Systems Workgroup

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State of Connecticut

Blue Ribbon Panel Workgroup

Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care

July 12th, 2023

Note that this session will be recorded and posted publicly on the OEC Website

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Initial Remarks
2. Workgroup Context
3. Panel Member Discussion of Preliminary Draft Systems Recommendations
    - Facilitated by Co-Leads in Breakout Rooms Discussion
4. Timeline and Wrap Up

ECE Systems

Moving towards alignment with remaining complexity

Before

State Department of Education
- School Readiness
- Part B – Special Education Preschool
- Quality Improvement

Office of Higher Education
- Workforce Registry
- Accreditation Support

Department of Social Services
- Care 4 Kids
- CDC – Child Daycare
- Home Visiting
- Facilities, CHEFA

Department of Developmental Disabilities
- Part C Special Education - Birth to Three

Department of Public Health
- Child Care Regulations and Inspections
- WIC – Women, Infant and Children Nutrition

2014
OEC Created

After

Office of Early Childhood
- School Readiness
- CDC – Child Daycare
- Care 4 Kids
- Workforce Registry
- Accreditation Support and Quality Improvement
- Child Care Regulations and Inspections
- Background Checks
- Part C Special Education – Birth to Three
- Home Visiting
- Universal Nurse Home Visiting
- Facilities

State Department of Education
- Part B – Special Education Preschool

Department of Social Services
- Medicaid
- IMPACT

Department of Public Health
- WIC – Women, Infant and Children Nutrition

Footnote: Governor Malloy established the Office of Early Childhood in 2013 by Executive Order. The OEC was established in statute in 2014.

Complexity of System from Three Perspectives

Teacher

Licensing:
- Head teacher requirements

Legal:
- Background checks

Registry & Professional Development:
- Higher Education Access, Requirements in
- Development Opportunities in Registry, ECE, SR Councils, CAEYC, NAFCC

Standards and Assessment:
- Early Learning Standards and Assessment in ECE

Birth to Three:
- If child needs supports

Director

Licensing & Accreditation:
- Director requirements
- Regulations (E License)
- ECE & RESCs (support)

Legal:
- Background checks (BCIS)

Registry:
- For Staff

United Way:
- Care 4 Kids

School Readiness:
- SR Councils for grants

CDC Funding:
- Grants and contracts

Head Start & Early Head Start

Special Education pre-school

Parent

United Way:
- Care 4 Kids
- 211 to find care and check on licensing inspections

School Readiness:
- Local SR Council process for enrollment in SR program

CDC Funding:
- Enrollment process: program recruitment

Head Start & Early Head Start
- Enrollment

Public school pre-school

Birth to Three:
- Enrollment, if needed

Systems is the third of four interdependent workgroups presenting to the Blue Ribbon Panel

WORKSTREAMS

Equity & Access

- Unmet need
- Parent demand and engagement
- Community needs
- Facilities
- Outcomes

Workforce & Quality

- Compensation strategies
- Recruitment and Retention
- Higher Ed and k-12 education and credentials
- PD and coaching
- Scholarships

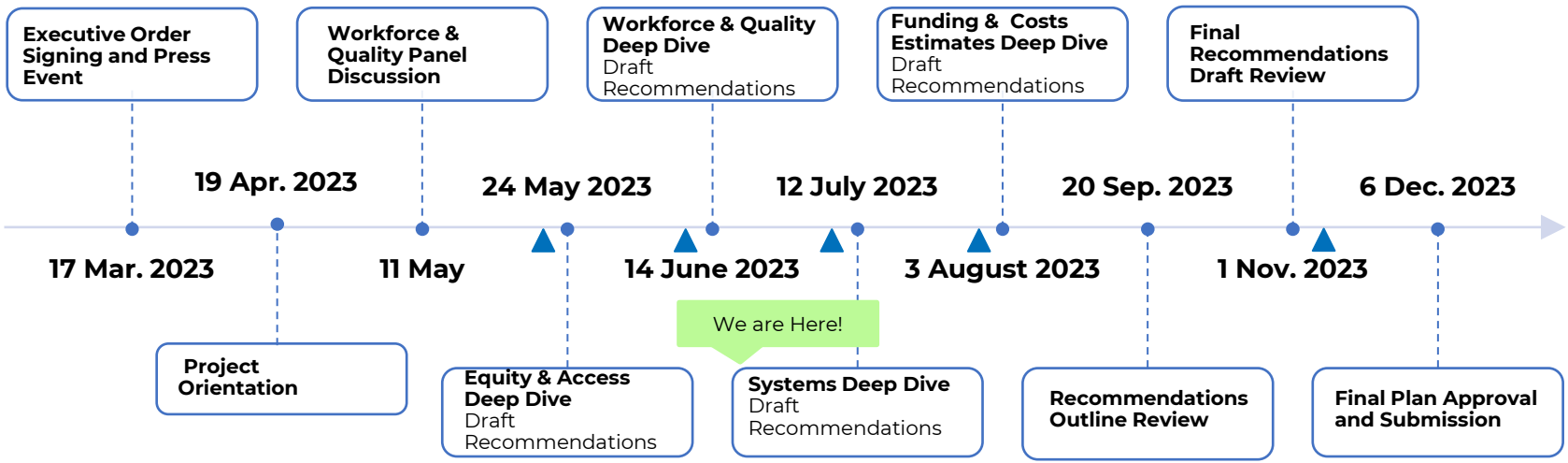
Systems

- State and local governance
- Data and information and infrastructure
- Streamlining state-funded funding sources
- Program supports and operations

