

# CT Early Childhood Cabinet

Purpose: to develop a high-quality, comprehensive system of early childhood education among the wide array of early childhood programs in the state, including Head Start, child care and School Readiness.

In 2007, the Governor established the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood as part of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007



In January 2010, the CT Early Childhood Cabinet was designated to be the State Advisory Council  
CGS §10-16z



Office of Early Childhood was established in 2013 with several strategic plans



During the 2014 Legislative Session, the State Advisory Council was renamed as the Early Childhood Cabinet.



Connecticut Office  
of Early Childhood

# Office of Early Childhood: Our Work

The state agency oversees a network of programs and services that help young children and families thrive.



## Early Care and Education (ECE)

Support more than **400** ECE programs serving over **40,000** children\*



## Care 4 Kids

Provide child care funding for low - and - moderate income families who are working or participating in education



## Home Visiting

Provide parenting and child development support to families of young children and pregnant women



## Birth to Three

Provide supports for families whose children have developmental delays



## Parent Cabinet

Advisory group that partners with OEC to elevate family voice and develop family-centered policies, programs, and practices



## Licensing

Licenses and inspect more than **4,000** child care and youth camp programs to ensure health and safety



## Background Checks

Oversee comprehensive background checks for child care providers



## Quality Improvement

Provide early childhood professionals with supports to improve child care practices



## Agency Administrative Functions

Fiscal, Legal, Communications, Information Technology, Data & Research



## Government & Community Relations

Outreach and engagement with key stakeholders and partners

# Building a Brighter Future

## Strengthening Connecticut's Early Care and Education Infrastructure



# Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act

On November 19, 2014, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG) of 2014 was enacted into law.

The law reauthorized the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program for the first time since 1996.

This law made significant advancements focused on strengthening child care in this country to better support the success of both parents and children.

## Child Care and Development Fund Activities (CCDF)

- Care 4 Kids
- Licensing and Regulation
- Quality Improvement
- Workforce Registry
- Data Systems
- Family Child Care Networks
- 211 Infoline (Child Care and Help Me Grow)
- Administration

### **CT CCDF Annual Funding**

Annual Federal Funding: Mandatory = \$18,700,000, State Matching = \$16,000,000, Discretionary = \$33,400,000

# 8 Sections of the CCDF Plan

1. Define and Coordinate CCDF Leadership
2. Promote Family Engagement
3. Provide Stable Financial Assistance to Families
4. Ensure Equitable Access to High Quality Care
5. Establish and Enhance Standards and Quality
6. Recruit and Retain High Quality Workforce
7. Continuous Quality Improvement
8. Accountability



# Goals in 2022-2024 CCDF Plan

Access to high  
quality child  
care

Provider rates  
and quality  
incentives

Market Rate  
Survey + Cost  
of Quality

Background  
Check System  
(BCIS)

