



BLUE-RIBBON PANEL ON CHILD CARE

What is the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Child Care and why was it formed?

- The Blue-Ribbon Panel on Child Care was initiated by Governor Lamont’s Executive Order. The Panel is charged with developing a strategic plan for a child care system that works for families, providers, and Connecticut’s economy.
- The Panel will outline a data-driven, actionable, 5-year strategic plan for Connecticut that supports family needs, business needs, and prioritizes equitable access to early care and education.
- The Early Childhood Care and Education system is challenged by issues such as access, affordability, and quality.
 - Parents do not have access to the care they need at a price they can afford. Parents cannot productively work and children lack high-quality early education.
 - The current costs for child care are lower than the actual cost of quality child care; this depresses provider wages and reduces quality.
 - Like other states, Connecticut’s Early Care and Education sector is experiencing significant workforce shortages due to low wages.
- However, Connecticut is highly ranked as a great place for families; the state can build on this foundation with a strong Child Care and Education plan. Connecticut can enhance family-friendliness, attracting and retaining more families.



The goal is to develop an equitable, high quality, and sustainable system that ensures that every child has a quality educational foundation that will prepare them to grow, learn, and succeed.

What is the role of the Panel and who are the members?

- Panel members will provide critical review and offer feedback on emerging plans.
- Panel members are parents, early childhood education experts, business leaders, higher education, public school, child care and education providers, and legislators:

Senator Eric Berthel

Audette Bisailon

Emily Byrne

Shawn Coyne

Representative Jeffrey Currey

Chris DiPentima

Jamie Eden

Representative Kathleen McCarty

Dr. Monette Ferguson

Diana Jepsen

Dr. William Johnson

Courtney Larkin

Carmelita Valencia-Daye

Althea Marshall-Brooks

Senator Douglas McCrory

Garrett Moran

Kailyn Nadeau

Fran Rabinowitz

Jessica Sager

Melissa Turner

Karen Lott

Maria Vargas



How is the Blue-Ribbon Panel planning process structured?

- Commissioner Bye will lead the work. The Hunt Institute will lend deep expertise around planning processes, based on experience working with other states. Social Venture Partners Connecticut and other consultants will also support the planning process.
- Planning is divided across four work groups:
 - Equity and Access
 - Workforce and Quality
 - Systems
 - Funding and Costs
- Work groups will make recommendations to the Panel. Recommendations will be informed by the input of stakeholders and advisors, leveraging current initiatives in Connecticut and best practices from other geographies.
- The Early Childhood Cabinet, the OEC Parent Cabinet, and the OEC External Steering Committee will be essential partners, providing expertise, input, and feedback.
- The Panel will meet in April to initiate the planning process, and then monthly throughout the spring and summer. A review in September will assess proposed plan contents; November the plan draft will be reviewed. There will be an extensive review process to ensure broad-based feedback. The final plan will be submitted in December.

How can you provide input to the plan?

- The Panel is committed to transparency and accountability. The website, currently under construction, will provide updates as work progresses:
<https://www.ctoec.org/blue-ribbon-panel/>
- There will be public listening sessions, scheduled for May 19, June 8, July 6, August 3, and November 9. The website will be updated to include details.
- The success of this plan depends on broad-based input and support from Connecticut's families, providers, employers, and community members. Please reach out through the website with any questions, concerns, or comments and consider attending a public listening session.