Funding & Costs

- Maximizing current funding
- Estimating investment gaps
- Identifying funding options,
  - Public-private (business, philanthropy)
  - Business participation
  - Federal, state, local
  - Innovative funding options
- Developing 5-year funding plan

The Blue Ribbon Panel Meeting Timeline

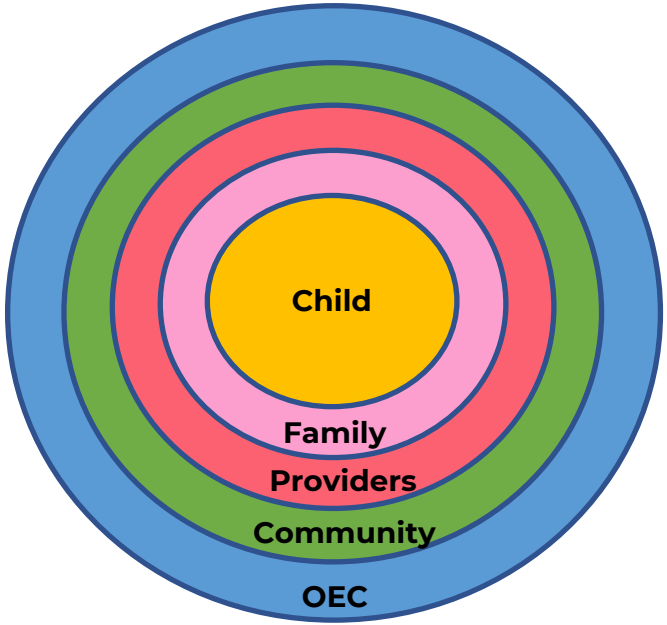


The recommendations presented today are considered **preliminary**; they will be discussed and updated by the Blue Ribbon Panel and then **further socialized with the field** before they are considered "final"

▲ *Indicates Public Listening Sessions For Collecting Feedback from the Field*

Grounding in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory views **child development** as a complex system of relationships **affected by multiple levels of the surrounding environment.**



We used this theory to consider the way different systems within the broader ECE system impact children and families.

Systems Workgroup Goal

Systems Goal

Build an equitable, efficient ECE system that is informed by current data and that fosters the sustainable provision of high-quality programs and services for young children and their families in CT.

The workgroup has drafted recommended strategies to the Blue Ribbon Panel according to three key categories*

- **Program Enrollment & Operations**
- **Funding Systems**
- **Governance**
- **Data & Outcomes**

Important note: the recommendations on the subsequent slides are preliminary based on current work and promising practices here and across the country. They will be prioritized and refined based on feedback from the public, guidance from the panel, and key stakeholders. They will then be tested for feasibility and impact.

**Categories were chosen and finalized by the Systems Workgroup, based on demonstrated need in CT found and shared experience from the field*

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Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

Program Enrollment and Operations

Draft Recommendations For Consideration

- Create a unified navigation system that provides a central location for families and providers to access all necessary information for child care in the state of Connecticut.
- Provide incentives to programs that utilize state systems (i.e., navigation system, assessment system, business supports, and Care4Kids) to improve business practices.
- Provide resources and supports for providers (informed by provider feedback loops) such as a shared services plan and onboarding supports for newly licensed programs.
- Assess where changes can be made to group home regulations so more providers are attracted to opening them; thereby increasing the supply of childcare slots for families.
- Aggressively seek subsidized facilities with a focus on facility needs for programs.

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Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

Data and Outcomes

Draft Recommendations For Consideration

- Enhance and integrate existing data systems (e.g. Provider 360 Portal, Registry, etc.) to support the creation of a comprehensive data system for providers that unifies program data entry and invoicing processes for state-funded programs.
- Streamline process for families to access child care information and availability.
- Collect common needs assessment data from local and regional governance bodies and provide data on OEC website.
- Implement a statewide system to assess Connecticut children's early learning and development from birth to age 5 that will be linked to the State Department of Education and local school kindergarten enrollment processes, by leveraging an existing platform.
- Create a transparent statewide data dashboard to share aggregate operations data and outcome measures with the field.