Quality  
Improvement  
System

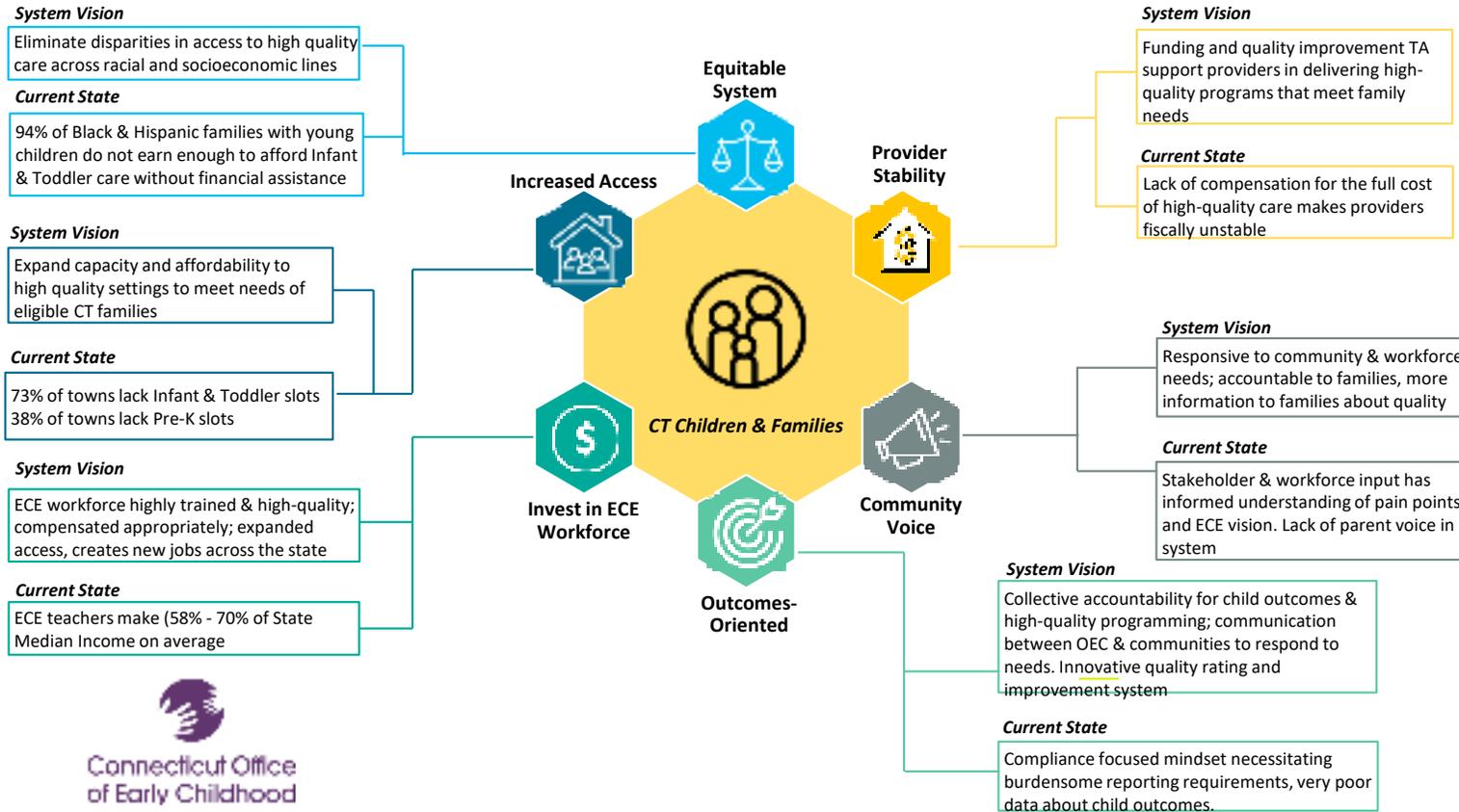
Staffed Family  
Child Care  
Networks

- 2022-2024 CCDF Plan was finalized based off of input from cabinet members and through public comment.
- The plan has been submitted to the Federal Office of Child Care and went into effect on October 1, 2021.



Connecticut Office  
of Early Childhood

# Overview System Re-Design: A vision for early care and education in CT



# GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS



# COUNCIL FORMATION & STRUCTURE

- Created by Governor Lamont in January 2019
- Council Leadership & Membership
  - Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Chair
  - OPM Sec. Melissa McCaw, Vice Chair
  - Members include representatives from state executive branch agencies; constitutional offices; and legislative caucuses
- Priorities
  - [Education & STEAM](#)
  - [Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity](#)
  - [Health & Safety](#)
  - [Leadership](#)
- Partners
  - Steering Committee
  - Corporate Leadership Circle

## EDUCATION & STEAM

The purpose of this subcommittee is to encourage educational advancement for women and girls, particularly in the areas of science, technology, engineering, the arts and math.

- Lt. Governor's Computing Challenge
- Internships
- Information HUB
- Arts Recognition

# ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & WORKFORCE EQUITY

The purpose of this subcommittee is to identify financial barriers that disproportionately hinder women and girls, including (but not limited to) pay and work environment disparities that inhibit fair performance evaluation and advancement in the workplace.

- Women-Owned Business Supports
  - [WBDC-Partnered Equity Match Program](#)
- Financial Literacy
  - [Financial Literacy Website](#)
- Equitable Workforce Representation
  - [Housing and Community Development Leadership Institute](#)
  - State executive branch equity review

## HEALTH & SAFETY

The purpose of this subcommittee is to identify health and safety issues that particularly impact women and girls and develop initiatives that support healthy lifestyles and offer physical, mental and emotional protection for women and girls affected by such matters.

- MAPOC Subcommittee on Women and Children's Health
- [PROUD](#)

# LEADERSHIP

The purpose of this subcommittee is to promote women leadership in both the public and private sectors, particularly government elected and appointed officials, corporate boards and executive management, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and the media with the ultimate goal of achieving gender parity such that gender in workforce leadership proportionately represents the Connecticut population.

