
Early Start CT Resource

Learn more about Early Start CT

Last updated: October 2024



Early Start CT Overview



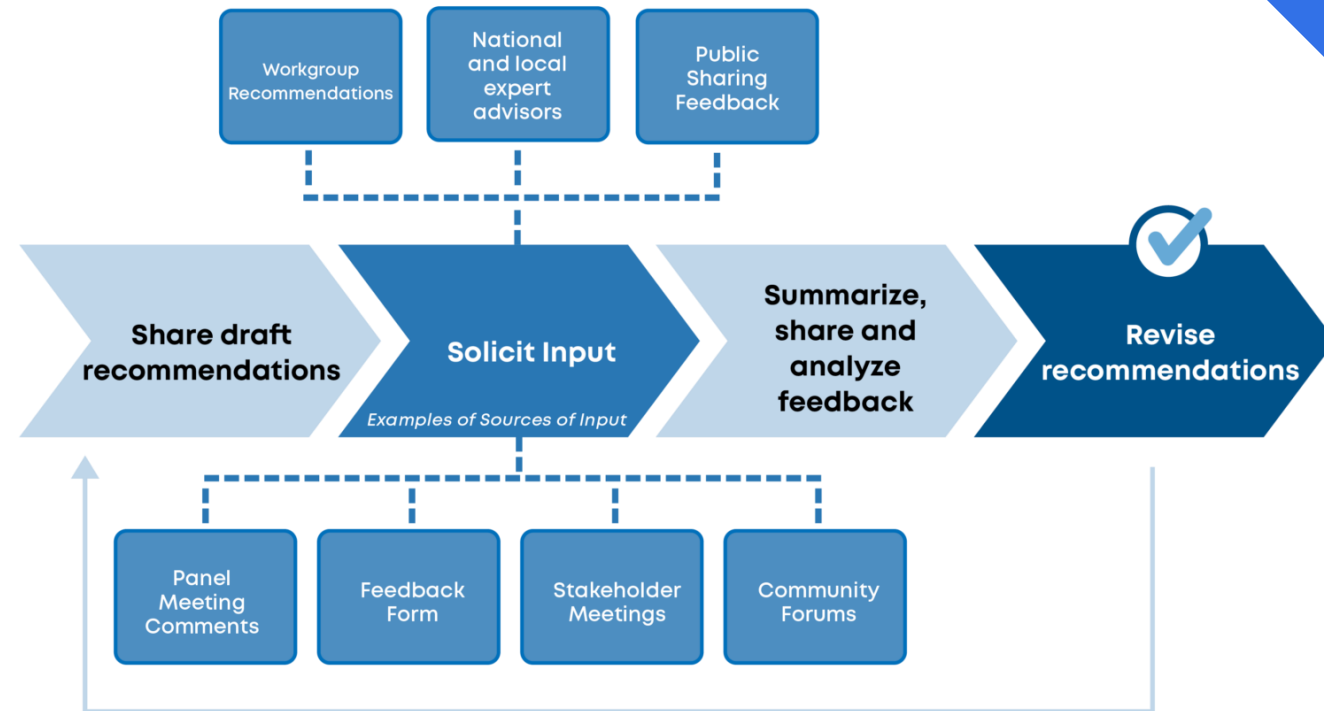
Where are we?

Governor Lamont initiated the Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care by Executive Order in 2023.

