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Final Recommendations and Implementation Report

Illinois PDG B-5 ECCE Governance Strategic Planning Facilitation

(ISBE contract 19-586SBE-CHFED-B-5918)

DECEMBER 2019

Eboni Howard | Kathleen Jones | Patricia Garcia-Arena | Nora Stagner

MAKING RESEARCH **RELEVANT**

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Executive Summary

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is contracted to support the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) to provide research and recommendations regarding early childhood care and education (ECCE) governance as the state engages in activities related to its Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) initiative. The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations to GOECD on ECCE governance to inform potential future reorganization of Illinois's early childhood services and programs governance structure, with an implementation plan on how recommendations could be executed. The recommendations arise from information AIR gathered from a review of Illinois administrative, fiscal, and governance documents and an examination of other state governance models. This organization of the report includes the following six sections: (1) guiding questions, (2) methodology and limitations, (3) a review of Illinois' current governance structure, (4) a review of other state governance structures, (5) recommendations, and (6) a proposed implementation plan.

In collecting information to help guide Illinois' perspectives and possible changes in ECCE governance, we were guided by the following questions:

1. What is the current status of ECCE governance in Illinois? What agencies are involved in Illinois' ECCE governance?
2. What is the status of ECCE governance in other states? What agencies are involved, and what are the policy issues or questions that states were attempting to address?
3. What challenges have states faced in implementing their governance system?
4. What governance models would be most applicable to the Illinois context?

Based on the review of the existing documents and expert interviews, we offer six recommendations for Illinois related to ECCE governance.

- **Recommendation 1.** Create a share, strategic vision and set of strategic goals for Illinois ECCE system of what Illinois wants to achieve by its governance structure.
- **Recommendation 2**. Develop a decision-making process for establishing the benefits and costs of changing governance structures.
- **Recommendation 3.** Reach consensus on the function of the governance structure, aligned to its strategic vision and goals.

- **Recommendation 4**. Inventory the state's capacity and resources needed to change the governance structure.
- **Recommendation 5.** Begin to make the change from existing governance structures already in place; augment the authority and funding for GOECD.
- **Recommendation 6.** Do not consider a governance model a "silver bullet" for improving ECCE systems.

We conclude by providing implementation approaches on how these six recommendations could be executed.

Introduction/Purpose

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is contracted to support the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) to provide research and recommendations regarding early childhood care and education (ECCE) governance as the state engages in activities related to its Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) initiative. The PDG B-5 initiative, which supports state efforts to study and plan ways to better integrate its mixed ECCE systems, helps to address a critical challenge in what has come to be known as the "patchwork" system of ECCE in the United States. ECCE in Illinois and across the United States is provided by a wide range of programs, including federal Head Start, state prekindergarten, and subsidies from the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant. This mixture of disparate systems results in fragmented funding and services as well as compartmentalized data on the impact of the services. (Demma, 2010; Kamerman, 2006; Regenstein & Lipper, 2013).

The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations to GOECD on ECCE governance to inform potential future reorganization of Illinois' early childhood services and programs governance structure, with an implementation plan on how recommendations could be executed. The recommendations arise from information that AIR gathered from a review of Illinois administrative, fiscal, and governance documents and an examination of other state governance models. This report includes the following six sections: (1) guiding questions, (2) methodology and limitations, (3) a review of Illinois' current governance structure, (4) a review of other state governance structures, (5) recommendations, and (6) a proposed implementation plan.

Guiding Questions

ECCE programs in the United States have been rooted in multiple systems of care (e.g., education, health services, human services, social services), resulting in numerous governance

structures that administer different funding, services, and data systems, often on behalf of similar populations of young children and their families (Demma, 2010; Illgen, Stebbins, Barnett, & Fahey, 2011; Kamerman, 2006). Federal, state, and local administrators have long recognized the complexities and inefficiencies of operating separate governance systems. Particularly in the last decade, there have been several efforts among states to integrate or collaborate across ECCE administrative systems to provide a more cohesive set of programs and services for children and families (Demma, 2010; Early Childhood Data Collaborative, 2011; Illgen et al., 2011). In collecting information to help drive Illinois' perspectives and possible changes in ECCE governance, we were guided by the following questions:

1. What is the current status of ECCE governance in Illinois? What agencies are involved in Illinois' ECCE governance?
2. What is the status of ECCE governance in other states? What agencies are involved, and what are the policy issues or questions that states were attempting to address?
3. What challenges have states faced in implementing their governance system?
4. What governance models would be most applicable to the Illinois context?

Methodology

To answer these questions, we collected documents related to three topical ECCE areas: (1) best practices in governance in the United States, (2) examples of state governance models, and (3) the Illinois early childhood governance model. In our review of each topical area, we took a slightly different methodological approach. In the subsequent sections we will summarize the methods taken for each topic area.

Review of Best Practices in Early Childhood Governance

We began by reviewing general documents about ECCE governance, including descriptions of the governance models in multiple states. These documents included reports recommended based on AIR's knowledge of the field as well as documents found by searching the internet and Education Information Resources Center (ERIC). We reviewed these articles to identify best practices, guidelines, definitions, and general information about governance models as well as guidance about which states to target for the next phase of review.

Review of Existing Illinois Governance Reports

The documents we reviewed on Illinois' existing governance structure were collected from GOECD and an internet search relating to early childhood systems governance from publicly available sources such as websites of Illinois agencies that administer ECCE programs. We reviewed the documents, culling them for information on these topics:

- Agencies described as part of Illinois' ECCE governance structure
- Role of the Illinois Early Learning Council
- Rationale for the current governance structure
- Vision of and purpose for an improved Illinois governance structure

We reviewed 10 documents relating to early childhood governance in the state of Illinois. A list of documents reviewed is available in Appendix A.

Review of Other State Early Childhood Governance Models

We reviewed 12 states' ECCE governance structures based on existing publicly available documents (a total of 51 documents were reviewed, which are listed in Appendix B). The 12 states were selected as a result of GOECD recommendations, coordination with other GOECD-involved initiatives such as the Illinois Early Childhood Finance Commission (Ruiz, 2019), and recommendations from the national experts we interviewed for this project. After state selection was complete, we conducted a targeted search for publicly available documents that discuss state governance and administrative structures in those states. We focused on governance documents that GOECD shared with us, documents publicly available on the internet, and knowledge from the AIR team.

