

Rhode Island Early Learning Council

DECEMBER 7, 2022

9:00 - 11:00 A.M.

RI DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION



EARLY LEARNING RI

9:00	Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Meeting Overview	Kimberly Brito, DHS Paige Clausius-Parks, RI KIDS COUNT
9:15	Update: Pre-K Expansion Planning	Kayla Rosen, RI Children’s Cabinet and Governor’s Office
9:30	Update: Early Head Start/Head Start	Mary Varr, RI Head Start Association Catherine Green, RI Head Start Collaboration Office
9:45	Update: Early Intervention	Jenn Kaufman, EOHHS
10:00	Update: Family Home Visiting	Blythe Berger, DOH
10:15	Update: Governor’s Workforce Board Early Childhood Workforce Plan	Jessica Mayernik, GWB
10:30	Update: Early Childhood Governance Planning/Role of Early Learning Council	Kayla Rosen, RI Children’s Cabinet and Governor’s Office
10:45	Announcements, Public Comments, & Next Steps	Paige Clausius-Parks Kimberly Brito

State Plans in Development

- Due 12/31/22: RIDE, DHS, Children's Cabinet - Pre-K Expansion and Early Childhood Workforce Recruitment/ Retention/Compensation Plan
- Due 12/31/22 DHS Early Childhood Facilities Bond Report
- Due 04/01/23: Governor's Workforce Board – Plan to address barriers to entering the Early Childhood Education Workforce
- Due 06/30/23: EOHHS Task Force - Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Medicaid Plan
- Due 10/01/23: Children's Cabinet Working Group -Early Learning and Child Development System Governance Recommendations



Feedback on RI Pre-K Expansion Plan Draft

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Feedback Process

Overview

- Following the discussion at the September ELC meeting, the interagency team developed a Working Draft and posted it online for feedback on October 17.
- Since the last ELC meeting, input/feedback discussions have included conversations with:
 - Two public feedback sessions via Zoom
 - Parents Leading for Educational Equity
 - RI State Superintendents Association
 - Head Start Association
 - Early Childhood Special Education Coordinators
 - Family Child Care Homes of Rhode Island
 - Business Owners in Childcare Association
- In addition, we received feedback via an online survey and via email.

Feedback themes

- Need for investments in the Birth-5 system as a whole
- Need to address staffing and compensation across Birth-5 system
- Need to address geographic considerations, including district boundaries for provision of ECSE services + access for communities that do not already have RI Pre-K
- Need to consider overall system readiness and supports needed for each part of the mixed delivery system, including LEAs, Head Start, Child Care Centers, and Family Child Care
- Need to keep equity at the forefront of decisions and ensure necessary supports for all children to be successful

Next Steps

- Reviewing all feedback & incorporating edits into the draft
- Developing the annual growth model and budget targets
- The final report is due December 31, 2022.
- Thank you for all of your help, ideas, and input throughout this process!



Early Learning Council December 2022

An update regarding Head Start at the local and national level.

Head Start: Overview



Head Start is a federally funded program that improves the school readiness of children from low-income families. Services are free and provided in a variety of settings. Head Start programs engage families in positive relationships, with a focus on family wellbeing. Families participate in leadership roles, including having a say in program operations. Head Start programs support children's growth in a positive learning environment through a variety of services, including early learning and development, health and family well-being.

Federal Head Start Eligibility

- At or below FPL
- Receiving Public Assistance
 - RI Works
 - SNAP
 - SSI
- Foster Care
- Experiencing Homelessness

RI Head Start: At-A-Glance

Source	Funding	Slots
State	\$1.4 M	130
Federal	\$35.3 M	2,462

RI Head Start: An Overview

Grant Recipient	Federal Funding	Federal Slots	State Funding	State Slots
Child, Inc.	\$5 M	370	\$100 K	9
Children's Friend	\$15.6 M	1,020	\$866 K	81
Comprehensive Community Action Program (CCAP)	\$2.6 M	194	\$86 K	8
East Bay Community Action (EBCAP)	\$5.1 M	340	\$110 K	10
Meeting Street	\$1 M	72	-	-
Tri-County Community Action Agency	\$4 M	284	\$141 K	14
Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc.	\$2.1 M	182	\$86 K	8



Office of Head Start National Priorities



In response to the current hiring and operational landscape of Head Start, the Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start is prioritizing the following:



The Region 1 Office of Head Start is breaking this down further to prioritize:

- Healthy and Safe Environments for Children, Families and Staff
- Workforce Development
- Full Enrollment Initiative
- Mental Health/Disabilities



Information Memorandums

The Office of Head Start issues Information Memorandums to communicate with grantees. Several recent IM's have focused on workforce wellbeing and health and safety of children.