The goal was 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.**

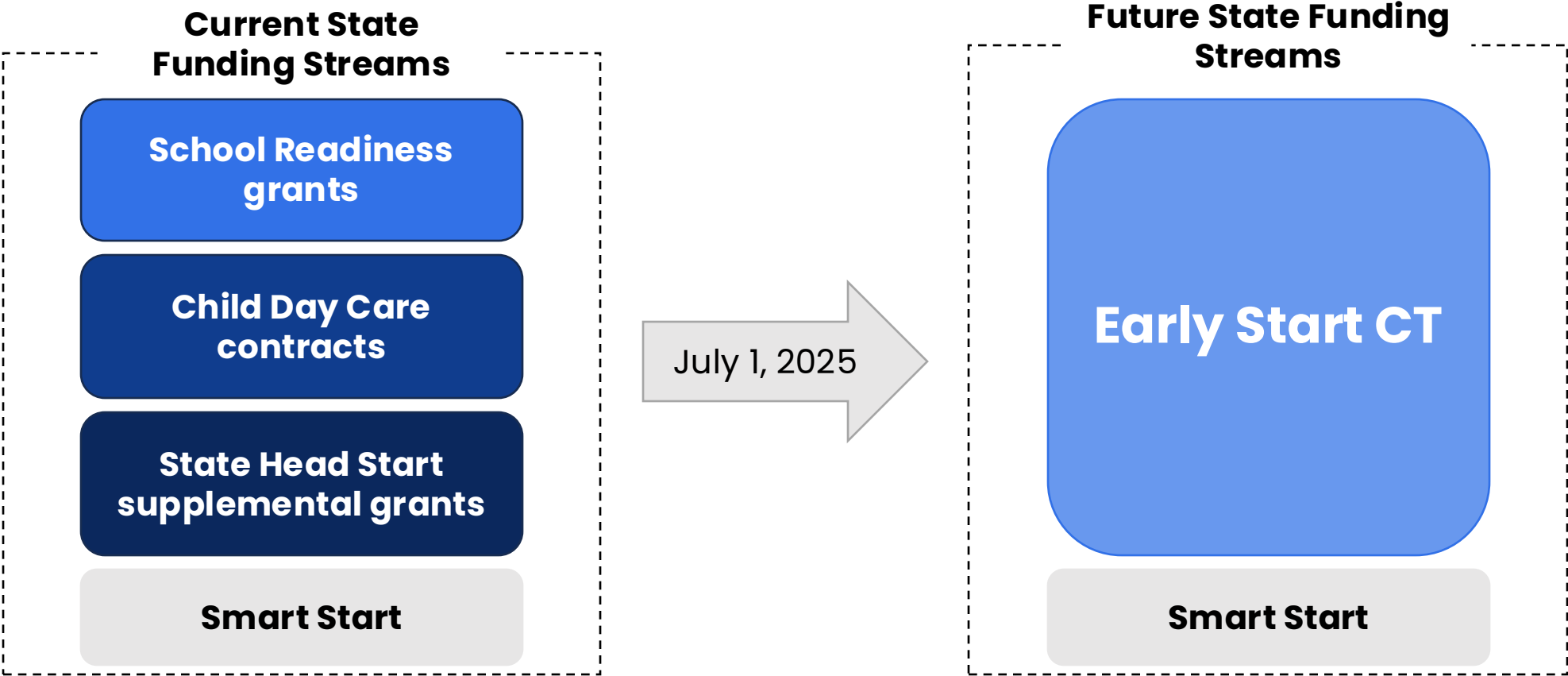
The culmination of over a year of work, **the Blue Ribbon Panel's report incorporates extensive feedback** from Blue Ribbon workgroups, national and local experts, Panel members, and other stakeholders, including providers, parents, businesses, and advocates.

Blue Ribbon Panel Feedback Process



What is Early Start CT?

Early Start CT is the new state funding stream that combines the current School Readiness grants, Child Day Care Contracts, and State Head Start supplemental grants; it goes into effect July 2025