The research team then created and implemented Excel databases for the coding process. We developed a coding protocol, consisting of key report elements common across articles and targeted to answer the above research questions. The final list of topics for the coding protocol included the following:

- Governance model type
- General description of structure
- Date founded
- Effectiveness of current model
- Strengths/benefits

- Weaknesses/challenges
- Current initiatives/opportunities
- Agency name
- Justifications for its creation or continued operation
- Funding source
- Head of agency

After coding and organizing the governance documents, we performed a quality assurance check, then examined codes for themes and patterns. After this analysis step, we created a summary profile of the analysis results for each state.

Expert Interviews

In addition to the document review methods, we also conducted semistructured interviews with five individuals who are national experts on the topic of ECCE governance. These experts were selected based on several criteria, including GOECD's recommendations, the experts' publication records on the topic, and AIR's knowledge of their work with states on governance issues. The telephone interviews lasted up to 60 minutes and included these topics:

- Strengths and challenges for different governance structures
- How a state should select and implement governance structures
- Exemplary states with respect to their ECCE governance structures
- Thoughts about Illinois' ECCE governance structure, and
- Key indicators to help states know whether their governance model works.

The interviewer and a note-taker took notes during and immediately after the interview. The interview notes were thematically coded based on the topics covered and summarized.

Limitations

The primary limitation of the methods for this project was the limited detailed information available about governance issues in existing, public documents. Not all states provided publicly available, detailed written material about their governance structure with information about how their governance structure was implemented, why it was changed, how it was funded, and whether it was any more effective in supporting children and families than their previous governance structure. Details about the resources needed to sustain the governance structure (e.g., financial and human resources) or the effectiveness of the governance structure for

improving service use, access, equity, coordination, and collaboration were particularly sparse. When information was available, documents tended to focus on strengths rather than challenges and weaknesses of a state's current governance structure.

Although we selected and interviewed experts who worked with multiple states on governance, including some familiar with Illinois and therefore in a position to provide advice and commentary relevant to Illinois, it was a small sample. We also only interviewed one person who personally had experience being part of a state governance system-change process. It could have been beneficial to interview additional state administrators who lead or are currently managing ECCE programs within a new governance structure.

Review of Illinois' Current Governance Structure

This section provides a summary of Illinois' ECCE governance structure, including a description of GOECD, several agencies administering ECCE programs in the state, and the state's Early Learning Council (ELC). Illinois has a mixed-delivery system for its ECCE programs that is spread across several state agencies and numerous state and federal policies and funding sources. The four key agencies and the 14 ECCE programs they administer are listed in Exhibit 1. Each program is described in greater detail in Appendix C.

Exhibit 1. Illinois State Agencies for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programs

Illinois Agency	ECCE Programs
Illinois Department of Human Services (ILDHS)	1. Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), with funding from the Child Care and Development Block Grant 2. Early intervention 3. Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting 4. Illinois Head Start State Collaboration Office 5. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low-income families buy food. 6. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) provides temporary financial and health-care coverage for pregnant women and families. 7. Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides food assistance to women, infants, and children. It helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well and stay healthy.
Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)	8. Prevention Initiative, as part of the Early Childhood Block Grant 9. Preschool For All (PFA), as part of the Early Childhood Block Grant 10. Title I Preschool: Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Act as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 11. Early childhood special education programs, federally funded through IDEA Part B, Section 619

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (ILDHS)	12. Child-care licensing of non–school-based child-care centers and homes 13. Foster care and adoption services
Illinois Department of Human Services(ILDHS)	14. All Kids, using both Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Along with these four state agencies, GOECD also is part of the Illinois' ECCE governance structure. GOECD serves as a coordinating body for the state agencies that administer ECCE programs. GOECD does not have any fiscal or administrative authority in its role as a coordinator with these agencies, or the ECCE programs the agencies administer. The purpose of GOECD is to coordinate various state initiatives to create an integrated system of quality ECCE programs across agencies (GOECD, 2019a). GOECD's primary function is to support the governance and system building of ECCE programs throughout the state. GOECD's roles are to:

- Cocreate and advance a comprehensive vision for early childhood systems,
- Provide leadership on the issues that are relevant across state agencies,
- Facilitate sharing of ELC recommendations through state agencies, and
- Convene the interagency team of early childhood program managers across agencies to facilitate implementation of recommendations to multiple systems from the ELC.

Another primary role of GOECD is to support the work of the state's statutory advisory council, the ELC. Illinois' the ELC is a public–private partnership that was created under Public Act 93-380 to coordinate existing programs and services for children from birth to age 5. The ELC is the leading advisory body for Illinois' early childhood system. Its membership includes public agency representatives, service providers, private funders, advocates, and family organizations. The ELC consists of a full council, an Executive Committee, four other standing committees, and multiple subcommittees. The ELC's Executive Committee guides the work of the other four standing committees. The committees and subcommittees of the ELC are listed in Appendix C.

All 10 governance documents reviewed provide a rationale for Illinois' current multi-agency ECCE governance structure of individual agencies, with a central coordinating body – the GOECD. Eight of the 10 documents reviewed focused on specific desired outcomes expected from the current multi-agency governance structure related to creating a shared vision for the ECCE system and improving the quality, access, coordination, and funding of the ECCE system. These expected outcomes from the Illinois governance structure include:

- Creation of a shared vision
- Improvement in quality and access

- Coordination of services
- Funding opportunities to improve funding allocation and distribution

Review of Other States' ECCE Governance Structures

Although governance looks different in every state, most governance structures fall into one of three basic models: coordinated governance (coordination), consolidated governance (consolidation), or creation of a new agency (creation) (Regenstein & Lipper, 2013). In the coordination model, early childhood programs and services are housed in various government agencies, and these agencies are expected to work together to collaborate and coordinate their efforts. This coordination can be accomplished through interagency agreements; an advisory board, such as a children's cabinet; or the state governor's office. In a consolidation model, all or most early childhood programs and services are administered by a single existing executive branch agency. Most often, this agency is the state education agency. In the creation model, the state creates a new executive branch-level agency, or a new entity within an existing agency, with accountability for all early childhood programs and services.

