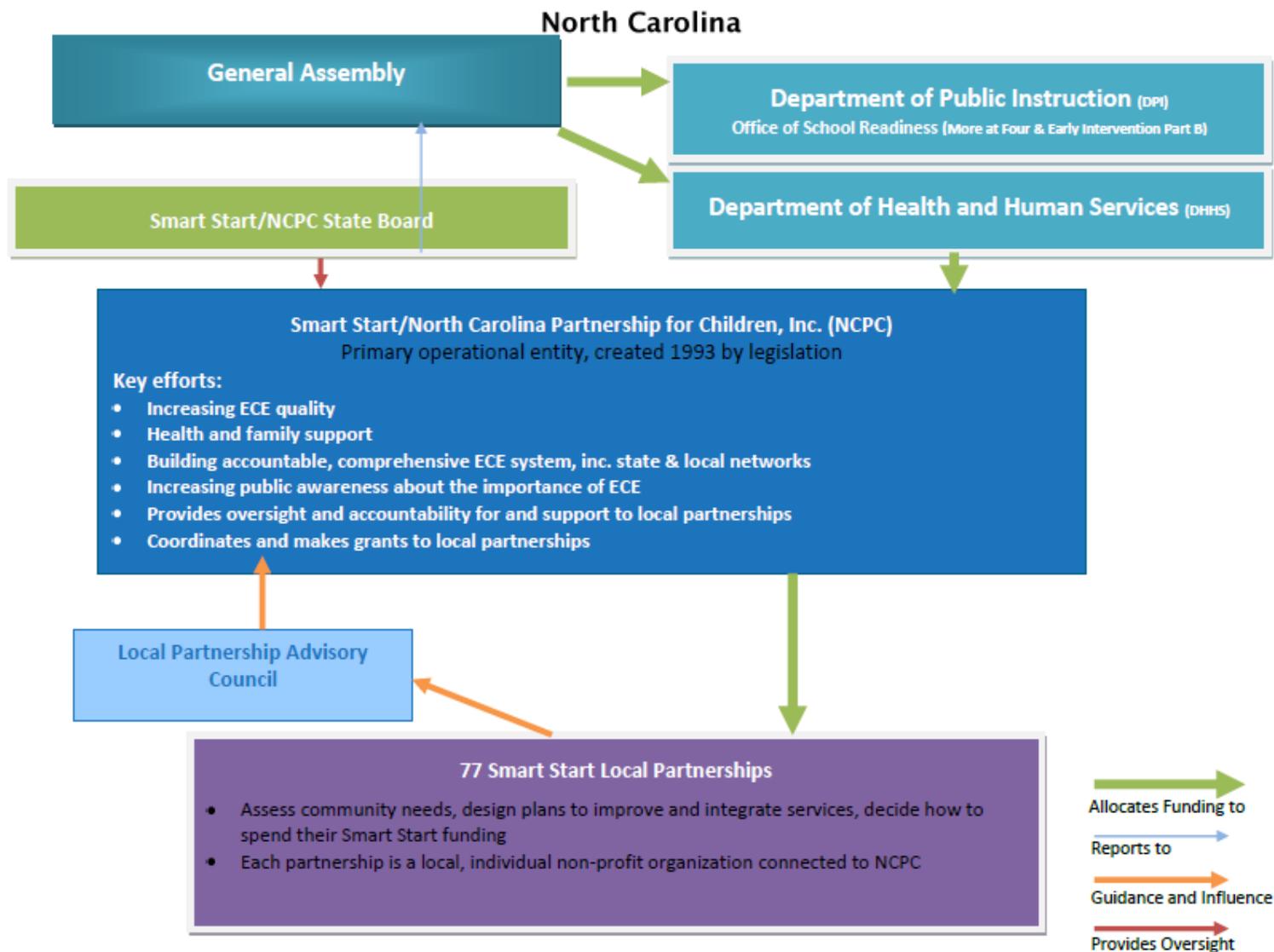
VI. Conclusions

North Carolina's approach to governance is unique in that it relies heavily on public-private partnerships for both financial and operational survival. Clearly, having survived for 20 years, Smart Start is a multi-level approach to governance that has proved durable as well as compatible with North Carolina's culture. Devolving authority for funding and programmatic decisions to the regional level has yielded flexibility as well as efficiency in making decisions about service delivery. Given these findings, it would seem that the Smart Start approach to governance is a viable one for any entity that wishes to take a more decentralized approach to governing early childhood.