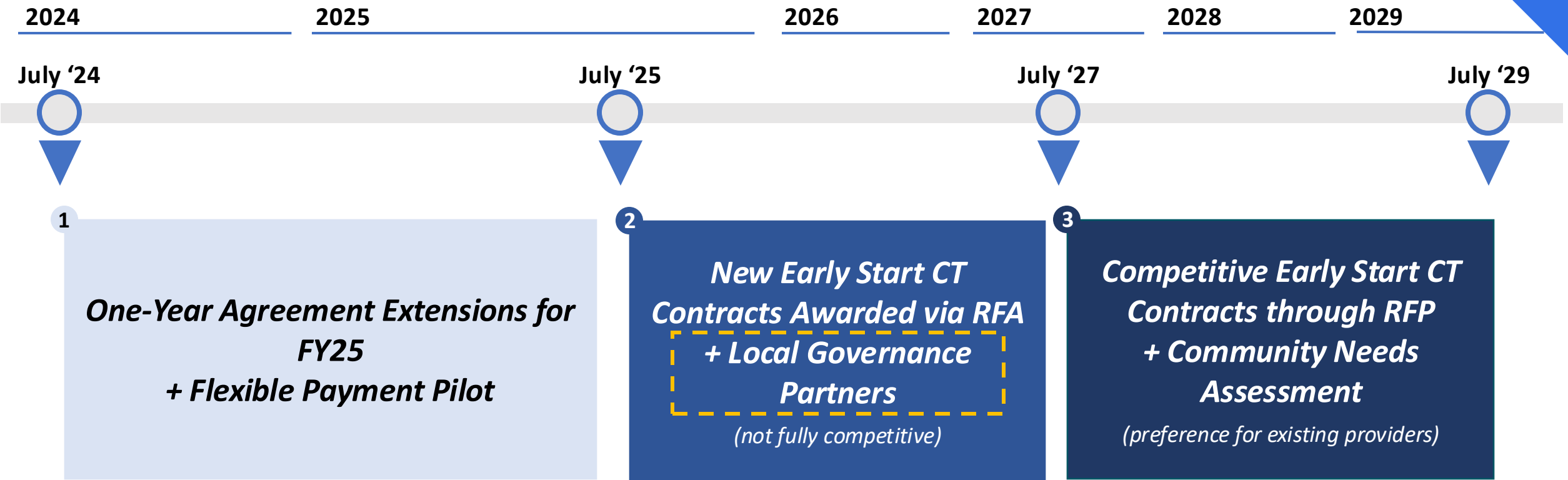
Who does Early Start CT benefit?

Early Start CT (ESCT) benefits families, providers, and the broader community.

How does it accomplish this?

- Expand child care access for families
- Center family and community needs
- Reduce financial and administrative burdens on providers
- Streamline the early care and education system