Enrollment Reductions and Conversion of Head Start Slots to Early Head Start Slots: ACF-IM-HS-22-09	Strategies to Stabilize the Head Start Workforce: ACF-IM-HS-22-06	Reporting Child Health and Safety Incidents: ACF-IM-HS-22-07
<p>A request to reduce funded enrollment or convert Head Start slots to Early Head Start slots is considered a change in scope request and requires OHS prior approval. This Information Memorandum (IM) provides additional guidance for the development and submission of these requests.</p>	<p>Acknowledges high credential requirements and stagnant wages and lack of comprehensive benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permanently Increase Compensation• Offer Bonuses, Short-term Pay Increases or Other Financial Incentives• Compensate Staff During Closures and Transitions• Public Student Loan Forgiveness	<p>Clarifies reporting requirements for incidents related to child safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child injuries that require medical attention• Inappropriate discipline• Potential child abuse and maltreatment• Lack of supervision• Unauthorized release

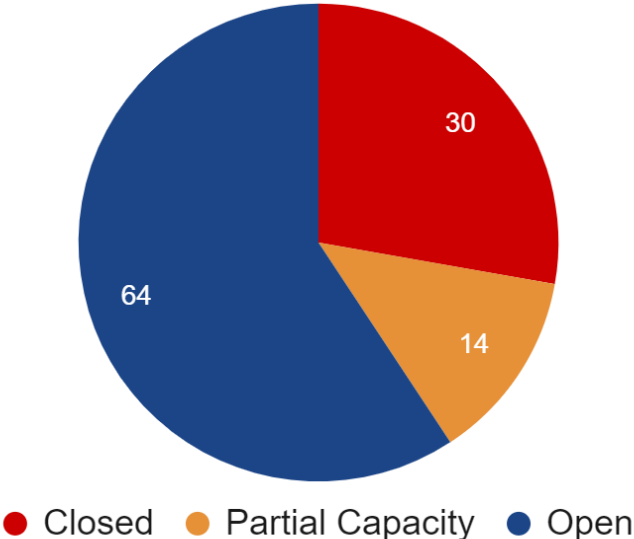


Rhode Island Head Start Classrooms

In October 2022, approximately 28 percent of 108 Head Start classrooms were closed due to lack of qualified staffing. An additional 13 percent were operating at partial capacity to support children's best interests.

Rhode Island Head Start Classrooms

October 2022



What is the impact?

- An estimated 540 preschool-aged children are not being served due to closed classrooms.
- Programs operating at partial capacity are reporting a need to serve less children in a classroom setting. This is to meet the needs of children in their care due to the rise in children experiencing mental health and social emotional challenges or developmental delays.

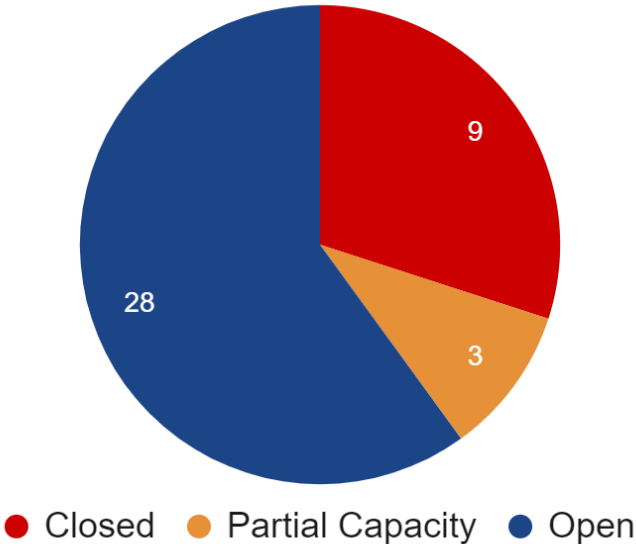


Rhode Island Early Head Start Classrooms

In October 2022, approximately 23 percent of 40 Early Head Start (EHS) classrooms were closed due to lack of qualified staffing. An additional 8 percent were operating at partial capacity to support children's best interests.

Rhode Island Early Head Start Classrooms

October 2022



What is the impact?