VII. References and Resources

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North Carolina Smart Start website: <http://www.smartstart.org/>



Colorado's Office of Early Childhood and Youth Development

The Colorado approach to early childhood governance is an approach to governance, in which 30 Early Childhood Councils (ECC) provide support and services to geographically designated catchment areas to meet the local needs of their communities. These councils are overseen by the Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood and Youth Development (OECYD). The ECCs are codified in legislation, though the OECYD is not. Through this regional governance approach, Colorado seeks to apply state-level support to meet the needs of early childhood communities at the regional level.

I. Historical Context of Colorado's Governance Approach

Colorado began its early childhood systems-building efforts with the development of a pilot program for regional councils. In 1997, the Senate passed legislation requiring the State Department of Human Services to designate 12 Early Child Care Pilot Councils to coordinate early childhood services at a regional level (Child Care Services - Consolidation Act, 1997). Due to the success of the pilot councils in advancing the coordination of early childhood services in 12 regions, these councils were made permanent in 2007 by legislation introduced in the House, which also created an additional 18 Early Childhood Councils. These 30 councils are still in existence, and until 2012 were supported at the state level by the Department of Human Services with additional collaborative support from the Colorado Departments of Education and Public Health and Environment (Early Childhood Councils Act, 2007). In 2012, Colorado began to focus on governance at the state level. In order to address the fragmentation of early childhood programs and services in the state, the governor made the decision to consolidate several state-level programs and services under a new office, the Office of Early Childhood and Youth Development (OECYD), housed within the Department of Human Services. Advocates and members of the governor's staff pressed for the OECYD to be codified in statute, but this effort failed. Maintaining his commitment to improving governance for ECE, however, the governor used his executive powers to authorize the creation of the OECYD. In addition to its authority over state-level programs and funding-streams, the OECYD also now provides oversight to the 30 ECCs.

II. Governance Structure

In addition to overseeing the 30 ECCs, the OECYD provides oversight to the following programs, previously scattered throughout the Colorado Department of Human Services: Child Care Licensing, Child Care Quality Initiatives, Colorado Child Care Assistance Program, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Early Intervention Colorado Program (Part C/Early Intervention), and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (Colorado Governor's Office, 2012). The Early Childhood Leadership Commission, a legislatively authorized commission that works to

advance early childhood programs and services through alignment and coordination, and Head Start State Collaborative Office, is also under the auspices of the new Office.

The director of the OECYD reports to the Executive Director of the Department of Human Services. The Executive Director of the Department of Human Services is appointed by and reports to the governor. This provides a line of authority that allows the governor to maintain control over the new OECYD. Since the ECCs will be reporting to the OECYD, which operates under the governor's authority, the ECCs are ultimately accountable to the governor (Colorado Office of the Lieutenant Governor, 2012).

Colorado has not consolidated all of its early childhood programs and services under the new Office, in part because moving programs that are currently housed in the Department of Education would require legislative action. The Department of Education's Office of Early Learning and School Readiness maintains authority over several ECE functions, including early development and learning of young children through academic standards, professional development, student assessment and measurement, high quality preschool programming, and the early identification of at-risk students (Colorado Office of the Lieutenant Governor, 2012).

At the sub-state level, the ECCs are composed of members who represent local organizations that support childhood services. In total, the 30 ECCs have over 1,000 members that represent over 600 local organizations (Colorado Early Childhood Councils, 2011). Each council has a non-governmental fiscal agent and a council director to oversee the operation of the ECC. The membership for each council must include a minimum of 10 members that represent the following groups: local government, early care and education providers and programs, health care, parents, mental health care, resource and referral agencies, as well as family support and parent education. Additionally, councils may have members from the following groups: "child care associations, medical and dental professionals, school district parent organizations, Head Start policy councils, a chamber or chambers of commerce, local businesses, faith-based and non-profit organizations, higher education institutions, and libraries" (Early Childhood Councils Act, 2007, p.1639).

III. Governance Functions

With the consolidation of the seven Department of Human Services programs we outlined above into the new Department of Human Services' OECYD, Colorado will be able to maximize available resources and reduce the duplication of services provided by these seven programs. The OECYD will provide oversight to these programs, insuring that there is collaboration and coordination among state staff.