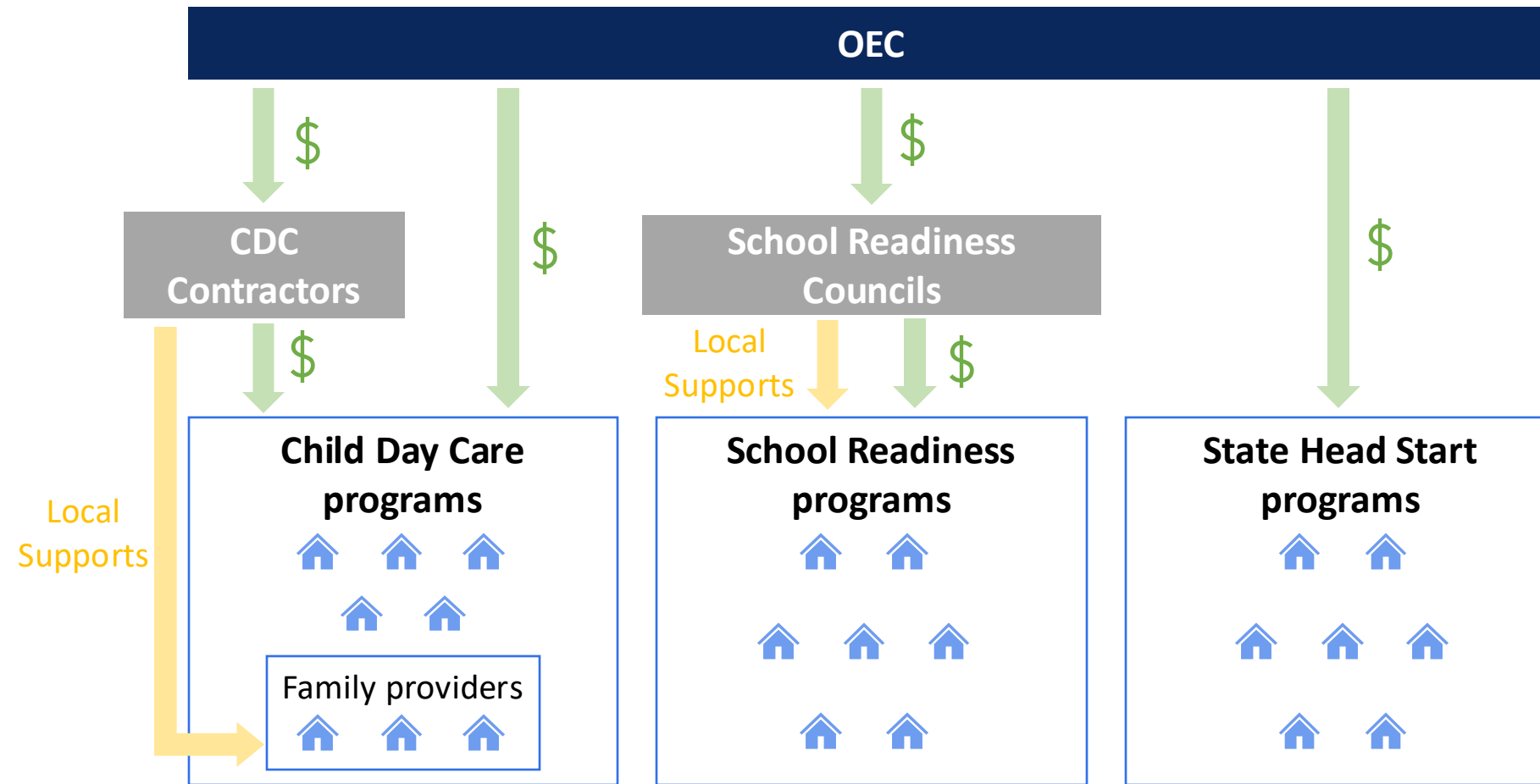
Early Start CT Timeline



Local Governance Partner (LGP) Overview



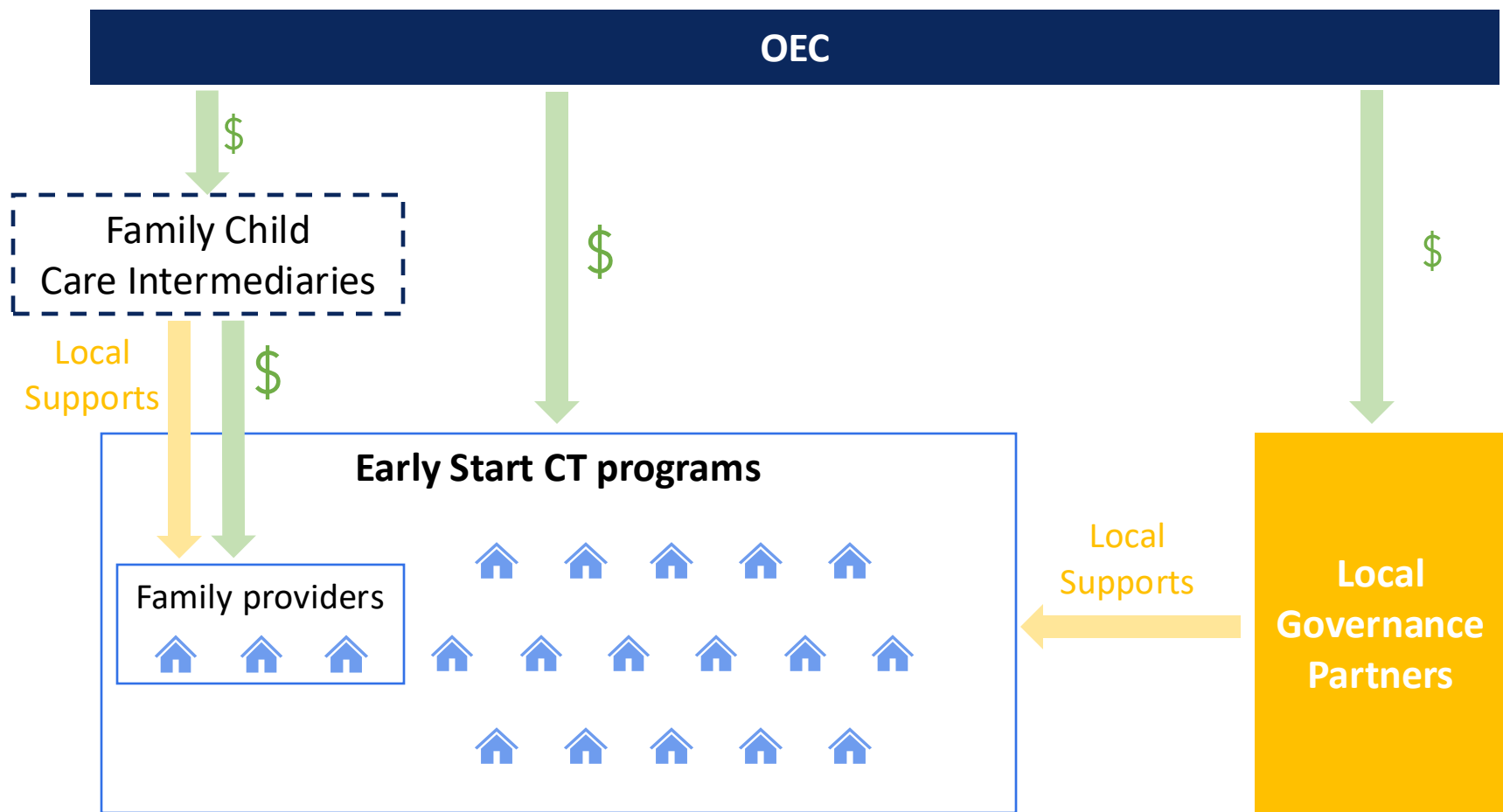
How are funding and local supports provided now?



Notes:

- This is **not** meant to reflect **all** sources of funding and local supports
- Examples of additional parts of the system not included here:
 - Some programs receive funding from multiple sources
 - Local Early Childhood Collaboratives play a vital role providing local support in many communities
- This depicts the basic structure that most programs that receive Child Day Care contracts, School Readiness grants, and/or State Head Start Supplement grants currently interact with

How will funding and local supports be provided in Early Start CT?



Notes:

- This is **not** meant to reflect **all** sources of funding and local supports programs will interact with