Governance Structures Used by Other States

We reviewed the governance structures of 12 states and the year the governance structure was created (Exhibit 2). Four of the 12 states we reviewed have a coordinated entity structure, similar to that in Illinois. Four states have independent agencies. Two states have structures classified as "other." In the case of Pennsylvania, although the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning is a consolidated agency, we classify it as "other" because it is part of two cabinet-level state agency departments: education and human services. Wisconsin also is categorized as "other" because its governance structure is unclear; it seems to be comprised of five or more offices with no clear coordinating body. Finally, two states, Maryland and Louisiana, have consolidated agency structures.

Exhibit 2. States Reviewed and Their Governance Structure

State	Governance Model	Year Created
Alabama	Independent agency	2015
Colorado	Coordinated entity	2012
Georgia	Independent agency	2004
Louisiana	Consolidated entity	2012–15
Maryland	Consolidated agency	2015
Massachusetts	Independent agency	2005
Nebraska	Coordinated entity	Unknown
Ohio	Coordinated entity	2019

Pennsylvania	Other	2006–07
Texas	Coordinated entity	2013
Washington	Independent agency	2016
Wisconsin	Other	2012

Effectiveness of Governance Structures

A common question among states, including Illinois, is *"What is the most effective governance structure for ECCE programs?"* Understanding the effectiveness of a state's selected early childhood governance model is not easy. Attempting to determine the effectiveness may involve addressing several questions, such as the following:

- Does the operating governance structure facilitate the implementation of the state's strategic vision and goals for early childhood services?
- Does the governance structure raise the visibility and funding of ECCE?
- Does the governance structure improve efficiencies in administrative management?
- Does the governance structure improve efficiencies in the use and equitable distribution of program funding?
- What impact does the governance structure have on cross-functional activities, such as program monitoring, program quality, workforce recruitment and retention, professional development, program technical assistance, and data systems?

From the documents reviewed, we found information about governance structure effectiveness in six states—Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Texas.[1] Interestingly, three of these states use independent agency governance models. For example, one document reviewing various states' governance models claimed that Georgia's independent agency governance structure improved the state's ability to monitor quality of services and fiscal standards across all programs (New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership, 2016). Information about Alabama also suggested that having an independent agency structure changed the state's national reputation from "worst to first" in ECCE metrics of program quality (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2019, p. 21). In Massachusetts, the independent governance structure was reported to promote consistency and expand access to child care for families involved with the Department of Social Services (Strategies for Children & Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy, 2008). Similarly, Louisiana's consolidated ECCE governance structure was considered to have contributed to the state preschool program's

[1] Pennsylvania is classified as having an "other" governance model. The governance model is a consolidated agency that is part of two cabinet-level departments: education and human services.

achievement of meeting eight of 10 of the National Institute for Early Education Research's quality benchmarks (Lieberman, 2018). In Pennsylvania, the creation of an ECCE governance structure by an administrative as opposed to legislative approval process was said to have made its creation more efficient (BUILD Initiative, 2015). In Texas, which has a coordinated governance system, any community that receives state or federal funding for home visiting is required to participate in an early childhood system's coordinating group. These coalitions are encouraged to identify community priority outcomes using the Results-Based Accountability framework (Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, 2018).

All five experts we interviewed said a state needs to start by assessing whether its current governance model is effective by judging how well the model advances what is defined as "success" for the state . All experts noted that state leaders need to be clear about their goals for governance; in other words, state leadership must ask itself, "What does the state want to get out of its governance structure?"

> *Make having the conversation about what success looks like as part of your decision-making process. Options [for success] need to be discussed as part of thoughtful process. Having that conversation and agreeing on that set of indicators is more important than the specific indicators themselves. Any expert can recommend ways to tell if you've succeeded or not, but the purpose is to make sure that everyone is on the same page of what matters to [the state].*

For example, the goals of a governance structure may be to decrease fragmentation, increase coordination between ECCE services , expand quality, and/or ensure that the state's resources are being leveraged and distributed equitably for a set of ECCE services and programs. Three experts explicitly stated that part of assessing effectiveness is to determine whether the structure improves access and use of ECCE services for children and families; states must ask, "What would that look like as far as the process of helping families access ECCE services?" One expert said that an effective system looks like "standardization, automating policies and procedures. Coordinated enrollment: I think families have one place to go to apply to a system no matter where it comes from, and they have one set of forms to fill out."

> *…[effectiveness is] shared funds, shared accountability, shared data, shared decision making based on that shared data, shared understanding of the problem, communication with the people you are trying to benefit… it is a game changer when people have a shared understanding of the experiences of the people they are trying to help. Having the conversation about what success looks like as part of your decision-making process. Options [for success] need to be discussed as part of thoughtful process. Having that conversation and agreeing on that set of indicators is more important than the specific indicators themselves. Any expert can recommend ways to tell if you've succeeded or not, but the purpose is to make sure that everyone is on the same page of what matters to [the state].*

Benefits and Challenges of Different Governance Structures

Seven of the 12 states reviewed included documentation on the strengths and benefits of their chosen governance model. From the documents reviewed, a range of strengths and benefits emerged. The most commonly noted benefit of an independent or coordinated entity is increased information sharing across various state agencies (Exhibit 3).

Based on the documents reviewed, only two of the 12 states noted a challenge stemming from their governance structure. According to Washington state, the change in governance made the silos in Washington state government more apparent. When the state moved all of its early childhood services under one department, the Department of Early Learning, lack of communication or collaboration among service groups became even more problematic and obvious than under the old structure (New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership, 2016). In Louisiana, the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (2019) expressed concern about Act 3, the law that consolidated the state's governance, licensing, accountability, and funding structure of all publicly funded early learning programs for children birth through age 4 in Louisiana under one department, the Department of Education and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). While the law changed governance and administrative processes it did nothing to increase funding or address disparities in public funding across programs. One takeaway message is that despite the change in governance, Louisiana is providing publicly funded ECCE to only 15% of the state's at-risk children (Lieberman, 2018) and there is concern that more vulnerable children under age 4 will end up in lower quality or unregulated ECCE settings (Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, 2019).