At the sub-state level, the ECCs carry out three primary functions: (1) creating internal capacity through the establishment and operation of a council of community partners who manage the internal functions of the council, including operational management, budget management, communication, planning, program administration, and resource development; (2)

building the foundation for communities to implement initiatives through local partnerships and engagement, shared accountability, funding, and policy reform, as well as providing opportunities to build knowledge and gain leadership experience; and (3) impacting the quality, access, and equity of services by working with local partners to ensure proper access for young children to high quality services (Colorado Department of Education, n.d.). In addition to carrying out these three key functions, councils may provide additional services targeted to focusing on early learning, family support and parent education, social/emotional and mental health, and physical health (Colorado Department of Education, 2012). The regional councils develop strategic plans for providing services to meet the unique needs of their community.

The federal funds provided to Colorado via the Child Care and Development Fund Block Grant has funded some of the councils' systems-building work. The ECCs are, however, also funded through a combination of public dollars which come from various state and local agencies, as well as private funds (Colorado Early Childhood Councils, 2011). While all ECCs are governed by the Department of Human Services' OECYD, some councils may have additional reporting and accountability obligations tied to private funds (J. Stedron, personal communication, September 14, 2012).

IV. Durability of Early Childhood Governance in Colorado

The OECYD was authorized by the governor, but was not instantiated in legislation, which makes it less durable than a legislatively formed office. The governor's decision to reorganize the seven Department of Human Services programs into the new OECYD only allows for the reorganization of early childhood programs that were already under the control of the governor. Because the OECYD was created by the governor, it is dependent on future administrations for continued support. The ECCs, however, have been established in statute and are considered durable.

V. Conclusions

Colorado's state and regional early childhood governance structure empowers state entities to create high-level policy and programs while also empowering regional ECCs to maintain a strong presence at the regional level. While there is significant reorganization of state-level early childhood initiatives within the Department of Human Services' new Office of Early Childhood and Youth Development, the role and activities of the regional Early Childhood Councils will not be directly impacted; indeed, the Councils may benefit from efficiencies and alignment gained through the state-level consolidation of the new office.

VI. References and Resources

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Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning

An approach to governance that consolidates governance functions at the state-level, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) is an administrative entity that houses all early childhood funding streams and programs for children birth through age 8 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. A highly centralized approach, OCDEL oversees four bureaus, each of which administers a set of state and federal funds and their associated programs. Evolving out of a deep commitment to systems-building and a vision for effective and efficient services to young children and their families on the part of those who created OCDEL, this approach to governance has, since its inception, significantly elevated the status and visibility of early childhood education in the Commonwealth.

I. Political Context out of which Governance the Office of Child Development and Early Learning Evolved

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning was created in 2006 under the leadership of then Governor Ed Rendell, his Policy Director and another member of his transition team who would become the Bureau Director of the new Office. The ECE advocate serving on Rendell's transition team, upon his taking office in 2004, had time to observe the culture, structure, and functions of early childhood programs and services within state government. During this process, she noted a great deal of fragmentation and duplication of early childhood programs and services in the Commonwealth. This non-coordinated and highly decentralized structure was not as effective in serving young children and their families as it could perhaps be. Having worked together on early childhood policy issues during Governor Rendell's time as Mayor of Philadelphia, Rendell had a high-degree of trust in his transition team-member, thus allowing her to lead the visioning process for the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (BUILD Initiative, 2010). Prior to 2006, early childhood services were split across the, then termed, Day Care Bureau, various divisions within the Department of Education, the Bureau of Early Intervention, and the Subsidy Bureau. The vision for OCDEL was to unify these programs under one authority structure, and to use the resources housed within OCDEL to begin improving the quality of early childhood programs while also building a coherent early childhood education system for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

II. Structure of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning

OCDEL is a state-office that operates under the joint authorities of the Department of Public Welfare and the Department of Education, with the Deputy Secretary of OCDEL reporting to the Secretaries of Public Welfare and Education. This type of administrative integration is typically called a "hybrid approach" and is unique among states in the U.S. Subsumed under OCDEL are four distinct bureaus: The Bureau of Early Learning Services, which focuses on quality improvement initiatives and on providing support to the ECE programs in the Commonwealth; The Bureau of Subsidized Services, which manages child care subsidy

dollars; the Bureau of Early Intervention; and, the Bureau of Certification Services, which oversees child care licensing. Also subsumed under the OCDEL structure is a Finance, Administration and Planning Unit. A graphic depiction of OCDEL is provided on page 47.

