

**Workforce & Quality
Workgroup**

DRAFT - CONFIDENTIAL

State of Connecticut
**Blue Ribbon Panel
Workgroup**



June 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 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



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

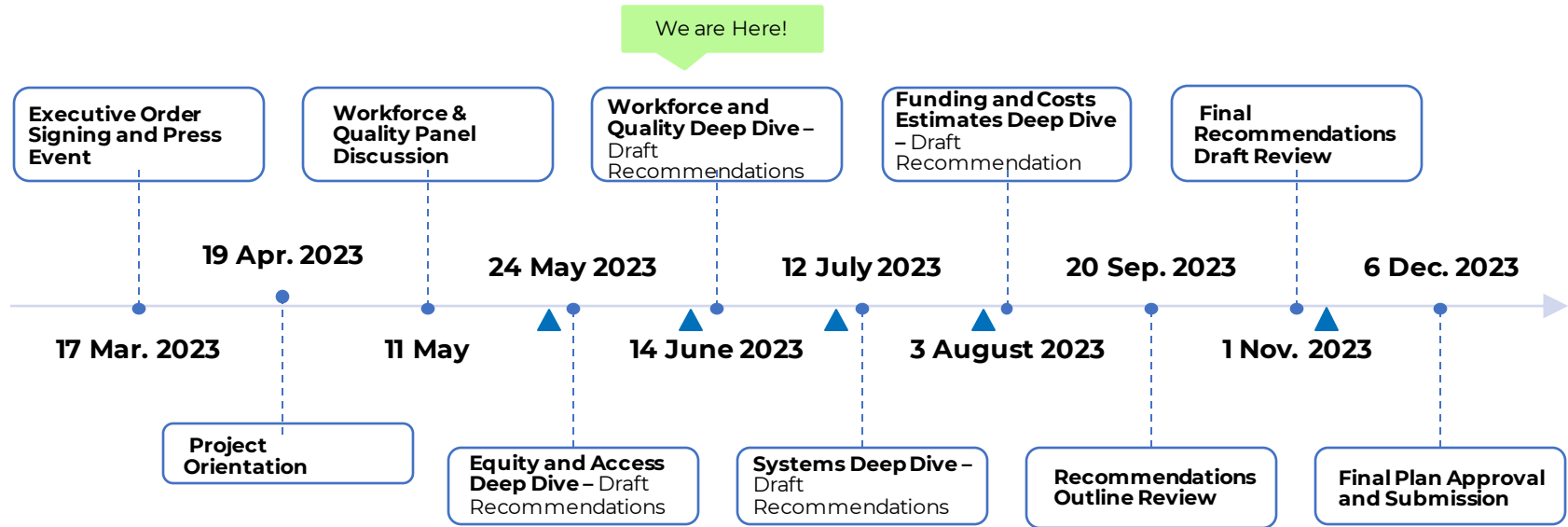
Systems

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

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"



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.

Early Childhood Educator I (120 training hours)

Early Childhood Educator II (Associate's Degree)

Early Childhood Educator III (Bachelor's Degree)

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

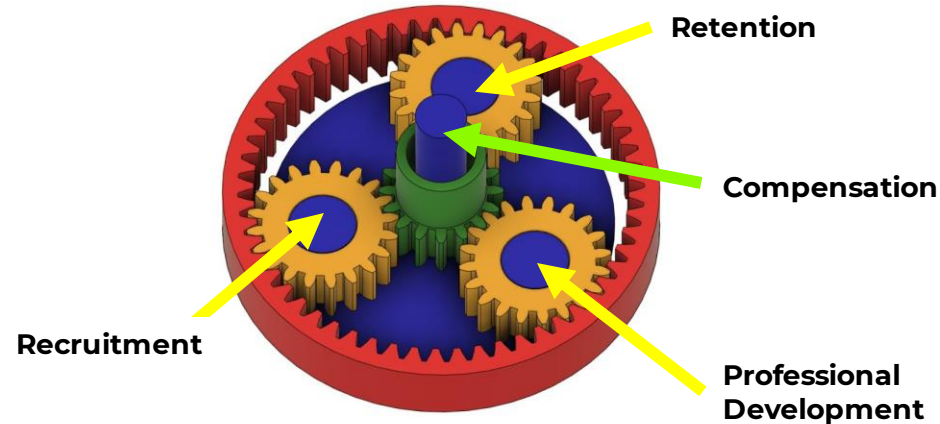
- Planning and implementing intentional, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that promote the social-emotional development, physical development, health, cognitive development, and general learning competencies of each child served;
- Establishing and maintaining a safe, caring, inclusive, 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

Statement on Unifying framework

- 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.