Local Governance Partners in Early Start CT



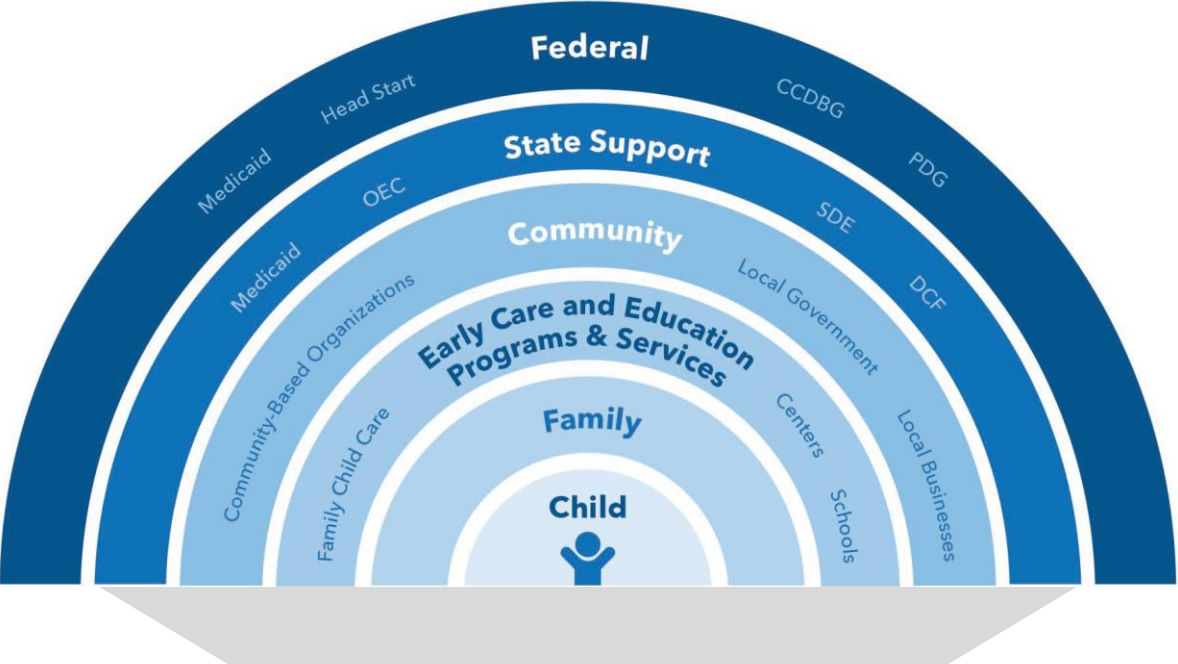
Now is the time to move to a more unified state and local system that is built on the good work and infrastructure that is already in place and functioning well.

A unified structure will assure that the well-being of every child in Connecticut is considered ... and that the young children and families who live in Connecticut are thriving and entering school ready to succeed.



Framework for Connecticut's Statewide System of Early Childhood State and Local Partnerships (2016)

Karen Ponder, CT Early Childhood Funder Collaborative



Local Governance Partners

Local Governance Partners (LGP)s, through relationships built on trust, will meaningfully engage the community in assessing and addressing the early childhood needs of the children and families in their communities



LGP Identification: Initial Hypothesis

1) If **only SR Council** in town, or **only LECC** in town:

- SR Council / LECC is offered opportunity to become LGP
- If SR Council / LECC opts out, move to option 3)

2) If **both SR Council and LECC** in town:

- SR Council and LECC combine or determine who will serve as LGP (e.g., Waterbury, Groton)

12 current CDC programs in towns with no SR Council or LECC

3) If **no SR Council or LECC** in town:

Options (e.g., Wallingford):

- Join another town's LGP
- Create their own LGP if the # of spaces in a town, or collection of towns, exceeds a minimum threshold to support an LGP

Note: Prior to an existing entity becoming an LGP, OEC will explicitly lay out the expectations of serving as an LGP **via an attestation**

Outlier cases

E.g., Trumbull:

Currently CDC funded town with no SR Council, no LECC, but a program in these towns receives SR funding through another town

- ***Programs would be supported by LGP in town they are receiving funding from***