III. Functions Accorded to the Office of Child Development and Early Learning

OCDEL has full authority over the major functions of the early childhood education system in Pennsylvania. More specifically, OCDEL has the authority to allocate and manage fiscal resources, to collect and analyze data on the ECE system, to create and manage new programs, and to develop and revise regulations pertaining to early childhood. In addition to OCDEL's authority over these aspects of the ECE system, OCDEL also has the authority to hold the programs and sub-systems which it funds accountable.

The funding streams for which OCDEL has authority include the federal funding-streams that are dedicated to early childhood, like CCDF and TANF, as well as parts of the Community Development Block Grant, and the Social Services Block Grant. Under Governor Rendell, OCDEL did enjoy significant additional state-level investment; this investment has waned somewhat under the new administration and in light of Pennsylvania's budget challenges.

These funding streams are used to administer a number of programs, most notably Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), arguably one of the most robust QRIS's in the nation. In addition, OCDEL also administers Pre-k Counts, a state-funded universal pre-k program which was instantiated in legislation as of 2008. Other programs that are under the auspices of OCDEL include: child care subsidy administration; child care licensing; home visiting programs, the Children's Trust Fund, a program aimed at reducing the incidences of child abuse and neglect; the Head Start State Supplemental Program; the T.E.A.C.H. early childhood scholarship program; and, a variety of professional development and technical assistance supports for the ECE workforce.

OCDEL, as a part of its approach to governance, also takes the responsibility for setting standards for early childhood in the Commonwealth. These standards include professional preparation standards, early childhood program standards, early learning standards, and setting the required levels of qualifications for the early childhood workforce. Many of these standards are integrated with the Keystone STARS QRIS standards.

In carrying out its accountability functions, OCDEL engages in a number of types of monitoring. Monitoring efforts include ECE programs via licensing; monitoring the nature, quality, and duration of professional development programs; monitoring the progress young children are making in child care programs by collecting data on their progress throughout the school year; and, monitoring the distribution and use of funds to the programs and services it administers.

IV. Durability of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning

OCDEL itself was created via an administrative reorganization at the order of Governor Rendell. The benefit of using this strategy to create OCDEL meant that legislative approval was not needed, nor did the Governor have to go through the Commonwealth's administrative rulemaking process and, thus, the Office could be created quickly. The major challenge to this tactic, however, is that it has a relatively low-level of durability compared to states whose approaches to governance are instantiated in legislation. Other than the PA Pre-k Counts program, which is legislatively mandated, OCDEL could be dismantled—its structure reorganized and its functions decentralized or reallocated at the pleasure of a sitting Governor.

Given the realities of the low level of durability of the Office, the goal of those working within it has been to illustrate the benefits of OCDEL. This has been accomplished by adopting a two-pronged strategy. First, by demonstrating through robust data the positive effects the programs OCDEL administers has had on the young children and families of Pennsylvania. Second, to garner broad-based public support and political will within the state legislature for early learning in order to preserve the current structure and functions accorded to OCDEL.

V. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning's Public-Private Partnerships

Engagement with the private sector, in particular the philanthropic community, has been instrumental in both the creation and sustaining of OCDEL, as well as in expanding the operational capacity of the Office. Major foundations like The Heinz Endowments and the William Penn Foundation, have shown tremendous support for OCDEL and the accomplishments of the Office, as well as making substantive financial contributions to support public leaders and early learning efforts in the Commonwealth (BUILD Initiative, 2010).

In addition to support by business-leaders and philanthropists, OCDEL contracts with a number of non-governmental entities to implement its programs at the regional and local level. The Regional Keys, for example, are entities responsible for implementing the Keystone STARS QRIS, professional development programs, and technical assistance programs within their specified geographic catchment areas. In addition, the Regional Keys are responsible for engaging in capacity-building and systems-building activities, like developing articulation agreements with higher education institutions, and creating sub-systems that assure children have seamless transition experiences from their Pre-k or K program into public school.

