



**COLORADO**

**Department of Early Childhood**

# **News from the Colorado Department Early Childhood**

Mary Alice Cohen, Deputy Executive Director  
December 2022

# Strategic Planning

## CDEC Vision

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

## CDEC Mission

The Colorado Department of Early Childhood ensures the delivery of a comprehensive, community-informed, data-driven, high-quality and equitable early childhood system that supports the care, education and well-being of all Colorado's young children, their families and early childhood professionals in all settings.

## Values

- Equity
- Family & Community Focused
- Excellence
- Innovation
- Asset-Based



# CDEC Goals

1

Ensure all families have equitable and easy **access to high quality** and **affordable** early childhood services to meet the unique developmental needs of children in mixed delivery settings, including **home and communities**, child care and preschools, and parental and child health settings.

2

Create policies, partnerships, and funding streams to recruit, retain, well-compensate, and support a **diverse and qualified early childhood workforce** to provide care and education to all children and their families.

3

Partner with families and organizations to meaningfully and **equitably engage, support, and empower families and communities** to promote children's overall development, learning, and well-being.

4

**Develop and enhance diverse partnerships** with stakeholders (families, early childhood professionals, communities, local and state public and private organizations) to strengthen a statewide, comprehensive, **well-coordinated**, and sustainable **early childhood system** that meets the evolving needs of all children, families, and communities.

# CDEC Goals

5

Leverage and align available federal, state, and local public and private funding streams to maximize impact and develop a **sustainable funding strategy** to maintain and strengthen early childhood programs and services.