Exhibit 3. Strengths and Challenges of Governance Models by State, Based on Document Review

State	Governance Model	Strengths	Challenges
Alabama	Independent agency	• Improved program quality	• None noted in the documents reviewed
Colorado	Coordinated entity	• Increased information sharing • Improved program quality	• None noted in the documents reviewed
Georgia	Independent agency	• Improved efficiencies: – Increased information sharing – Ease of monitoring programs	• None noted in the documents reviewed
Massachusetts	Independent agency	• Serve more children • Improved efficiencies: – Alignment of resources, standards, and policies	• None noted in the documents reviewed
Louisiana	Consolidated entity	• Increase standards • Increase program accountability	• Insufficient funding to support new structure • Does not address the current disparity in public early childhood care and education funding
Texas	Coordinated entity	• Structured process • Common goals	• None noted in the documents reviewed
Washington	Independent agency	• Improved efficiencies: – Increased information sharing – Ease of monitoring programs	• Some silos are more obvious – Lack of communication – Increased collaboration problems

All five experts we interviewed unanimously agreed and strongly emphasized that there is no single "right" governance model. They all felt that a change in the governance structure will not automatically lead to improved collaboration, coordination, and efficiencies in funding, distribution, and access to services.

> *I think that there is no magic bullet with a single governance structure that will lead to improved outcomes…. Creation of a single governance structure in and of itself without a focus on alignment/service delivery doesn't work…. If you only change the governance structure without changing the policy alignment piece and [without] active engagement from key leaders, and an active agreement that the goal is to align [services], then the governance structure won't work.*

The strengths and challenges of different governance models, as articulated by the national experts we interviewed, are detailed in Exhibit 44. The BUILD Initiative also provides a detailed table on the strengths and weaknesses of the three primary governance models from their state review several years ago (Regenstein & Lipper, 2013, p. 18).

Exhibit 4. Strengths and Challenges of Governance Models Noted by National Experts

Governance Model	Strengths	Challenges
Coordinated entity	• Increased information sharing • Increased visibility for early childhood care and education (ECCE) • Increased conversations across relevant ECCE agencies and entities	• May not have authority or funding to influence agencies that control ECCE programs. • Midlevel agency leadership and agency heads are not really involved. • Degree of influence over other agencies changes with the governor. • Sustainability
Consolidated agency	• Increased visibility for ECCE when the agency has strong leadership, collaboration, alignment, and a unified vision • Increased aligned and better coordinated policies and practices • Higher level agency leader at an appointee level who has a lot of authority • Improved operational efficiencies	• Decreased visibility for ECCE when there is no strong leadership, strong voice, or coordination; ECCE can get deprioritized within the agency it is consolidated within. • Adopting an existing "agency culture" that may not fit with ECCE culture. • Not all ECCE programs are consolidated. • Need to have ongoing structures to coordinate with other ECCE programs and services that are not part of the consolidation. • Can be disruptive for the existing programs and leaders in the agency; can cause disengagement and fragmentation. • Need a way of systematically and strategically coordinate policies within the agency. • Centralizing everything in one department does not mean that all that needs to be coordinated and standardized actually is. • Will not have perfect coordinated across all programs and functions. • Easy to replicate the same pitfalls as before consolidation.

Governance Model	Strengths	Challenges
Independent agency	• There is a unified vision. • Increased visibility for ECCE • Higher level agency leadership at an appointee level who has a lot of authority • Improved operational efficiencies • Agency has its own power and money.	• Not all ECCE programs are in the new agency. • Still need to have ongoing structures to coordinate with other programs and services not in the agency. • Centralizing everything in one department does not mean that all that needs to be coordinated and standardized actually is. • Will not have perfect coordination across all programs and functions. • The new childhood agency does not have the same "cache," leadership level, and respect as the other long-standing state agencies. • Takes a lot of political capital. • Easy to replicate the same pitfalls as before consolidation. • Big change initiatives take strategic thought, capacity, buy-in, and funding. • Takes a lot of time building new entity.

Funding Sources

We reviewed documents for information about how the 12 selected states funded their ECCE governance structure. Exhibit 5 provides a summary. The documents we reviewed did not always provide information about how the governance structure was funded. Six of the states we reviewed noted the funding source for their governance structure. Three of these six state governance structures are financed by state sources. The remaining three state models for which we have information are funded by a combination of federal, state, and other funding sources.

Exhibit 5. Governance Structure Funding Sources

State	Governance Model	Funding Source Provided
Alabama	Independent agency	State operating budget
Colorado	Coordinated entity	State operating budget
Georgia	Independent agency	Federal funding, state operating budget, and other[a]
Louisiana	Consolidated agency	Federal funding, state operating budget, and other
Massachusetts	Independent agency	Federal funding, state operating budget, and other
Washington	Independent agency	State operating budget

[a] "Other" is defined as a "braided" funding effort among the Department of Public Instruction, Department of Children and Families, and Department of Health Services.

Recommendations

There is general agreement that states would benefit by having a coherent governance system to manage many, if not all, types of early childhood programs and services: early learning, care, family support, health (including mental health and nutrition), and special needs/early intervention (Goffin, Martella, & Coffman, 2011). However, all of the experts we interviewed noted that is difficult or at least unusual to be able to organize all ECCE services under one administrative governance structure. Thus, a governance structure alone will not fix broken programs, increase state capacity, crystalize leadership and management processes, or increase efficiency by improving results for the same or fewer financial resources (Regenstein, 2019). Changing the governance structure does not in itself reduce gaps in access to quality services or improve collaboration and coordination across disparate programs (Regenstein, 2019).

The experts unanimously agreed that Illinois' current structure should be changed, but there was less consensus among this group of national governance experts about if that means a totally new governance structure immediately. Most of the experts leaned toward recommending that the GOECD be empowered as the first step towards an improved ECCE governance structure for Illinois. This may be because experts all agreed that the actual governance model a state picks is not what is important; silos, lack of coordination and collaboration, and inefficiency can happen with any type of governance model. However, as indicated in the recommendations in Exhibit 6 below, the experts leaned toward proposing that Illinois consider improving or enhancing the coordination model, with GOECD serving as the coordinating body with the assistance of the ELC.

Exhibit 6. Suggestions From Experts for Governance in Illinois

State	Governance Model	Expert Quote
Expert 1	Empowered Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) or consolidated into existing agency, either ISBE or IDHS	…[could] have in place ongoing sustainable funding… could be something more than what Illinois currently has that provides the funding and authority over Early Childhood. If you don't have the authority, and you don't have the ability to systematically articulate what the tasks are across programs, all the coordination at the state level won't make that much of a difference. [Challenge with new agency] often not at the same level as the other state agencies…. When moving to change your model, and would still suggest consolidation as the approach, need to be clear about WHY you are consolidating.
Expert 2	Empowered GOECD	As a current model, Illinois [current governance model] is not particularly functional…. Even if not creating a new agency, you don't have to go from zero to sixty. What are the steps between here and creating a new agency that would make the system more organized? Let's try something, let's try a governor's office (GOECD) with some teeth and really commit to that and see how that goes. If that doesn't work, then say okay, what do we need to learn?