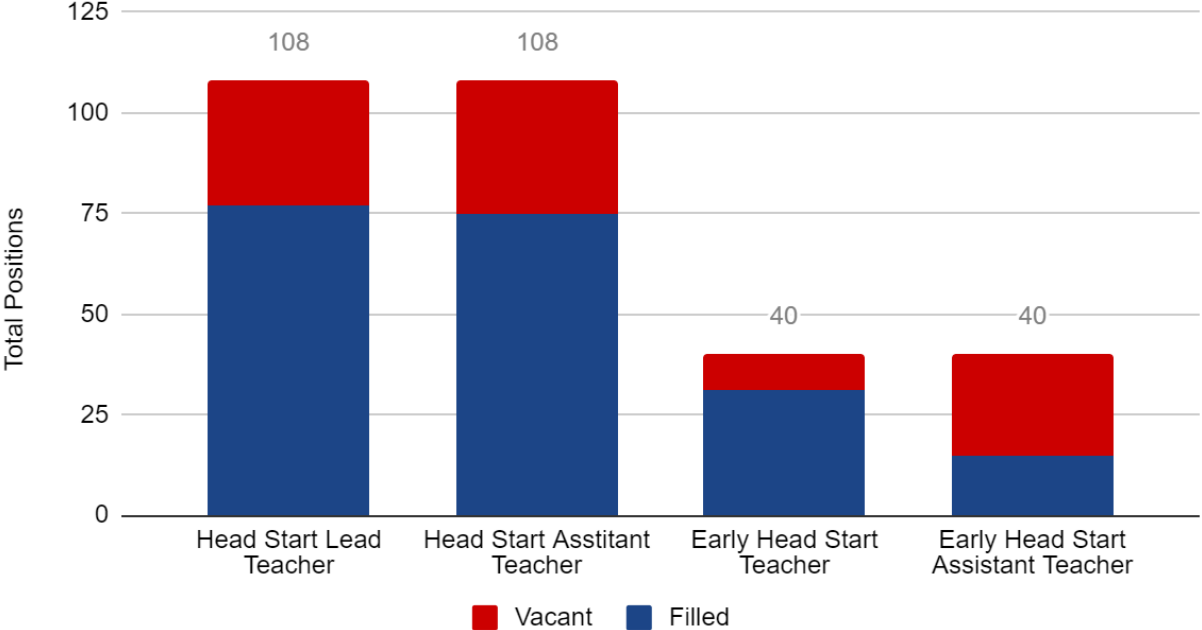
- An estimated 72 infant and toddler children are not being served due to closed EHS classrooms.
- Programs operating at partial capacity are reporting a need to serve less children in a classroom setting to help meet the needs of children in their care due to the rise in children experiencing mental health and social emotional challenges or developmental delays.



Rhode Island HS/EHS Educator Employment

Mirroring the hiring challenges being seen in other industries, Rhode Island Head Start programs are also experiencing unusually high levels of employment vacancies.

Head Start & Early Head Start Educator Positions



Employment Vacancies Overview*

- 31 Head Start Lead Teacher Vacancies | 77 filled
- 33 Head Start Assistant Teacher Vacancies | 75 filled
- 15 Early Head Start Lead Teacher Vacancies | 35 filled
- 9 Early Head Start Assistant Teacher Vacancies | 31 filled
- 28 Additional vacancies

**All data is preliminary and subject to change. Staffing levels fluctuate on a day-to-day basis.*



Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC)

The Office of Head Start oversees ECKLC which serves as a resource guide of evidence-based information, training materials and guidance re: best practices in Early Childhood Education.

While ECKLC is overseen by the Office of Head Start, many of the resources are applicable to the early childhood care and education system. These resources are designed to support quality learning and care across the child care system. Evidence-based resources include webinars, videos, written guidance and toolkits.



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	Cross-Cutting Approaches	Education & Child Development	Family & Community	Health
	Culture & Language	Child Screening & Assessment	Community Engagement	Health Services Management
	Data & Ongoing Monitoring	Children with Disabilities	Family Engagement	Mental Health
	Professional Development	Curriculum	Family Support & Well-being	Nutrition
	School Readiness	Learning Environments	Local Early Childhood Partnerships	Oral Health
		Teaching Practices	Parenting	Physical Health
		Transitions	Pregnancy	Safety Practices





**Catherine Green,
RI DHS Head Start Collaboration
Office Director**

Catherine.Green@dhs.ri.gov

<https://dhs.ri.gov/programs-and-services/child-care/head-start/head-start-collaboration-office>





First Connections



Children's Friend

Central Falls, Pawtucket,
East Providence

Community Care Alliance

Burrillville, Foster, Cumberland
Gloucester, Johnston, Lincoln, North Providence, North
Scituate,
North Smithfield, Scituate, Smithfield, Woonsocket