VI. Conclusions

Pennsylvania's choice to adopt a consolidated and centralized approach to governance reflects the vision and commitment of former Governor Rendell, his policy director, and his transition team-member to create a coherent ECE system. In the Commonwealth, governance is the major lever driving the continued advancement of the ECE system. Unique in its structure,

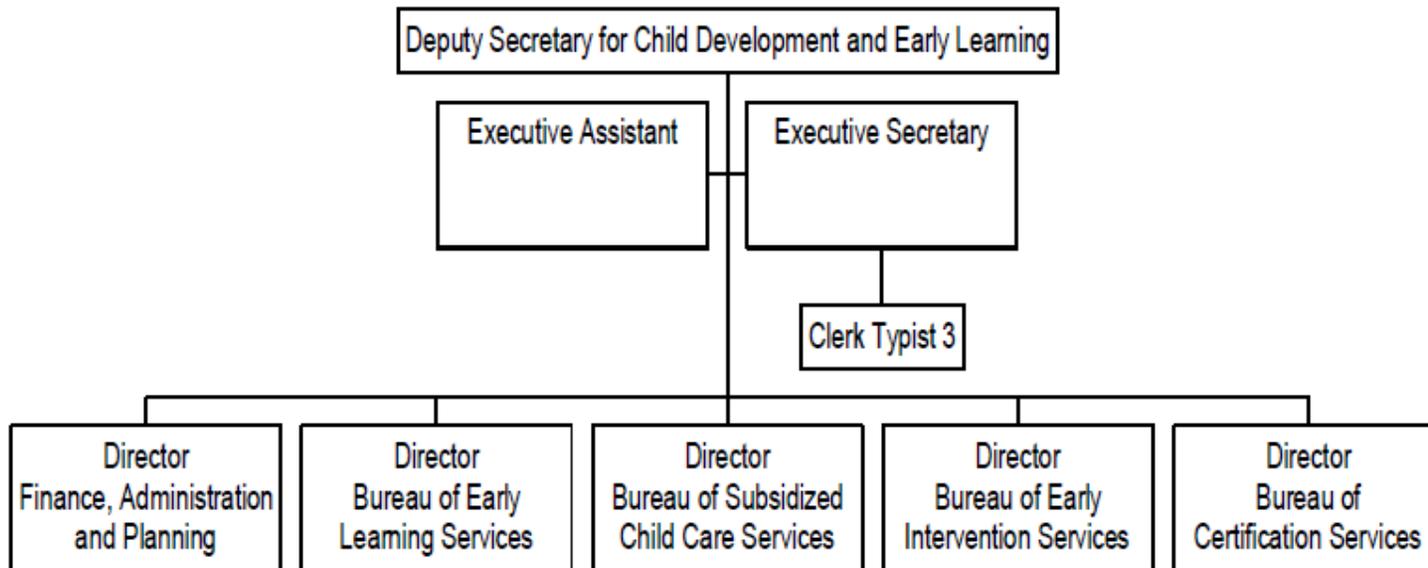
OCDEL has taken a once fragmented set of programs and created an approach to governance that unifies services for children birth through age eight living in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

VII. References and Resources

Build Initiative. (2010). *A look at six states' governance structures*. Boulder: CO: The Build Initiative .

Website for OCDEL: <http://www.ocdelresearch.org/default.aspx>

OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING
May 2012



Maryland Division of Early Childhood Development

Maryland has chosen to adopt a consolidated state-level approach to governance. All early childhood functions in Maryland are subsumed under the Maryland State Department of Education, and housed within the Department's Division of Early Childhood. By consolidating early childhood programs within Department of Education, Maryland has chosen to accord to its governance apparatus a wide scope of services.

I. Historical Context out of which Maryland's Early Childhood Governance Approach Evolved

The impetus for consolidation of early childhood governance within the Department of Education was fueled by a great deal of fragmentation of early childhood services across the state, a scarcity of resources for early childhood resulting from consistent cuts to early childhood services housed in the Department of Human Resources, and advocates' concerns about the low level of quality in early childhood programs. These three challenges, coupled with the Chief State School Officer's support for and interest in early childhood, catalyzed the press for focusing on governance. Recognizing that they had a strategic ally and potential leader in the CSSO, ECE advocates approached her with the idea of consolidating ECE services within the Department of Education (Kagan, Gomez, Tarrant, & Friedlander, 2010).