State	Governance Model	Expert Quote
		We know the current system doesn't work, but there is no vision of what working looks like.
Expert 3	The model doesn't matter.	Doesn't matter [the model]. Need a model that can [be] aligned to rules and standards to make it easier for children and families to access services. A model needs to align the process and regulations.
Expert 4	Empowered GOECD	GOECD has been the public center and holding vision. They keep going… no matter what else is going on. GOECD is impressive. And, I don't think it would just be the end of the world if they [Governor's office] give them more money or more teeth, but that may only be good as long as you have a supportive Governor. When the governor changes and another one comes in that is not supportive, their role could change.
Expert 5	Independent agency	[GOECD] is currently one of a convening…. But at the end of the day, GOECD doesn't have the authority…. We need an administrative structure to facilitate that…. I know from the past that I would think there isn't currently an agency that would work. There's such a strong history of reasons why none of these agencies would be great [for consolidation]. I could see Illinois being a good candidate for a creation model, but I can't imagine it being a popular choice because of the cost…. I can't picture consolidation working. I think creating something new could be really unpopular, but maybe exciting.

The experts agreed that alignment among programs guided by clear strategic goals and commitment leadership can help improve the current status quo. Based on the review of the existing documents and expert interviews, following are six recommendations:

Recommendation 1. Create a share, strategic vision and set of strategic goals for Illinois ECCE system of what Illinois wants to achieve by its governance structure. The experts unanimously agreed that Illinois' current structure should be changed, but that change should be based on a shared, strategic vision of what Illinois wants to accomplish by changing the structure. The experts agreed that coordination in the administration of among programs should be guided by clear strategic goals, perhaps based on those emerging from the PDG grant and processes.[2]

Recommendation 2. Develop a decision-making process for establishing the benefits and costs of changing governance structures. A decision-making and communication process can determine if it makes sense to change the governance structure. A strength of Illinois' current ECCE mixed-delivery system is there are several stakeholders, within and outside state government, highly committed to improving ECCE in the state. The national experts pointed out when considering changing governance structures, the power and decision-making dynamics between the state agency administrators, advocacy groups, and private funders, is a

[2] AIR is also working with GOECD on their PDG B-5 Strategic Plan. As of December 13, 2019, AIR catalogued 191 strategic ECCE goals from 26 existing strategic plan documents for GOECD and ELC council members to review and prioritize. The final PDG B-5 Illinois strategic plan will be completed in February 2020.

consideration. As such, developing a clear decision-making process, with clear definitions and boundaries around who is accountable, responsible, contributing, and/or supporting the decision-making process. As one expert explained, "I think you need both the inside and the outside perspective; but there need to be clear boundaries."

Recommendation 3. Reach consensus on the function of the governance structure, aligned to its strategic vision and goals. There is general consensus in the ECCE field that any governance system must include (a) coordination at the policy and practice levels; (b) coherence, meaning alignment across developmental ages and settings; (c) sustainability; (d) efficiency, meaning that the system uses resources wisely and avoids duplication of effort; and (e) accountability (Goffin, Martella, & Coffman, 2011). In choosing a governance system, Illinois should ensure that "form follows function" (Goffin, Martella, & Coffman, 2011, p. 11). First, decide what functions each governance structure should fulfill, then determine what structural form will best support those functions. Illinois also needs to be realistic about its capacity to enact major structural change and sustain it. One important aspect of capacity is the governor's support for change because a shift in governance will often require gubernatorial action and support (Regenstein & Lipper, 2013). These recommendations also were supported by the national experts.

> *All the mid-level managers are the ones who actually do the work; if they aren't rowing the same boat it won't work…. Every single silo has very strong proponents that say, "Don't change my rules or take my money away," so someone has to say, "Too bad," and change that.*

Recommendation 4. Inventory the state's capacity and resources needed to change the governance structure. From our review of existing documents and interviews with experts, Illinois agencies and stakeholders have discussed improving or enhancing the coordination model, with GOECD serving as the coordinating body with the assistance of the ELC (BUILD Initiative, 2016; GOECD, 2019b). A report written jointly by ISBE and DHS (2017) also suggested the creation model, laying out the case for a state agency to be known as the Department of Early Childhood Development. However, all the experts agreed that big change initiatives, such as creating a new state agency or consolidating programs into an existing agency, can take a lot of time, effort, money, and attention from active, vision-aligned leadership and managers at multiple levels within the state. Some states have gone through the process of changing structures to realize they do not have the human capacity and workforce to do the work required in the new structure. One expert stated, "Doesn't matter what model you're in if there are three people being sent in to do the work of 20." Also, the experts stated that new

governance structures, such as consolidation or a new agency, can take a lot of time and money, so Illinois needs to take stock of what financial resources it has for such an investment.

> *We know Illinois' current system doesn't work, but they don't have a vision of what working looks like. I don't know if it's smart to start with a premise that going from what they have now to a new agency will be the most effective way to [improve the system].*

Recommendation 5. Begin to make the change from existing governance structures already in place; augment the authority and funding for GOECD. There is a lot of thoughtful and systematic analysis to be done about resource and capacity needs, along with determining the decision-making process of, the methods of communication, and the necessary leadership to be developed, in order to change state governance structures within Illinois' complex ECCE system. We recommend that Illinois begins the governance change by building on what the state already has in place—GOECD—and by providing it with consistent, stable funding and governing authority with strong interagency agreements. Reinforce and empower GOECD as a coordinating body. Also, while giving the GOECD more authority, Illinois can start to implement the previous five recommendations. If an enhanced GOECD does not work in moving toward achieving the short-term strategic goals that Illinois wants, then the state should move forward to consolidation or creating a new agency with a clear understanding of the multiple levels of resources it will take.