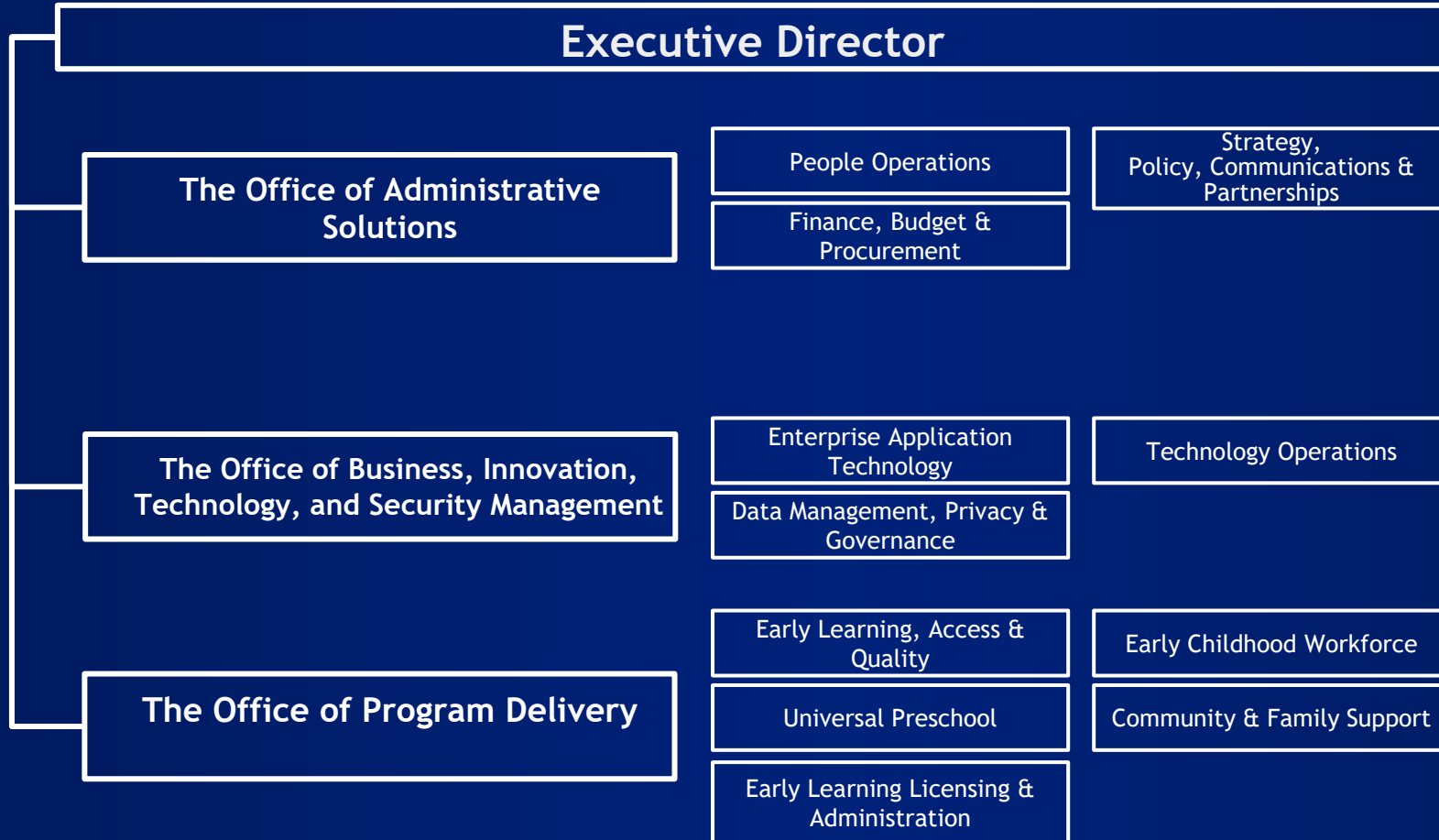
6

Develop and continuously improve on a **statewide, integrated data system** and **research agenda** to access timely and actionable data, incorporate the voice of families and communities to inform planning and policy development, enhance informed decision-making, and improve service delivery.

7

Strengthen **internal operations** and prioritize **employee diversity** and **well-being** to effectively and efficiently serve our children, families, and communities.

# CDEC Organizational Structure



# Hiring Updates

- Our Chief Administrative Solutions Director, Tom Massey, began Dec. 12, filling the last of our three Office Director positions.
- Our Division Director for Strategy, Policy, Communications & Partnerships, Karen Fox Elwell, began Dec. 12, completing division leadership within the Office of Administrative Solutions.
- Within the Office of Program Delivery, our Early Childhood Workforce Division Director, Rebecca Vlasin, began Dec. 12, completing division leadership within that Office.
- Other updates:
  - UPK Manager, Julie Chavez, started Nov. 28
  - LCO Manager, offer accepted, starts Jan. 9
  - Reviewing final candidates for Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care Program Administrator