Advocates in Maryland viewed early childhood as the foundation for K-12 education and, as such, believed that governance for the birth to 5 sector of the education system should not be separate from the rest of the system. In addition, advocates perceived the Department of Education as a safe-haven for early childhood, feeling that consolidation within the Department of Education would "assure stability and continuity of services for children from birth onward" (Kagan et al., 2010, p.9). Once support from the CSSO for consolidation was secured, ECE advocates approached their local legislators with the idea of consolidation. The legislature was supportive of the idea, but had concerns about the political sensitivity of transferring authority for ECE from the Department of Human Services to the Department of Education. Once the legislation was passed, the Governor stepped in and worked closely with the CSSO to oversee the creation of the new Division of Early Childhood and the transfer of programs and funds from the various offices in the Department of Human Services into the new Division within the Department of Education.

II. Structure of the Division of Early Childhood Development

Within the State Department of Education, there are four Divisions, one of which is the Division of Early Childhood (DEC). The Maryland Division of Early Childhood is an administrative structure that is subsumed under the auspices of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Oversight for the DEC is provided by an Assistant Superintendent, who

reports directly to the Chief State School Officer and the State Board of Education. A graphic depiction of the MSDE, DEC is provided on page 52.

The scope of Maryland's governance structure is broad. Within the Division of Early Childhood, there are 11 offices, each of which focuses on the administration of a different program or funding-stream. These offices include: the child care credentialing program, early childhood mental health, pre-kindergarten, child care subsidy, Child Care Resource and Referral services, the Maryland tiered reimbursement program, child care quality grants, licensing of child care programs, licensing of nursery school programs, the Head Start State Collaboration office, and the office of family support. The Division of Early Childhood does not have authority over early intervention services in the state; early intervention services were already housed within the Department of Education in the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services.

III. Functions Accorded to the Division of Child Development

The DEC has authority for most of the functions related to early childhood in the State of Maryland. The one exception is early intervention; as we noted, the responsibility for early intervention remains with another division within the State Department of Education. The Division of Early Childhood is responsible for managing all programs and funding-streams related to early childhood, for collecting data on the ECE system, and for holding all of the programs operated by the 11 Offices in the DEC accountable for meeting their required benchmarks.

The funding streams for which the DEC is responsible for managing are both CCDF subsidy funding and the quality set-aside money within CCDF, TANF funds for child care subsidy, Title I preschool funds, and state pre-kindergarten funding. In addition, funding for early childhood mental health and child abuse prevention is managed by the DEC. These funding streams are used to administer a number of programs targeted at increasing familial access to child care and for improving the quality of child care services provided. Notably, Maryland has a strong Child Care Resource and Referral system, through which many of the subsidy dollars and quality activities are administered.

The DEC engages in a number of types of monitoring for the purposes of holding the programs it administers accountable. Monitoring efforts include ECE programs via licensing; monitoring the nature, quality, and duration of professional development programs; and monitoring the distribution and use of funds to the programs and services it administers. In addition to its program and fiscal-management functions, the DEC also collects data on the ECE programs in the state and on the children who attend these programs. Once all ECE programs for children birth through age 5 were consolidated under the auspices of the Department of

Education, it seemed auspicious to collect data on all children in Maryland beginning at birth. In this way, consolidation was the driver for creating a unified data system; the authority accorded to the Department of Education for all children birth through grade 12 meant that the DOE could use the data collected in early childhood to make decisions that would benefit children later in school and life.

IV. Durability of the Division of Early Childhood

The Division of Early Childhood is enshrined in legislation, making Maryland's approach to governance very durable. In addition to legislation which allocates the authority for early childhood to the Department of Education, the Governor issued an executive order transferring authority from the Department of Human Services to the Department of Education. While the executive order expedited the reallocation of powers, it alone would not have guaranteed durability, as the next gubernatorial administration could have overturned the order. It is the legislation that insures the durability of the structure, because it instantiates the DEC in statute, which is difficult to overturn.

V. Public-Private Partnerships

Maryland's early childhood public-private partnerships played an important role in the establishment of the Division of Early Childhood. Among the stakeholders to initially advocate for consolidation was the Annie E. Casey Foundation which argued that Maryland early childhood services needed to be more centralized. Additionally, the Maryland State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care serves an advisory role on early childhood issues and initiatives. This council consists of members of the administration, as well as representatives from Maryland public and private organizations.

VI. Conclusions

In conclusion, Maryland's consolidated state-level approach to governance has provided a durable foundation for the alignment of services within the early childhood system, as well as rendered overall improvements to the system itself. The DEC exemplifies Maryland's commitment to creating a seamless system for children birth through high school graduation.