> *I don't think it is a question of what [governance] structure. It is about what you want to do. It is about action. You need to know what you want to do and why. If you have good leadership, it doesn't matter what governance structure [a state has]. You got to have strong effective leadership, if you don't have those two things [action and leadership], it doesn't matter what you do…. I've seen states completely change their organization and it doesn't make one bit of difference. In my opinion, we get lost in the conversation around governance. All about moving the chairs around on the deck. Doesn't matter. Going to have the same rules, same funding, same issues, and same silos. is no single right model; they do good things for different purposes but it's all trade-offs. My advice—think about the trade-offs that are inherent in this work and walk through the decisions that you face, and from there have a conversation about what model you want to do. [The selection and changing to a new governance model] is not where you start, it's where you end.*

Recommendation 6. Do not consider a governance model a "silver bullet" for improving ECCE systems. One expert stated that if a state starts a discussion of ECCE governance with a

question about the governance model, it runs the risk of skipping over other important building steps. Consequently, a state likely will find that it has similar problems and issues in the new governance structure that it did in its old one. Do not expect a change in governance structure to be the "silver bullet" that solves issues concerning collaboration, coordination, access, equity, funding, and other challenges in ECCE administration. Our review of other states' governance models and the current governance structure for Illinois leads us to the conclusion that there is no single model that will work best for Illinois. All five experts we interviewed also unanimously agreed and strongly emphasized that there is no single right governance model. Each model has distinct advantages and disadvantages.

> *There is no single right model; they do good things for different purposes but it's all trade-offs. My advice—think about the trade-offs that are inherent in this work and walk through the decisions that you face, and from there have a conversation about what model you want to do. [The selection and changing to a new governance model] is not where you start, it's where you end.*

Implementation Approach

This section provides an implementation approach on how the six recommendations could be executed. Implementation of a major initiative such as changing ECCE system governance will involve setting clear goals and objectives, making decisions, operationalizing actions, gathering data, and making midcourse adjustments. "It is clear that implementation is not an event, but a process" (Metz, Naoom, Halle, & Bartley, 2015). Several frameworks in the implementation science field suggest that implementation is a multistage process that is not always linear. Implementation involves multiple decisions, activities, and modifications to change the structures and conditions necessary to implement and sustain new initiatives (Metz et al., 2005; National Implementation Research Network). Four typical implementation stages are exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full implementation (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005; Metz et al., 2015). For all of the recommendations, Illinois should consider the implementation factors listed in Exhibit 7. In the following sections, we explain how these recommendations can be implemented.

Exhibit 7. Considerations for Implementing a New ECCE Governance

Implementation Factors
Strategic goal and priorities
Agency philosophy and culture
Administrators and providers agency history and perspectives
The ECCE programs to be included; that is, what is "in" and "out" of a new governance model?
Thorough understanding of current roles, authority, and responsibilities
Involvement of those outside of state government such as local communities, counties, advocates, and philanthropists
Leadership, at all levels
Infrastructure availability, including facilities, information technology, and data servers

Recommendation 1. Create a share, strategic vision and set of strategic goals for Illinois ECCE system of what Illinois wants to achieve by its governance structure.

Recommendation 2. Develop a decision-making process for establishing the benefits and costs of changing governance structures.

Recommendation 3. Reach consensus on the function of the governance structure, aligned to its strategic vision and goals.

These recommendations require a clear understanding of the central and primary problem the state wants to solve; being clear about the strategic vision, goals and objectives of the state; and, only after that, examining details about innovations in governance that will address the problem and be aligned to achieving priority strategic goals. Executing this approach successfully requires the following actions:

- Clearly define "the problems" that a different governance structure would solve. What does the state want out of new governance approach? What is Illinois definition of what an "effective" ECCE governance model? What data will Illinois use as indicators that their model is "more effective"
- Assess the values and principles within, across, and external to state agencies. What is the state, across agencies and services, trying to achieve with its ECCE system? What values are supportive and what may be barriers in a new governance approach?
- Determine what the "shared strategic vision" is within, across, and external to state agencies. How does an agency or external stakeholder contribute to achieving that shared vision? What will you ask every agency or organization to "bring to the table" to support the governance structure?

- Create clear inclusion and exclusion criteria that define the population or programs for which a change in governance would be most beneficial. What programs would be "in" or "out" of a governance change? No ECCE governance model exists in which all programs impacting young children are in one entity, and experts suggest the most successful governance models have a narrow focus, such as expanding prekindergarten or child care for low-income families.

Begin addressing these recommendations by selecting a group composed of internal (state administrators) and external stakeholders with expertise in implementation practice and expertise in the content area of program administration and governance issues. This implementation stage may take 3 to 6 months (Fixsen, 2005).

Recommendation 4. Inventory the state's capacity and resources needed to change the governance structure.

Recommendation 5. Begin to make the change from existing governance structures already in place; augment the authority and funding for GOECD.

There is often an assumption in big-change initiatives that once a new way is in place, the outcomes they seek will be realized. All too often, as stated by the experts we interviewed and expressed in the literature about major change initiatives, there is little difference between the new and old way. This is often because major change initiatives consume the time of people, as well as other fiscal and physical resources that are open to challenges and failures throughout the change process, and the foundational understandings of what is needed to accomplish a major change is overlooked (Hall, 2013). Practical preparations are needed to initiate a major change, such as a change in a state governance structure. Getting into the nitty-gritty of legal agreements, data privacy/storage/transfers, informational technology infrastructure, real estate and offices, unions, and several other operational factors can often be overlooked in decisions about change, and those details can be all-consuming for staff, taking attention away from the big strategic goals and objectives. There is limited appreciation of the practicality, complexity, and perseverance major change efforts require (Hall, 2013). Practical topics to address that are commonly described in the implementation research field (National Implementation Research Network, n.d.), include:

- Creating a decision-making process for levels of influence and authority. What are the decision-making tables? Who is at the tables? Do they have the political support, authority, and ability to gain the necessary buy-in to get all required parties on the same page with the shared goals?

  - Developing communication protocols for multiple audiences. What are the main functions or responsibilities of the governance body?
  - Ensuring financial resources are in place, especially for operations and infrastructure. Do you have the right leaders, managers, and support staff in place? What are the total costs of a new governance structure? Are the finances sustainable?
  - Ensuring human resources are in place. What are the short- and long-term capacities necessary to make this work? What capacities are necessary in terms of availability of people, time, and financial resources for sustainable governance?
  - Finding or reallocating physical space. If creating a new governance entity or consolidating, is there space for the staff to operate from?
- Purchasing equipment, technology, and data management.