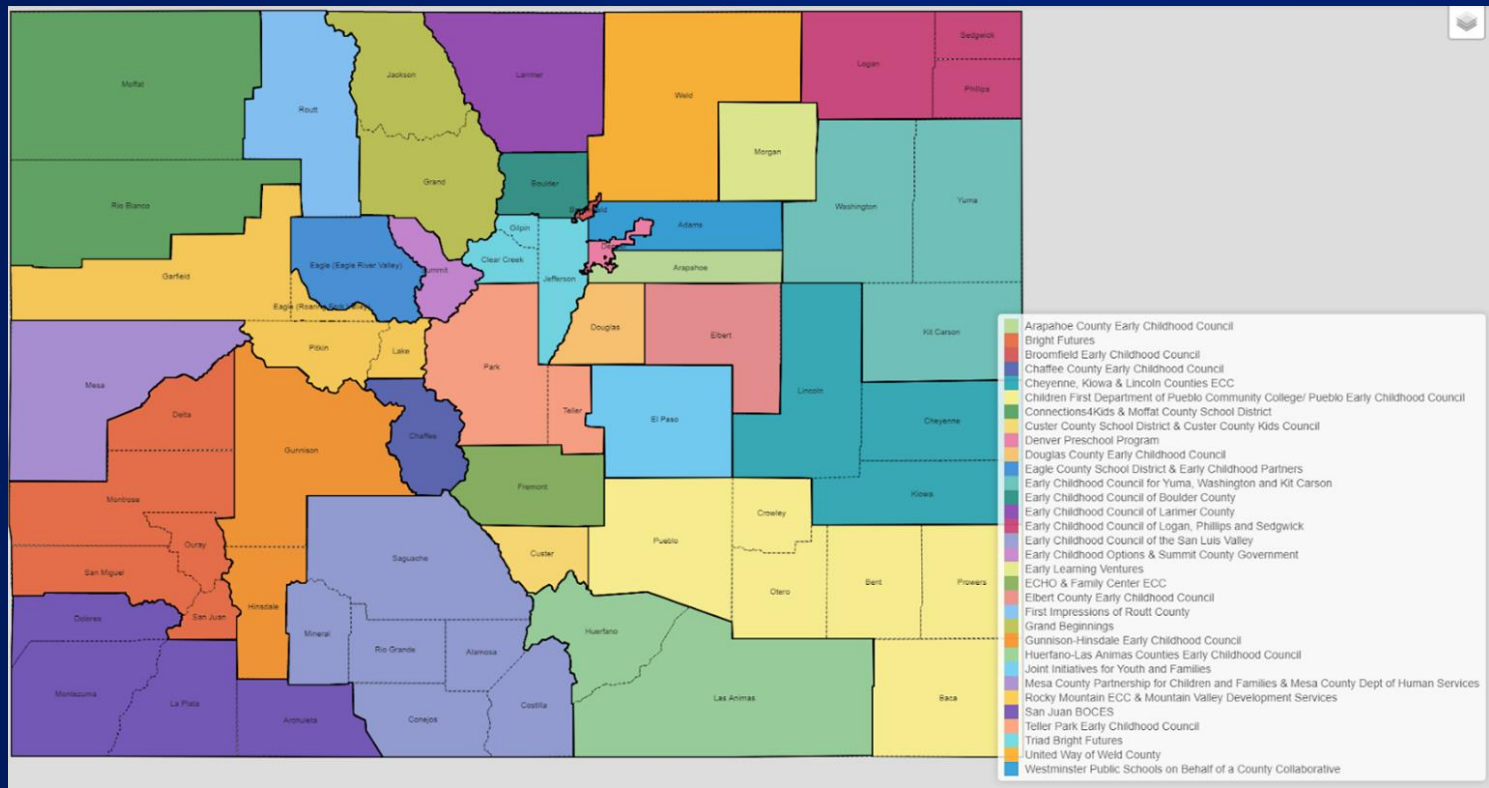


# Early Childhood Budget Requests

- R-01- Universal Preschool (UPK)** - \$325 million from the cash fund to pay preschool providers
- R-02- Increasing UPK Participation** - \$4.9 million to increase provider and family participation in UPK
- R-03- UPK Provider Bonuses** - \$5 million for bonuses to providers who offer universal preschool in the first year
- R-04- Early Intervention Caseload Adjustment** - \$0.4 million to restore Early Intervention eligibility
- R-05- Equity in the Department of Early Childhood** - \$2.8 million to support investments in equity, including translation of communications and coursework, and a CDEC Equity Lead and Tribal & County Liaison
- R-06- Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Support Line** - \$0.4 million for the ECMH support line
- R-07- Continuation of Federal Stimulus Strategies** - \$102.3 million federal stimulus funding to continue lasting investments in the early childhood system
- R-08- Records and Reports Cash Fund Solution** - \$0.2 million reduction and statutory change to separate CDEC and CDHS utilization of the fund
- R-09- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training Restoration** - \$0.15 million for child abuse prevention
- R-10- Provider Rate Increase** - 3% Community Provider Rate Increase (\$6.4 million)
- R-11- Nurse Home Visitor Program Spending Authority** - \$1.0 million spending authority for nurse home visiting
- R-12- Right-Sizing Quality Improvement Grants Funding** - \$0.4 million reduction to align with historical spending
- R-13- Transfer of FTE Between CDEC and CDHS**- net neutral \$0.4 million change to true-up FTE between the two departments



# Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs)



- 32 LCOs across the state - covering all regions
- Currently in training and implementing on community plans



# UPK Universal Application

- System live to LCOs
  - Providers live
  - Test use
  - Family application launches January 17
- 
- Families can search participating providers, prioritize choices, connect
  - Providers can customize program information and highlights
  - Review applications
  - Connect with families