VII. References and Resources

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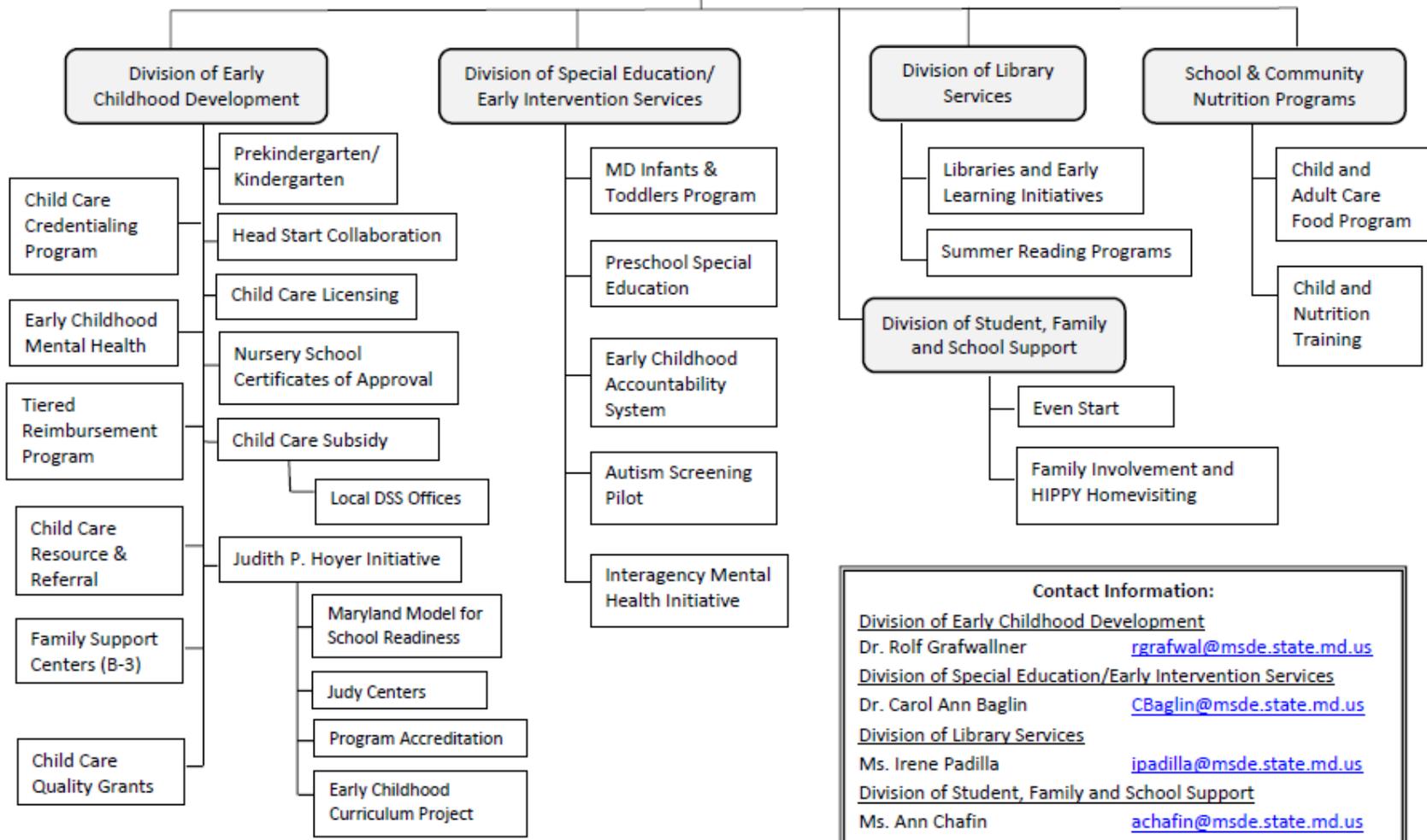
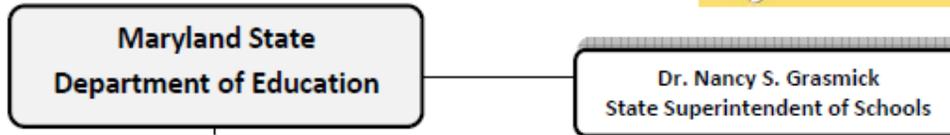
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Maryland DEC website: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/

MARYLAND'S GOVERNANCE OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION



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