In addition, the human, psychological, element of those people actually doing the work is often overlooked (Hall, 2013). Each person will respond to the change and its activities, with various attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about the change and the resulting new structure. Begin addressing these recommendations first, start by creating implementation teams. "Implementation teams are groups of individuals who have the task of intentionally monitoring and supporting implementation. Implementation teams see themselves as accountable for the success of the new initiative" (Metz et al., 2015, p. 5). They can be composed of five to eight people who include key personnel (such as program administrators and practitioners) and key stakeholders (funders, recipients of program services, or community members). Ideally, having a small team at every level of the system change is important (Metz et al., 2015), with a "core" implementation team responsible for the day-to-day implementation. Within these teams, as well as with staff impacted by the change initiative, one can use tools such as the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) that enables leaders to gauge staff concerns in order to give people the necessary supports to ensure success navigating and implementing the change (AIR, 2015). This stage of implementation may take 2 to 4 years (Fixsen et al., 2005) National Implementation Research Network, n.d.). In consideration of this time frame, and based on the results of the resource inventory, it may be best to make a smaller change from existing governance structures already in place, like an empowered GOECD with sustainable resources, than a complete re-design and/or new structure.

Recommendation 6. Do not consider a governance model a "silver bullet" for improving ECCE systems.

The following issues also should be considered in an implementation approach of the governance structure recommendations for a state's ECCE programs and services:

- The alignment of the governance model operational structure to expected goals, outcomes, and overarching strategic vision for ECCE programs and services.
- A definition of what it means to have "effective" governance of ECCE programs and services.
- An articulation of the multifunction services that would be part of an ECCE governance structure.
- The fiscal and political context.
- The ability to sustain a governance structure over time, both financially and administratively.

The key lesson to be learned from the information gathered from the review of other state models, the expert interviews, and literature is that organizational system change is a process (Fixsen, 2005; Hall, 2013; Metz, 2015). A change initiative, such as a change in the statewide governance structure of ECCE systems and programs, will require a considerable length of time and resources. It will also be vulnerable to failure because of any number of factors related to shared-vision, clear short- and long-term goals, leadership, coalition-management, communication approaches, decision-making processes, agency/program culture, and resources, (Kotter, 2007). And skipping and rushing through steps can result in no change in improving access, quality and coordination of much needed ECCE services to young children and their family.

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Appendix A. Illinois Governance Documents

Boston Consulting Group. (2019). *Early Education Funding Commission Steering Committee Meeting #1.* Unpublished report.
Report by the Boston Consulting Group on reshaping Illinois' funding model to one that will provide more equitable access to quality early childhood education. The document also describes current funding sources and models in Illinois.

BUILD Initiative. (2016). *Background report on governance models to inform Illinois' early childhood governance planning.* Unpublished report.
Gives an overview of OECD's successes, challenges, plans for OECD's future role, and a proposed Illinois early childhood governance structure.

Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. (2019a). *Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development memo.* Unpublished memo.
This memo is a summary of the scope of work of GOECD's responsibilities in Illinois' current ECCE governance structure.

Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. (2019b). *Sustainability of the GOECD.* Unpublished document.
This document describes the inefficiencies, quality discrepancies, and challenges to access and service delivery within the current governance system of Illinois. GOECD works with all functional areas of early care and education. Although it is possible for GOECD to make progress toward fulfilling its mission without sustainability, that progress is artificially capped.

Illinois Department of Human Services. (n.d.). *Child care & development.* Retrieved from: https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=31094.
This website describes the offices at the Illinois Department of Human Services.

Illinois' Early Childhood Strategic Plan. (2019). *Illinois' early childhood strategic plan, funding commission, and governance: Ideas for coordinating initiatives to achieve a re-imagined system of excellence.* Unpublished document.
Strategic plan for summer and early fall of 2019 and beyond. Discusses organizing and sequencing of multiple strands of governance work currently in process in Illinois and how they interrelate.

Illinois Early Learning Council Executive Committee. (2019). *Report of the Illinois early childhood strategic visioning and planning meeting*. Unpublished document.
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Appendix B. Other State Governance Documents Reviewed

Title and Source
Overall Documents
Education Trends: Governance in Early Childhood Education
Early Childhood Systems Building Resource Guide—Early Childhood Governance Models
BUILD Initiative—A Framework for Choosing a State-Level Early Childhood Governance System
Early Childhood Governance: An Analysis on National and Local Early Childhood Education Governance Structures
Alabama
Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education
Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education Annual Report (2019)
Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education: 2019 Legislative Presentation, Secretary Jeana Ross
Colorado
Colorado Office of Early Childhood Department of Human Services
Colorado Early Childhood Governance Frequently Asked Questions
Zero to Three—Colorado Office of Early Childhood
Colorado Department of Human Services—About CDHS
Early Childhood Leadership Commission
ECLC Annual Report 2018
Colorado House Bill 13-1117
Georgia
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Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning: A Report to Our Citizens, State Fiscal Year 2013
Louisiana
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Louisiana Believes—Early Childhood
Louisiana's Early Childhood System: A Guide for Program Leaders, 2019
Creating a Coordinated, Integrated Early Care and Education System: State Early Childhood Administration
Lessons From the Bayou State: Early Care and Education in the Bayou State
Act No. 3
Maryland
Division of Early Childhood: About
Building a High-Quality Early Childhood Education System in Maryland

Title and Source
Massachusetts
Department of Early Education and Care
Department of Early Education and Care—2017 Annual Report
A Case Study of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care
Nebraska
Office of Early Childhood
HSSCO: Head Start Collaboration Office, Building and Bridging Systems in Early Care and Education
Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)
Common Ground: Collaboration and shared leadership in systems serving Nebraska's youngest children. Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council Biennial Report to the Governor 2016-2018
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Department of Education—Early Childhood Education in Nebraska Public School District, Educational Service Unit and Head Start Programs: 2016-2017 State Report
Ohio
BUILD Ohio
Department of Education—Early Learning
Early Childhood Ohio
Ohio's Early Childhood System
Executive Order 2019-02D
DeWine Announces Creation of Children's Initiatives Office
Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Department of Human Services—Child Care and Early Learning
Pennsylvania Department of Education—Early Learning
BUILD Pennsylvania
Texas
Texas Education Agency: Early Childhood Education in Texas
The Texas Early Childhood Systems Integration Group: Engaging State Leaders to Capture Early Childhood Collective Investments and Impacts
Washington
Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families
Improving the Well-Being of Washington State's Children, Youth, and Families
Wisconsin
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
2018 Annual Report: Early Care and Education in Wisconsin
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction—Office of Early Learning
Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families—Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families—2013–15 Biennial Report
Wisconsin Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan with Conditional Approval Letter for FY 2016-2018