Family Service of RI

Providence and Cranston
Charlestown, Coventry, East Greenwich, Exeter, Hopkinton,
Narragansett, New Shoreham, North Kingstown, South
Kingstown, Warwick, West Greenwich,
West Warwick, Westerly

Visiting Nurse Home and Hospice

Barrington, Bristol, Jamestown, Little Compton,
Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth,
Tiverton, Warren

Evidence Based Programs



**Healthy Families America
Nurse-Family Partnership
Parents as Teachers**

Evidence Based Programs



Re-competed in 2022

1 Agency implements NFP (capacity 150)

7 Agencies implement HFA (capacity 775)

6 Agencies implement PAT (capacity 464)

All programs are available statewide

January 2023 Agencies can begin billing Medicaid for services for HFA and NFP



Governor's Workforce Board

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train for success · connect for growth

Early Childcare Workforce Advisory Committee Update

December 7, 2022





FY23 Budget – Article 10 (pg. 237)

- (b)(1) In furtherance of the goals set forth in this chapter, no later than January 1, 2023, the governor's workforce board shall convene a working group comprised of representatives from the department of elementary and secondary education, department of human services, office of the postsecondary commissioner, the RI early learning council, organized labor and early childhood education industry employers, whose **purpose shall be to identify barriers to entry into the early childhood education workforce, and to design accessible and accelerated pathways into the workforce,** including, but not limited to, registered apprenticeships and postsecondary credit for prior work experience.
- (2) No later than April 1, 2023, the working group shall provide the general assembly with recommendations for **addressing the barriers to workforce entry and implementing the solutions identified by the working group;** the recommendations shall outline any administrative and legislative action that would be required by participating agencies to implement the recommendations.

About the Committee

- Co-Chairs
 - OPC Commissioner Shannon Gilkey
 - Robin Melfi Coia of the New England Laborer's Cooperation Trust
- There are 16 Board Members in addition to committee co-chairs
 - This committee includes representatives from DHS, RIDE, RI OPC, RI Early Learning Council, organized labor, and industry employers. Industry employers are from a range of different organizations in the state including community-based organizations, Headstart, and private providers.
- Meetings
 - Initial Kickoff meeting- October 24th
 - Second Meeting- November 18th
 - Next Meeting- This Friday, December 9th

Discussions To Date

- Early to finalize recommendations, but starting early conversations about recommendations
- Focusing on 'Barriers to Employment'
- Categorizing the recommendations to submit to the legislature (Not final)
 - Quantative
 - Supply vs. Demand of the Workforce
 - Qualitative
 - Quality of Educational Pathways
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - Do the educators represent the community
 - Wages
 - How do we increase wages?
- Discussion on Career Pathways and credentials in the industry
 - How do we help people enter the career pathway, but not over-credential



Working Group on Early Childhood Governance – Update

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Recall: The FY23 budget establishes a working group on early childhood governance to review current approach and identify proposals for future structures.

Overview of Budget Article

FY23 Budget Requirements

By October 1, 2023, the early childhood governance working group must deliver a report on early childhood governance. The report includes:

- Coordination + administration
- Governance + organizational structure
- Fiscal cost of proposals
- Implementation of data systems

The Article names the members: DHS, RIDE, OPC, RIDOH, DOA, Chair of the Children’s Cabinet, and RI Kids Count. It notes that staff of the Children’s Cabinet will staff the group to complete the duties and the Early Learning Council will be an advisory body.

It provides \$250,000 to enable completion of the report and recommendations.

Mission & Scope

Mission

The goal of Rhode Island’s Working Group on Early Childhood Governance is to examine systems, structure, and authorities that govern and administer early childhood programs (as defined in the Scope). The Working Group will use this information to make recommendations that would advance RI’s vision for children enter kindergarten educationally, social-emotionally, and developmentally ready to succeed, putting them on a path to read proficiently by 3rd grade that sets Rhode Islanders up for successful completion of postsecondary education. The Working Group will conduct a comprehensive review of the current conditions and identify gaps and opportunities for improvement to best achieve the goals set forth in the ECCE Strategic Plan and the Governor’s 2030 Plan. The Working Group shall develop a report that includes recommendations regarding the governance of early childhood programs in the state. The recommendations shall address, but need not be limited to:

- The coordination and administration of early childhood programs and services;
- The governance and organizational structure of early childhood programs and services, including whether, and under what circumstances, the state should consider unifying early childhood programs under one state agency;
- The fiscal structure of proposed recommendations; and
- The implementation of early childhood data systems, for strategic planning, program implementation and program evaluation.

Scope of Analysis:

The Working Group’s efforts will focus on the following core programs:

- **Child care licensing** (DHS)
- **Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)** (DHS)
- **Head Start / Early Head Start Collaboration** (DHS)
- **RI Pre-K** (RIDE)
- **Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Standards (CECE)** (RIDE)
- **Early Childhood Special Education – IDEA Part B, 619** (RIDE)
- **Early Intervention (EI)** (EOHHS)
- **KidsConnect** (EOHHS)
- **Family Visiting** (RIDOH)

To conduct a comprehensive review, the Working Group’s scope will also include analysis of the gaps and opportunities of the supporting systems for ECCE programs, including but not limited to:

- Workforce development, career pathways, and higher education pathways (in collaboration with the Governor’s Workforce Board report in April, 2023)
- Professional development and technical assistance
- Quality evaluation, improvement, and support (with focus on Quality Rating and Improvement System, the RI Early Learning and Development Standards, and the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies)

Process for Systems Analysis: The process for the report development should have regular public input and maintains focus by having a clear “problem diagnosis” phase that defines the scope of the work.

High-level Proposed Process Plan – For Discussion

Timeframe	Process Step	Details	Deliverable
Summer-Fall 2022	Set-up group, structure, and process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene Working Group • Process for report development is established • Develop goals and SOW for consultant support • Procure consultant support 	Process, roles + responsibilities, and capacity is finalized
Winter 2022	Define the problem needing to be solved + any missed opportunities due to current governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing documents • Stakeholder interviews with internal and external stakeholders • Family, educator, and provider focus groups • Surveys + other broad-based feedback methods 	Shared definition of the issues and missed opportunities that could be solved through governance
Winter 2022-Spring 2023	Topic-focused discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through internal reviews, working group meetings, and national analysis, develop potential solutions to address the issues identified – aligned to specific areas required in the legislation + other key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority populations • Coordination + administration • Governance + organizational structure • Fiscal cost of proposals • Implementation of data systems 	Summaries of potential solutions for feedback on each topic for public input
Summer 2023	Develop and release a working draft of the report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a working draft of the report for public feedback • Host various feedback sessions + other feedback opportunities 	Full working draft report
Fall 2023	Finalize Plan + Publish Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize changes to the plan • Identify FY24 proposed investment in RI Pre-K for Governor’s Recommended Budget and reflect accordingly within the plan • Share final report with General Assembly and Governor 	Final report

Working Group + Advisory Group Cadence Going Forward

Meeting	Members (*can have designees)	Purpose	Frequency
Working Group on Early Childhood Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary Novais, Chair (EOHHS) • Lisa Odom-Villella (RIDE) • Director Brito (DHS) • Kristine Campagna (RIDOH) • Director Thorsen (DOA) • Commissioner Gilkey (OPC) • Leanne Barrett, RI Kids Count 	Legislatively established Working Group responsible for developing and delivering a final report in October 2023 that addresses the legislation.	Quarterly
Early Learning Council	30+ members of the early learning sectors, co-chaired by DHS, RIDE, and RI Kids Count	The ELC advises the Governor and Children’s Cabinet on items related to young children. The ELC is officially designated as the advisory body for the Working Group. At upcoming 2023 ELC meetings, we will have a standing agenda topic focused on this Governance process for feedback and input.	Quarterly
Informal Advisory Body	Volunteers from ELC and broader early childhood sector	More frequent, informal opportunity for input for members of the early childhood sector who will want to be highly engaged. This group is anticipated to meet on Zoom and have more frequent meetings with staff, consultants, etc to give feedback and input on the development the report and recommendations.	As-needed

Let me know if you are interested!

- If you are interested in potentially joining the informal advisory group and/or receiving updates via email about the Working Group on Early Childhood Governance work, please email me at kayla.s.rosen@governor.ri.gov
 - Information about upcoming Working Group on Early Childhood Governance meetings
 - Updates about progress of the Working Group
 - More frequent, informal discussions with the vendor & staff team on the development of the report and recommendations
 - Group of advisors for the Vendor team to engage with throughout the process

Public Comment

2023 Early Learning Council Meetings:

- Wednesday, March 29th -- 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, June 28th -- 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, September 27th -- 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 6th -- 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Locations TBD

See www.earlylearningri.org for meeting schedules, handouts, notes, and state reports