Foundational Recommendation: Compensation

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.**



Compensation is at the center of all workforce issues and no issues will be resolved if compensation is not addressed

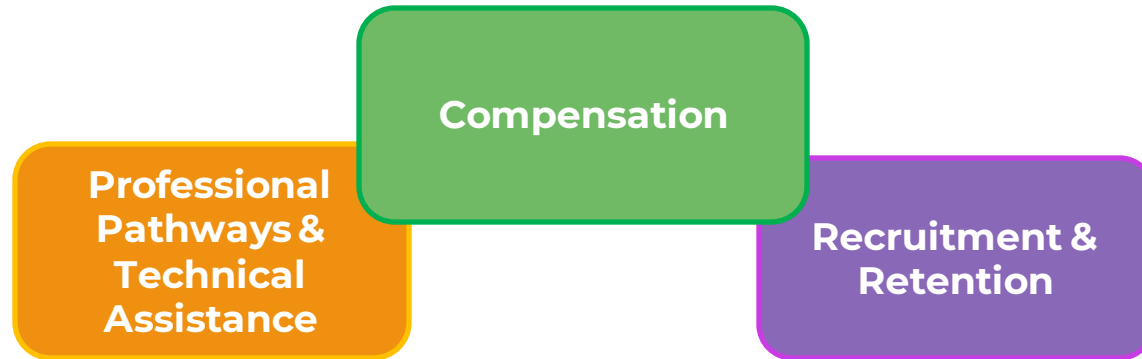
Workforce and Quality Workgroup Goal

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*



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*

Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

Compensation

Draft Recommendations For Consideration

- Update the **existing CT Compensation Schedule Report** to build a compensation plan which utilizes a true cost of care study
- **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
- Consider **strategies for improved benefits** in the compensation package (PTO, health care, dental and vision, retirement, etc.) and explore nontraditional benefit options
- 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

Subgoal Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Panel

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

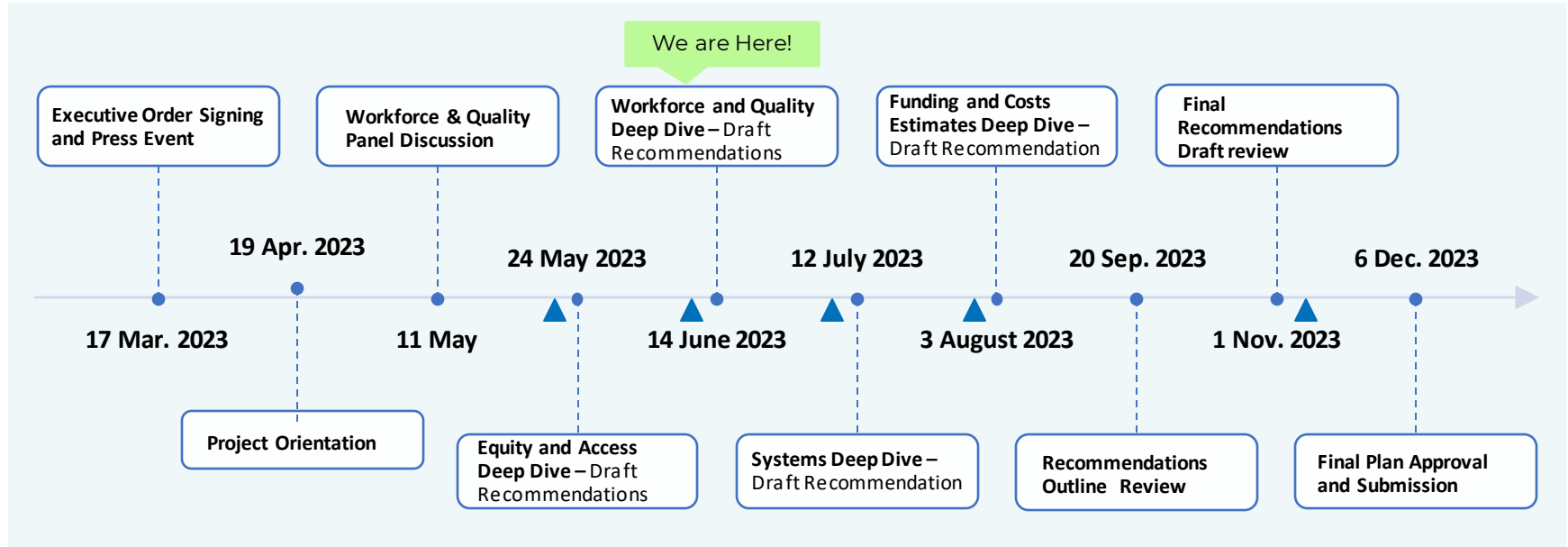
Retention:

- **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 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!**



Thank you for your participation today!