Local Governance Partner (LGP) Roles and Responsibilities

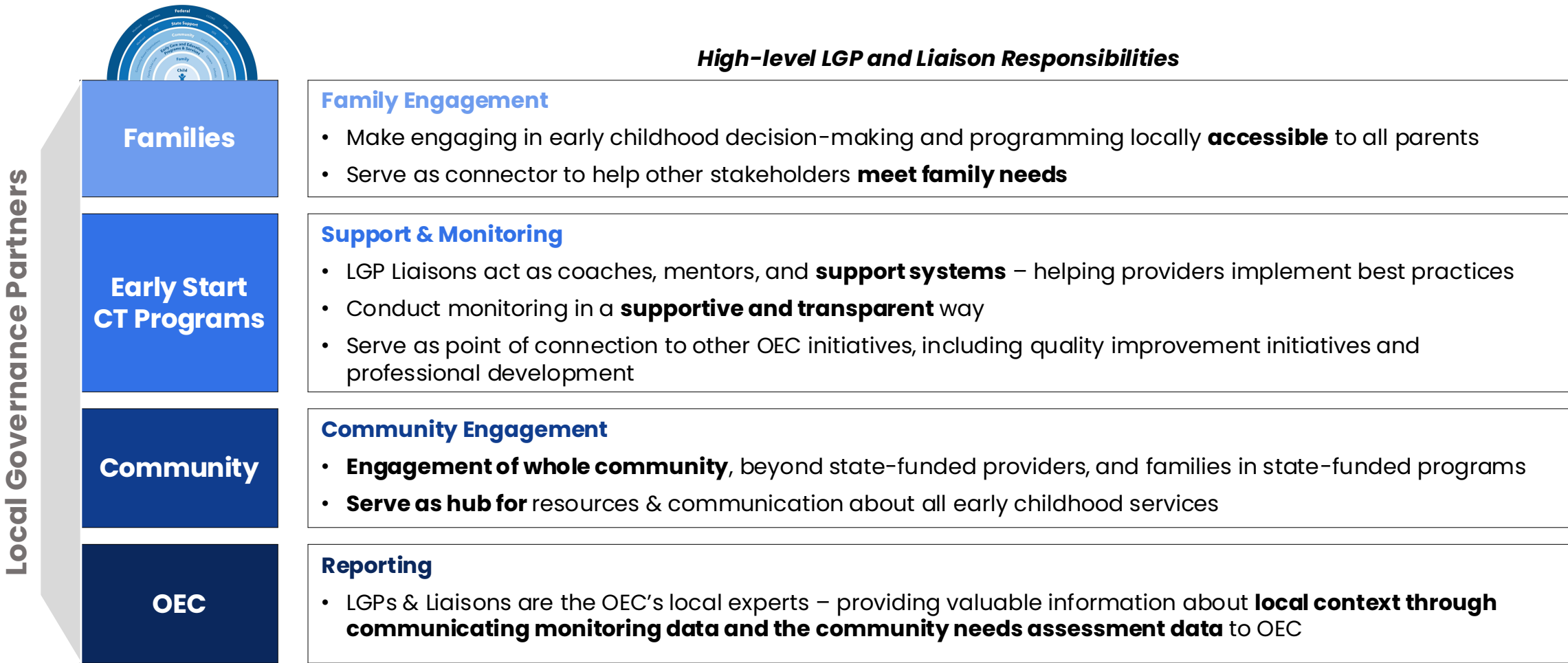
How?

Center family and community needs

- **Create & support governance bodies:** ESCT establishes Local Governance Partners (LGPs), the new governance body that will represent each community receiving Early Start CT funding. LGPs and their liaisons will support ESCT families, providers, and the broader community by:
 - Providing coaching and resources to providers and families
 - Conducting compliance monitoring, in coordination with the Office of Early Childhood (OEC)
 - Engaging the community
 - Connecting providers with OEC
- **Support local needs assessments:** LGPs will conduct local needs assessments beginning in SFY 2027, which will be used to create a more efficient and effective mixed delivery system by accurately and equitably allocating child care spaces.