Appendix C. Detailed Descriptions of Illinois' Current Governance Structure

The Illinois Department of Human Services oversees early childhood care and education (ECCE) programs that serve children and their families from birth through 5 years. The major early ECCE programs include the following:

1. *Child care*: The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), with funding from the Child Care and Development Block Grant gives vouchers to parents with low incomes to help pay for child-care services while working or in training or school.
2. *Early intervention*: Early intervention is a statewide program for infants and toddlers under 3 years of age and children with a disability, a 30% delay in development in any area, or at risk of developmental delays. The program is federally funded from IDEA, Part C, and Medicaid; state funded by the General Revenue Fund; and privately funded with insurance billing and family payments.
3. *Home visiting*: The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program provides intensive home-visitation services to new and expectant families to strengthen the parent–child relationship, encourage healthy child growth and development, nurture parents in their role as the child's first teacher, and prevent child abuse and neglect. The evidence-based models used are Healthy Families Illinois, Parents as Teachers, and Early Head Start-Home-Based Services.
4. *Illinois Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO):* HSSCO is federally funded from Head Start and includes other initiatives, such as the Child Care Collaboration, which facilitates collaboration between child care and other ECCE programs, and the Child Welfare Head Start Statewide Joint Agreement, which fosters collaboration at the state and local levels to ensure that children receiving child welfare services are served in Head Start/Early Head Start.
5. *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)* helps low-income families buy food.
6. *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)* provides temporary financial and health-care coverage for pregnant women and families.
7. *Women, Infants and Children (WIC)* provides food assistance to women, infants, and children. It helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well and stay healthy.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) administers the following key programs for children ages birth through age 5 years:

1. *Prevention Initiative*: Funded by the General Revenue Fund as part of the Early Childhood Block Grant, the Prevention Initiative provides community-based and home visitation supports to children from birth to age 3 and their families.
2. *Preschool For All (PFA):* Funded by the General Revenue Fund as part of the Early Childhood Block Grant and supplemented by a federal Preschool Expansion Grant (PDG-E), PFA provides high-quality programs for children who are determined to be at risk of academic failure and for children in low-to-moderate income families. PFA Expansion (PFA-E) programs, funded in part by PDG-E funds, are full day and serve children identified as having multiple risk factors.
3. *Title I Preschool:* Title I, Part A provides federal funding through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), to help local education agencies (LEAs) support those children who are at the most risk of failing. LEAs can choose to use these funds to offer or expand preschool services to students who are eligible. ISBE is the administrator of Title I funds to all Illinois LEAs.
4. *Early childhood special education programs*: These special education programs are federally funded through IDEA, Part B, Section 619, and provide special education services for children ages 3–5 through local school districts and special education cooperatives.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (ILDCFS) operates two ECCE programs:

1. *Child care licensing*: ILDCFS is responsible for licensing non-school-based child care centers and homes, granting license-exempt status to qualifying settings, and providing periodic monitoring and licensure violations tracking.
2. *Foster care and adoption services*: IDCFS strives to reunite children with their birth families. When reunification simply is not possible, as determined by the courts, many foster families choose to adopt the children they have cared for.

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (ILDHFS) operates one key ECCE program:

- *All Kids* is Illinois' program for children who need comprehensive, affordable health insurance, regardless of immigration status or health condition, using both Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) funding, so that every child in Illinois has access to medical coverage.

Illinois' state advisory council, the Early Learning Council (ELC), is a public–private partnership that was created under Public Act 93-380 to coordinate existing programs and services for children from birth to age 5. The ELC is the leading advisory body for Illinois' early childhood system. Its membership includes public agency representatives, service providers, private

funders, advocates, and family organizations. The ELC has a full council, an Executive Committee, five standing committees, and multiple subcommittees. The ELC's Executive Committee guides the work of its other four committees. The committees and subcommittees of the ELC are listed in Exhibit C-1.

Exhibit C-1. ELC Committees and Subcommittees

ELC Committees	ELC Subcommittees
Executive Committee: The Executive Committee maximizes the ability to capture current and future federal funds for services and infrastructure. It holds and advances a comprehensive vision for early childhood systems, including quality, access, and integration and alignment. The Executive Committee also connects and leverages priorities of other bodies whose focus includes early childhood and education (e.g., P–20 Council, Cabinet for Children and Youth).	
Access: The Access Committee increases access to high-quality early learning programs for children, families, and communities with the greatest need and supports early learning programs that serve the highest need families and children.	• All Families Served • Family Engagement Implementation
Integration and Alignment: The Integration and Alignment Committee successfully integrates and aligns early childhood programs and services to support program quality and seamless access for children and families. Through collaboration, the committee maximizes efficiency and quality of infrastructure investments across all types of early childhood services and ensures that the range of early childhood services and supports are connected so that families experience a seamless system.	• Data, Research, and Evaluation • Inclusion • Health • Community Systems Development
Quality: The Quality Committee increases the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of early childhood services in supporting the healthy growth and development of all young children birth to age 5, especially those with the highest needs. It ensures that early care and education professionals have the knowledge and skills to effectively nurture and support the development and learning of all children in Illinois. It also ensures that children are ready for school by providing a solid foundation for appropriate child development strategies in workforce preparation across all settings.	• ExceleRate • Birth to Three Ad Hoc (convenes as needed)
Home Visiting Task Force: The Home Visiting Task Force (HVTF) advances a comprehensive vision for home visiting that includes improving the quality of and access to evidence-based home visiting programs for all at-risk families; increases coordination between home visiting programs at the state and local levels, as well as between home visiting and all other publicly funded services for families; and serves as the advisory body for Illinois' federal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting grant program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.	• HVTF Executive Committee • Home Visiting-Child Welfare (I-PPYC-HV) • Home Visiting/Early Intervention Collaborative (HV/EI) • Universal Newborn Support System (UNSS) • Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health BA Credential

Note. Early Learning Council information reported in this exhibit was retrieved from https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/EarlyLearningCouncil/Pages/ExecutiveCommittee.aspx

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