# Provider Rates by LCO

LCO	2023-2024 Part-Time Rate (10h)	2023-2024 Half-Day Rate (15h)	2023-2024 Full-Day Rate (30h)
Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council	\$4,742.88	\$5,926.69	\$10,544.48
Bright Futures	\$4,916.60	\$6,143.77	\$10,723.48
Broomfield Early Childhood Council	\$4,680.51	\$5,848.75	\$10,474.13
Chaffee County Early Childhood Council	\$4,816.14	\$6,018.24	\$10,600.78
Cheyenne, Kiowa & Lincoln Counties ECC	\$4,847.65	\$6,057.62	\$10,581.52
Children First Department of Pueblo Community College/ Pueblo Early Childhood Council	\$5,042.11	\$6,300.61	\$10,873.61
Connections4Kids & Moffat County School District	\$5,072.89	\$6,339.07	\$11,055.08
Custer County School District & Custer County Kids Council	\$4,735.83	\$5,917.88	\$10,474.33
Denver Preschool Program	\$4,883.22	\$6,102.06	\$10,748.93
Douglas County Early Childhood Council	\$4,662.16	\$5,825.82	\$10,449.21
Eagle County School District & Early Childhood Partners	\$4,851.20	\$6,062.05	\$10,762.67
Early Childhood Council for Yuma, Washington and Kit Carson	\$4,779.01	\$5,971.83	\$10,553.20
Early Childhood Council of Boulder County	\$4,842.16	\$6,050.75	\$10,716.69
Early Childhood Council of Larimer County	\$4,757.44	\$5,944.89	\$10,511.26
Early Childhood Council of Logan, Phillips and Sedgwick	\$4,806.31	\$6,005.95	\$10,527.24
Early Childhood Council of the San Luis Valley	\$5,060.23	\$6,323.25	\$10,841.52
Early Childhood Options & Summit County Government	\$4,895.25	\$6,117.09	\$10,872.90
Early Learning Ventures	\$4,792.23	\$5,988.36	\$10,508.05
ECHO & Family Center ECC	\$4,885.88	\$6,105.38	\$10,674.55
Elbert County Early Childhood Council	\$4,724.82	\$5,904.13	\$10,570.18
First Impressions of Routt County	\$4,899.16	\$6,121.98	\$10,864.11
Grand Beginnings	\$4,921.04	\$6,149.32	\$10,885.94
Gunnison-Hinsdale Early Childhood Council	\$4,856.34	\$6,068.47	\$10,669.68
Huerfano-Las Animas Counties Early Childhood Council	\$5,016.18	\$6,268.21	\$10,815.48
Joint Initiatives for Youth and Families	\$4,735.40	\$5,917.35	\$10,469.89
Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families & Mesa County Dept of Human Services	\$4,759.02	\$5,946.85	\$10,428.72
Rocky Mountain ECC & Mountain Valley Development Services	\$4,877.41	\$6,094.80	\$10,830.27
San Juan BOCES	\$4,870.04	\$6,085.59	\$10,681.32
Teller Park Early Childhood Council	\$4,794.32	\$5,990.97	\$10,649.80
Triad Bright Futures	\$4,713.94	\$5,890.53	\$10,513.26
United Way of Weld County	\$4,732.93	\$5,914.25	\$10,459.08
Westminster Public Schools on Behalf of a County Collaborative	\$4,828.39	\$6,017.28	\$10,642.96
<b>AVERAGE:</b>	<b>\$4,837.46</b>	<b>\$6,044.37</b>	<b>\$10,655.45</b>



# What's Ahead


- UPK Comms Plan
- Family Application opens January 17
- Quality standards



## CCCAP and UPK

- RAC County Subcommittee will consider recommendations
- Training will roll out in the spring for county human services staff

# Stimulus Funding Overviews



**COLORADO**  
Office of Early Childhood  
Department of Human Services

**State and Federal Stimulus Strategies**  
Ensure All Families Have Equitable and Easy Access


The Office of Early Childhood seeks to ensure all families have equitable and easy access to high quality early care and education services so that all children start school ready to succeed.

**Activity 1:  
Child Care  
Stabilization  
Grants**

«» This activity provides more than 4,700 eligible child care providers that were in operation as of March 11, 2021 with recurring operational grant payments with amounts based on licensed capacity and quality level, with additional bonus awards added for providers meeting certain family needs, including providing care for infants and toddlers, offering nontraditional hours, and serving children with special needs, to both reflect the increased costs associated with meeting certain family needs and incentivize other providers to begin offering care in these areas. • These recurring grants will help Colorado maintain licensed child care capacity through a mixed delivery system, ensure early childhood educators remain fully compensated, and provide financial relief to families through reduced or waived tuition or copayments. This activity builds on the \$35 million State General Fund appropriation for sustainability grants that were allocated in House Bill 20B-1002. • Funding Source: ARP • Funding Amount: \$221,694,958 (Note that \$101,516,223 of this total is required to be used by providers to reduce family tuition and is also reflected as a family strengthening activity).

**Activity 2:  
Employer  
based  
Child Care  
Facilities**

⤴⤵ This program will provide financial assistance to employers to construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care center to provide licensed child care services on- or near-site to its employees. This program is expected to fund the creation of between 10-25 new child care centers with a maximum award of \$800,000. Eligible employers must provide a financial match of 50% for for-profit employers and 25% match for nonprofit or government employers. • Families in Colorado face a number of challenges accessing child care, including long wait lists, limited locations near work or home, or no local licensed child care options. These issues may worsen with increased demand for care as families return to work, population growth, and the implementation of Universal Preschool. This program will help address these issues and build more child care capacity. • Funding Source: State General Fund • Funding Amount: \$8,800,000



**COLORADO**  
Office of Early Childhood  
Department of Human Services

**State and Federal Stimulus Strategies**  
Support the Early Care and Education Workforce


The Office of Early Childhood supports the early care and education workforce, to expand the number of educators in the state, and equip them with the tools they need to nurture and teach children in their care.