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Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

Funding Systems

Draft Recommendations For Consideration

- Consolidate the number of state funded ECE funding sources from five (School Readiness, Child Day Care, Smart Start & Smart Start for Recovery, State Head Start Supplement, Care4Kids) to one.
- Fund programs by classroom, based on blocks of time (informed by local community needs).
- Deploy unified state funding to programs through State of Connecticut Purchase of Service (POS) contracts, rather than the current mix of grants and POS contracts; distribute payments directly to programs, quarterly in advance of service provided, rather than through contractors/fiscal agents.
- Appoint regional ECE governance bodies (aligned with intermediary regional governance structure in Governance recommendations) to assess unmet need for high quality ECE by community every three years and develop an annual plan for local disbursement of state funds allocated to communities in alignment with demonstrated needs and local assets.
- Convert the funding structure to reflect the true cost of care rather than market rates.

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Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

Governance

Draft Recommendations For Consideration

- Create and fund a cohesive governance system that covers all towns and provides an opportunity for local partnership and collaboration to allocate state funding.
- Design and fund an intermediary regional governance structure to support local bodies.
- Create supports at the state level to bolster capacity of local and regional governance bodies.
- Create a common needs assessment, with common data collection across local governance bodies.

Systems Workgroup

Breakout Groups:

Discuss Detailed Draft Recommendations

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Note that these sessions will be recorded

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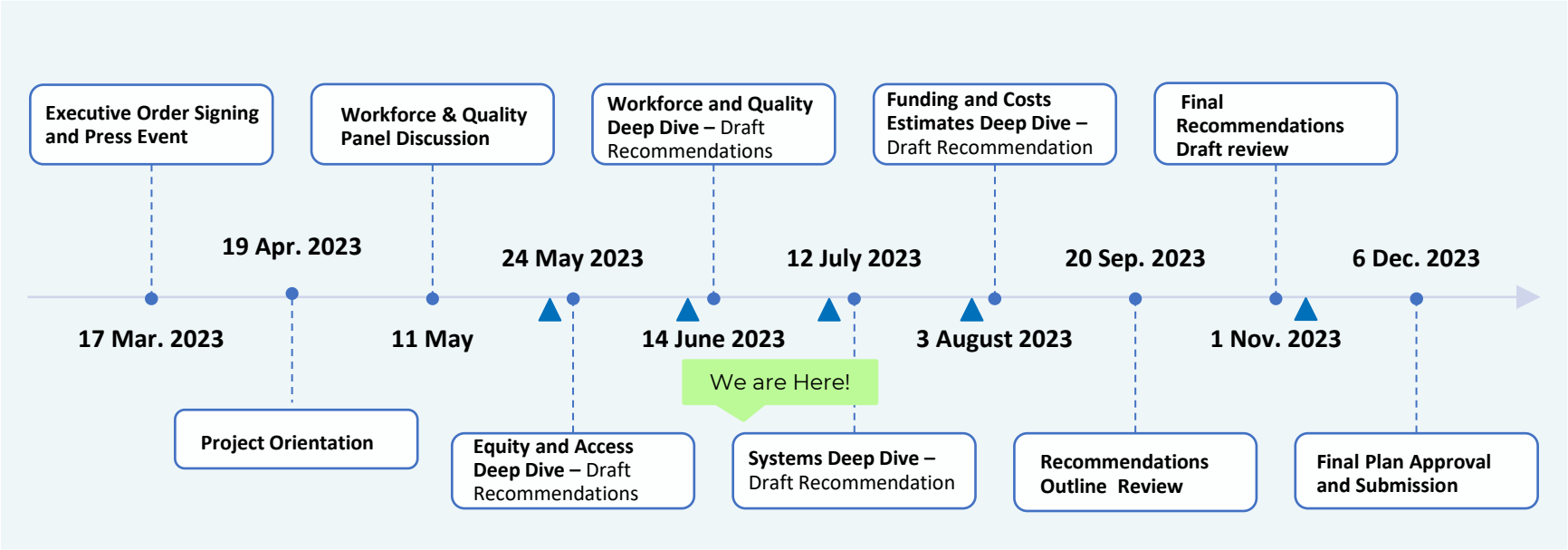
Questions For Discussion

- What are your general reactions to the recommendations? What do you need more clarity on?
- What would you prioritize or deprioritize within these, and why?
- What is missing from these recommendations?
- What questions do you have about the recommended strategies? Where should the workgroup dig in further as we continue to build out the recommendations?

Next Steps and Further Feedback



- **Please visit the Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care website and/or reach out to us directly with additional questions or comments:**
  - **There will be a form added to the website to submit any feedback and questions**
- **We will incorporate your feedback and continue to keep you updated as these recommendations are prioritized and defined - Let us know other ways you would like to be able to provide input!**

▲ *Indicates Public Listening Session For Collecting Feedback from the Field*

Thank you for your participation today!

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