

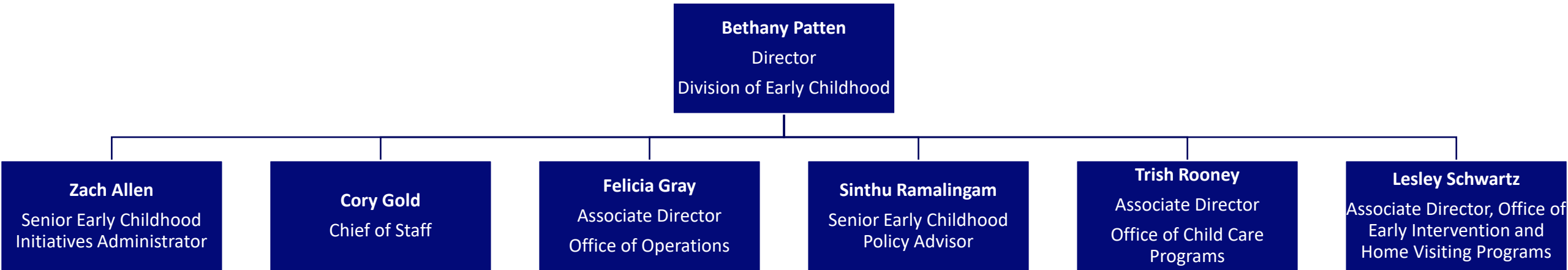


# ELC Update: DHS Division of Early Childhood

# The Division of Early Childhood continues to grow!

## New DEC Executive Team Members:

- Trish Rooney, Associate Director of Child Care Programs
  - New Integration and Alignment Committee Co-Chair
- Sinthu Ramalingam, Senior Early Childhood Policy Advisor



## DEC's Strategic Plan remains under construction but approaches completion

Upcoming final steps in the process:

- Complete action plans for prioritized objectives under each of the 5 goals
- Develop Key Performance Indicators to track progress on each of the prioritized objectives
- Determine implementation and reporting plans
- Continue the work / get to work!



# IDHS implementation of Smart Start begins soon!

- Child Care in SFY24
  - Funding: Smart Start Transition Grants
  - Planning: Prep for contract rollout via ad hoc committee and cost model validation
- Early Intervention in SFY24
  - Funding: 10% provider rate increase
  - Planning: Prep for future improvement proposals via cost modeling and demonstration project
- Home Visiting in SFY24
  - Funding: salary increases to floor, expand slots beyond federal relief fund expiration
  - Planning: Develop strategy to increase number of slots in highest need communities

**DEC will continue to share updates and seek input and feedback from members of the ELC on Smart Start implementation. Thank you!**



## Research and Grant Opportunities

- IDHS continues to partner with research institutions in their study of:
  - Non-traditional hour child care (Erikson Institute, University of Chicago, Illinois Action for Children)
  - CCDF Policies, including Strengthen and Grow Child Care (University of Chicago, Illinois Action for Children)
- IDHS and other state agencies have signed Statement of Commitment for UIC's application for Early Educator Investment Collaborative grant
  - Proposal to Innovate Financial Systems to Build Capacity for Increased and Sustainable Early Childhood Education Compensation
  - Focus: Apprenticeships
  - Advisory Body: Early Learning Council Executive Committee

Help  
is here



DIVISION OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD