

NEW MEXICO EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 3, 2017

STRATEGIC PLAN & RECOMMENDATIONS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ELAC members identified priority goals to achieve the responsibilities set forth for the council by reviewing, analyzing, and prioritizing the 2011 New Mexico SB120, the Head Start Act, and Race to the Top Application. Based on the information reviewed, the following three Priority Goals were identified:

1. High Quality Early Childhood Workforce
2. Accessibility to High Quality Early Childhood Programs
3. Improved School Readiness (now and at 3rd grade)

Based upon the needs of communities across New Mexico and the priorities outlined in our by-laws, ELAC offers the following recommendations.

Priority Goal 1 High Quality Early Childhood Workforce: Recommendations

- 1 ELAC recommends to the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) and the Governor of New Mexico that funding for provider training and education be sustained/expanded to support obtaining degrees and incentives to help with staff retention and quality.
- 2 ELAC recommends to the Higher Education Taskforce and the Public Education Department (PED), Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and Department of Health (DOH) that a system be developed to acknowledge and apply appropriate credit from prior learning experiences to current educational situations.

Priority Goal 2 Accessibility to High Quality Early Childhood Programs: Recommendations

- 3 ELAC recommends to the DOH, CYFD, and PED that in order to prevent duplication of efforts and saturation of services, they conduct a formal needs assessment in a community before funding additional services in the community. State funds should not supplant federal funds.
- 4 ELAC recommends to the DOH, CYFD and PED that in order to meet the needs of the underserved and rural communities in New Mexico that the departments meet with community stakeholders to increase their capacity to apply for funding and consider flexible funding models to meet their needs.

- 5 ELAC supports CYFD implementation of the Child Care Block Grant reauthorization without raising parent copays, lowering eligibility or reducing slots.
- 6 ELAC recommends to CYFD that input from the ELAC be included in any revision of the Investment Zones.
- 7 ELAC recommends to DOH, CYFD and PED that the Pyramid Framework Partnership be shared across programs as a system to support social emotional development and address the needs of children with challenging behaviors.
- 8 ELAC recommends to the LFC, DOH, CYFD, and PED that they work with ELAC and coordinate efforts when funding early childhood programs through state, federal and philanthropic opportunities. The state should maximize the use of federal and philanthropic funds in New Mexico.
- 9 ELAC recommends to the DOH, PED and CYFD that they recognize and sustain a variety of program models within the system of care in early childhood that meets the needs of families.
- 10 ELAC recommends to CYFD, PED and DOH that developmental screening information be shared between service providers to eliminate duplication of effort.
- 11 ELAC recommends to the PED that an appointed member of ELAC should be added to the committee that oversees the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) and the data included in the system.
- 12 ELAC recommends to the DOH, CYFD, and PED that all early childhood personnel serving families prenatally through children five years of age shall have training on inclusion within one year of employment.
- 13 ELAC recommends to PED that a plan be created to support LEAs in meeting the needs of children that need special education services so that they can be served in their typical setting and in the best interest of the child.

**Priority Goal 3 Improve School Readiness (now and at 3rd grade):
Recommendations**

- 14 ELAC recommends to PED that ELAC review and provide input into the ESSA implementation in New Mexico.
- 15 ELAC encourages the CYFD, PED and DOH to adopt the 2011 definition of school readiness as a part of the Early Learning Guidelines (ELGs).
- 16 ELAC recommends to CYFD and PED that ELAC be involved in the determination of Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT) criteria/cut scores for determination of school readiness for New Mexico children.

ELAC looks forward to its reauthorization and strengthening of our role in advising various departments and committees around early learning in New Mexico.