**Activity 1:  
Sustainability  
Grants for  
Workforce  
Retention**

«» This activity will provide early care and education workforce retention grants to any of the nearly 4,700 eligible licensed child care providers to support the retention of more than 24,000 early childhood professionals in Colorado. Eligible child care providers may use their grant for areas including employee benefits, employee compensation, professional development, and hiring additional staff. • COVID-19 has affected the child care industry in Colorado with approximately 10% of child care businesses closing and a 23% decline in the early childhood workforce according to research done by Early Milestones. The child care system was fragile before COVID-19 and is now even more vulnerable to a collapse. This activity will help child care providers sustain their workforce, a vital component to keeping facilities open and operating. • Funding Source: CRSA & ARP • Funding Amount: \$49,817,600 (\$35,000,000 CRSA; \$14,817,600 ARP)

**Activity 2:  
Workforce  
Recruitment  
& Retention  
Programs**

«»⤴⤵ This activity will create an Early Care and Education (ECE) Recruitment and Retention Grant and Scholarship Program that will provide 1,200 current and potential early childhood professionals with financial assistance to draw from a menu of options, adaptable to local needs, to support their access to education and training in order to help them earn credits, credentials, and degrees, and meet child care licensing requirements to serve as qualified workers or obtain a higher level of qualification. The program will help address the early childhood workforce need in Colorado by providing educators a variety of pathways to the profession. • Colorado, like many states, is facing a shortage of early childhood professionals, and the implementation of universal preschool will only increase demand. This activity will result in an increase in qualified early childhood professionals, alleviating workforce shortages and better preparing the state for universal preschool. • Funding Source: CRSA & CCDF Base • Funding Amount: \$11,732,524 (\$9,332,524 CRSA; \$2,400,000 CCDF Base)



**COLORADO**  
Office of Early Childhood  
Department of Human Services

**State and Federal Stimulus Strategies**  
Family Strengthening

The Office of Early Childhood provides communities and families with the support they need so children have a healthy environment in which to thrive.

**Activity 1:  
Reduced  
Child Care  
Tuition for  
Families**

«» This activity will dedicate over \$100 million from the child care stabilization grants (see the Access handout) to reduce or eliminate child care tuition payments for families. COVID-19 continues to be economically devastating for child care providers. • As many families across the state lost income, they stopped sending their children to child care, thus reducing the tuition payments child care providers depend on to stay open. This activity will help families to enroll in child care by allowing providers to reduce or eliminate tuition payments. This will support families to return to work, help build back enrollment numbers at child care facilities across Colorado, and result in \$100 million kept in the pockets of families across the state, with families saving an average of \$450 per child over the grant. • Funding Source: ARP • Funding Amount: \$101,516,223

**Activity 2:  
Reducing  
CCCAP  
Copayments**

⤴ This activity will lower the cost of child care for low-income families enrolled in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) by lowering the parent fee that families pay out of pocket to a maximum of 10% of gross income. This strategy also invests in a communications strategy to ensure eligible families are aware of CCCAP and its benefits. • Cost of care is a major barrier for many families trying to access licensed, high-quality child care. By reducing the copayment families pay for CCCAP, more families will be able to enroll their children in care, thus being able to work or attend school, with more money left over for food, transportation, housing, and other vital costs. • Funding Source: CRSA • Funding Amount: \$6,307,914

# Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

Stakeholder engagement will remain critical to the success of CDEC and the universal preschool program. Stakeholders can expect to remain informed and engaged through the following new and existing channels:

- CDEC Website: [cdec.colorado.gov](https://cdec.colorado.gov)
- Sign up for the [CDEC Newsletter](#)
- Follow the CDEC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#)
- [Feedback Form](#)
- Newsletter updates through the [Our Voice Newsletter](#)
  - Please sign up for *Our Voice* to continue to receive updates!
- ECLC monthly Town Halls
  - Next Town Hall: Tuesday, January 10 at 5:30pm



# THANK YOU

Keep in touch!

[maryalice.cohen@state.co.us](mailto:maryalice.cohen@state.co.us)



@COEarlyChildhood  
@PrimeraInfanciaCO



@COEarlyChild



COEarlyChildhood



Colorado Department of Early  
Childhood



Newsletter  
[cdec.colorado.gov](http://cdec.colorado.gov)