For Discussion: Local Governance Partners (LGPs)



For Discussion: Local Governance Partners (LGPs)

Blue text: *Pulled from legislation*

Local Governance Partners	Family	Vision for LGP Engagement	Liaisons Roles & Responsibilities	LGP Roles & Responsibilities
		<p>Family Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as connector to help other stakeholders meet family needs Make engaging in early childhood locally accessible to all parents 	<p>Liaisons are responsible for serving as a trusted information source for families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing and providing information about all programs in the community Communicating choices available to families Connecting to other OEC initiatives, state-wide programs, and community resources <p>Liaisons support programs in building capacity to engage with families and build parent leadership</p> <p>Liaisons help facilitate family-oriented programming</p> <p>Liaisons serve as point-person within LGP for connecting families to other OEC and ECE initiatives (e.g., 211 CT, Sparkler)</p>	<p>LGPs are responsible for employing strategies to solicit parental engagement and membership, e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating spaces, physical and virtual, that are explicitly open and accessible to families Ensure meetings are held at times that are feasible for many families to attend Ideally, offering child care for in-person meetings <p>LGPs will conduct annual family engagement survey, or leverage an existing parent survey, to solicit feedback on LGP programming. This survey, and a plan of how the LGP will use the data, will be shared back with OEC in a summary report.</p> <p>LGPs will offer family-oriented programming informed by family engagement survey and other sources of family input</p>

For Discussion: Local Governance Partners (LGPs)

Blue text: *Pulled from legislation*

Local Governance Partners



ECE
Programs

Vision for LGP Engagement

Monitoring & Support

- LGP Liaisons act as coaches, mentors, and **support systems** – helping providers implement best practices
- Conduct monitoring framed as “**high-touch, accessible, local support**”
- Serve as point of connection to other OEC initiatives

Liaisons Roles & Responsibilities

- Liaisons **visit with providers quarterly (at a minimum). Provide coaching & support** by asking providers about their systems for...
- Enrollment (documentation, family income & fees, etc.)
 - Family engagement
 - Health and safety
 - Continuous quality improvement (Liaisons connect providers to Elevate service navigators, if helpful)
- Liaisons **monitor for meeting contract requirements and OEC general policies**
- LGPs enter monitoring findings into an electronic survey/form that feeds data directly to OEC
 - Where gaps are found, Liaisons either connect programs to OEC existing resources or provide targeted support themselves
 - Assess if gaps are provider-specific or exist community wide, and plan programming accordingly

LGP Roles & Responsibilities

LGPs are responsible for organizing quarterly events that **provide technical assistance regarding best practices in early care and education and family engagement** for providers


LGPs will provide **professional development opportunities** for providers that are **jointly sponsored with OEC**, identified through a “menu” of services provided through OEC and partners

- The audiences for the professional development opportunities (e.g., state-funded providers only, all providers, directors only, etc.) will vary based on the specific needs of the community



For Discussion: Local Governance Partners (LGPs)

Local Governance Partners



	Vision for LGP Engagement	Liaison Roles & Responsibilities	LGP Roles & Responsibilities
Community	Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engagement of whole community, beyond state-funded providers, and families in state-funded programs• Serve as hub for resources & communication about all early childhood services	<i>How would liaisons support private providers in the community?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Need to demonstrate what private providers have to gain to build buy-in</i> <i>What does broader community engagement look like?</i>	LGPs are responsible for ensuring community outreach is regularly conducted by having at least 1 of the events hosted by LGPs, per year, target the whole community of ECE programs, early childhood partners (i.e. WIC, Home Visiting), and families <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Need to further define community outreach (both who and how)</i>
OEC	Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LGPs & Liaisons are the OEC's local experts – providing valuable information about local context Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase awareness and utilization of OEC PD opportunities among providers	Liaisons support in conducting community needs assessment (beginning for FY28 contracting cycle) Liaisons communicate monitoring and other data to OEC program managers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use standard monitoring form to communicate information to OEC (e.g., E-License on iPad)• Develop a more formalized communication structure, outside of quarterly report to communicate urgent issues	LGPs will support in conducting community needs assessment (beginning for FY28 contracting cycle) LGPs will provide professional development opportunities for providers that are jointly sponsored with OEC , identified through a “menu” of services provided through OEC and partners

