State of Connecticut

Blue Ribbon Panel Workgroup

June 2023

Note that this session will be recorded and posted publicly on the OEC Website
1. Welcome and Initial Remarks

2. Workgroup Context and Expert Overview

3. Panel Member Discussion of Preliminary Draft Workforce and Quality Recommendations
   - Facilitated by Co-Leads in Breakout Rooms Discussion

4. Timeline and Wrap Up
Workforce is the second of four interdependent workgroups presenting to the Blue Ribbon Panel.

**Workstream 1: Equity & Access**
- Unmet need
- Parent demand and engagement
- Community needs
- Facilities
- Outcomes

**Workstream 2: Workforce & Quality**
- Compensation strategies
- Recruitment and Retention
- Higher Ed and k-12 education and credentials
- PD and coaching
- Scholarships

**Workstream 3: Systems**
- State and local governance
- Data and information and infrastructure
- Streamlining state-funded funding sources
- Program supports and operations
- Regulations and statutes

**Workstream 4: 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 the Unifying framework
Unifying Framework Vision

Our vision is that each and every child, beginning at birth, has the opportunity to benefit from high quality, affordable early childhood education, delivered by an effective, diverse, well-prepared, and well-compensated workforce.
Three Meaningful Designations

Members of the early childhood education profession will be prepared to be accountable for the following responsibilities:

- Planning and implementing intentional, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that promote the social-emotional development, physical development, health, cognitive development, and general learning competencies of each child served;
- Establishing and maintaining a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy learning environment;
- Observing, documenting, and assessing children’s learning and development using guidelines established by the profession;
- Developing reciprocal, culturally responsive relationships with families and communities;
- Advocating for the needs of children and their families;
- Advancing and advocating for an equitable, diverse, and effective early childhood education profession that is well-compensated; and
- Engaging in reflective practice and continuous learning.
We will not advocate for increased educational requirements without advocating for funding to provide requisite supports and attendant compensation.

We will not advocate for new regulations or requirements for early childhood educators without advocating for increased funding and capacity supports so that programs, institutions, and educators across all settings can implement them.

We will not advocate for new regulations or requirements for early childhood educators without advocating to establish and implement realistic timelines that recognize the challenges faced by the existing workforce, across all settings.

We will not advocate for new regulations or requirements for early childhood educators without advocating for implementation plans and timelines that recognize the particular challenges that family child care and other community-based providers face, so as not to contribute to or worsen their widespread decline.

We will not advocate for policies that disproportionately and negatively impact educators from communities of color.

We will not advocate for policies that advance the early childhood education profession without doing the work to mitigate unintended consequences and create meaningful pathways for advancement.
In conjunction and consistent with the Unifying Framework’s structure, we will not make other recommendations without first addressing a path forward to appropriate compensation.

Foundational Recommendation: Compensation

Compensation is at the center of all workforce issues and no issues will be resolved if compensation is not addressed.
Workforce and Quality Workgroup Goal

Workforce & Quality Goal

Develop and sustain equity-driven, skilled, diverse professional lead educators and program leaders that are prepared and fairly compensated to meet the early childhood education needs of the state’s children and families.
The workgroup has drafted recommended strategies to the Blue Ribbon Panel according to three key categories*

- Recruitment & Retention
- Professional Pathways & Technical Assistance
- Compensation

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 Workforce and Quality Workgroup, based on demonstrated need in CT found through available CT data and shared experience from the field.
Breakout Groups:
Discuss Detailed Draft Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

Note that these sessions will be recorded
**Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel**

### Compensation

*Draft Recommendations For Consideration*

1. **Update the existing CT Compensation Schedule Report** to build a compensation plan which utilizes a true cost of care study.

2. **Adopt the three educator level roles (ECE I, II and III)** defined in the Unifying Framework and establish compensation requirements that are aligned with the government-funded reimbursement rates for state funded early childhood programs tied to ECE I, II and III requirements.

3. **Consider strategies for improved benefits** in the compensation package (PTO, health care, dental and vision, retirement, etc.) and explore nontraditional benefit options.

4. **Socialize the importance of the structure of the profession** and its value to families and to children’s development in connection with increased compensation.
Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

Professional Pathways & Technical Assistance

Draft Recommendations For Consideration

- Restructure Connecticut early childhood credentialing and certification systems into an ECE Professional Licensure system (OEC and SDE) to align with the Unifying Framework

- Utilize the NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies as the basis for designing OEC-developed and/or sponsored professional development pathways

- Fund the Professional Pathways and Technical Assistance System (PPTA) (including higher education and in-service learning) to expand infrastructure and support high quality professional learning both in the higher education system and in the field
## Recruitment and Retention

### Draft Recommendations For Consideration

**Recruitment:**
- **Expand the introduction of ECE** as a respected, desirable profession in high school (and even before) to build interest, understanding, knowledge, and opportunities such as Apprenticeships.
- **Leverage directors as leaders** who serve as the face of recruitment in their programs and are the key driver for retention (for programs and for the broader field).
- **Implement marketing strategies** to attract individuals into the ECE field and promote incentives to bring people from other fields into ECE.

**Retention:**
- **Include retention-focused benefits in the compensation package** (PTO, health care, dental and vision, retirement, etc.).
- **Follow/adopt payscale that has mobility and steps for experience** with ongoing professional development.
- **Create career pathways which utilize partnerships with colleges** to give credits toward achieving a credential or a degree while working.
Questions For Discussion

• What would you prioritize or de-prioritize 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

- Executive Order Signing and Press Event: 17 Mar. 2023
- Project Orientation: 17 Mar. 2023
- Workforce & Quality Panel Discussion: 11 May
- Workforce and Quality Deep Dive – Draft Recommendations: 14 June 2023
- Systems Deep Dive – Draft Recommendation: 3 August 2023
- Equity and Access Deep Dive – Draft Recommendations: 24 May 2023
- Recommendations Outline Review: 1 Nov. 2023
- Final Plan Approval and Submission: 6 Dec. 2023
- Final Recommendations Draft Review: 1 Nov. 2023
- Recommendations Outline Review: 1 Nov. 2023
- Equity and Access Deep Dive – Draft Recommendations: 24 May 2023
- Workforce and Quality Deep Dive – Draft Recommendations: 14 June 2023
- Systems Deep Dive – Draft Recommendation: 3 August 2023

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!
Thank you for your participation today!