- [Diversity on State Boards and Commissions](#)
- State of CT – Employer
  1. Employee Development & Training Opportunities / Cultural Competency
  2. Affirmative Action Reports, Hiring Goals and Recruitment Strategies

# JULY 21, 2021 CLC & GWC PRIVATE SECTOR CONVENING

## OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Engage and activate business leaders from around the state to provide greater early childhood education (ECE) opportunities to our children and families
- ✓ Provide employers with tools to make actionable steps to reduce childcare related barriers for their employees and strengthen the childcare infrastructure of their communities
- ✓ Share best practices from employers in Connecticut

# ECE EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

## Our Vision

Encourage the private sector to collaborate on expanding access to affordable and developmental childcare in the State.

## Call to Action for Employers



### Quick Wins

Recommendations that employers can implement without significant investment or systems level change in their organization



### Internal Investments

Recommendations that demonstrate a commitment to organizational growth and receptivity to employees' long term child care needs



### Community Investments

Recommendations that rely on collective action of employers to build partnerships and improve access to child care for the local community



### Statewide Systems Change

Recommendations that will help drive change at the systems level and grow the early childhood education field

# CALL TO ACTION OVERVIEW

## Call to Action Groupings



### Quick Wins



- Understand the Needs of Your Working Parents
- Provide Employees with Useful Child Care Information
- Educate Employees About Their Tax, Subsidy, and Discount Eligibility
- Start an Employee Resource Group
- Advance Flexible Work Arrangements & Scheduling



### Internal Investments



- Reserve Child Care Slots and/or Provide Back-up Care
- Offer a Dependent Care Assistance Plan or Dependent Care FSA
- Provide Childcare Scholarships or Subsidies
- Open an Onsite Child Care Facility



### Community Investments



- Develop Private Sector Technical Assistance (TA) Partnerships
- Join and Support Local or Regional Early Childhood Councils or School Readiness Council
- Provide Financial Support, TA, or Mentoring to Other EC Programs and Networks
- Co-invest to Open a Local Child Care Facility
- Donations of Supplies and Funding to Child Care Providers



### Statewide Systems Change



- Raise Awareness
- Advocate
- Jointly Fundraise
- Research or Support Research
- Develop a Coalition of Businesses for Early Childhood Education

# CHILDCARE INVESTMENT IMPACTS

## Areas of Impact for Employers

### Employee Performance

Access to reliable and quality childcare **improves productivity** by easing employees' stress levels and **reducing employee absenteeism** caused by acute childcare needs

### Recruitment and Retention

Investments in child and family supports **increase employee satisfaction and decrease costly staff turnover**, while also making organizations an **attractive option for potential employees** with current or expected childcare needs. This can help organizations **differentiate from competitors** and diversify their recruitment pipeline

### Community Standing

Investments in quality childcare signal to their communities and customers that organizations are **committed not only to their employees, but to the broader community and local economy**

### Moving the Field

Elevating the importance of, advocating for, and expanding access to quality childcare can have **ripple effects beyond an organization** and establish an organization as a **leader in efforts to improve childcare at a systems level**

## QUESTIONS?

For more information  
visit the [Governor's  
Council on Women  
and Girls](#) website

Contact:  
[Cherie.Phoenix-  
Sharpe@ct.gov](mailto:Cherie.Phoenix-Sharpe@ct.gov)

# UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

- Full Council - November 16<sup>th</sup> at 3pm
- Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity – December 9<sup>th</sup> at 3pm
- Education & STEAM – December 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm
- Health and Safety – December 6<sup>th</sup> at 10am
- Leadership – December 15<sup>th</sup> at 3pm

## ▶ WHY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)?

A strong system benefits our children and the economy and promotes equity



### Our Children

*The first years of a child's life have long-lasting impacts*

**90%**

of a child's **brain development** happens by age 5 <sup>1</sup>

**13%**

**return on investments** in high quality birth-to-five childcare through **savings on education, health, employment, and social behavior outcomes** <sup>2</sup>



### The Economy

*Inadequate child care creates economic inefficiencies and burden*

**9.5%**

of CT parents **quit a job, declined a job, or changed jobs** due to child care (pre-COVID) <sup>3</sup>

**\$57B**

annual **costs incurred** by parents, taxpayers, and businesses due to inadequate child care, **\$13B of this is incurred by businesses** <sup>4</sup>

**\$1.5B**

average annual impact on CT's GDP

**25K+**

size of CT's **Early Childhood workforce** <sup>5</sup>



### Gender and Racial Equity

*Child care-related challenges fall disproportionately on women, and particularly women of color*

**76%**

of CT parents who reported having to **stay home** due to childcare in fall 2020 were **female** <sup>6</sup>

**94%**

of **families of color cannot afford** high quality infant and toddler care <sup>7</sup>

**92%**

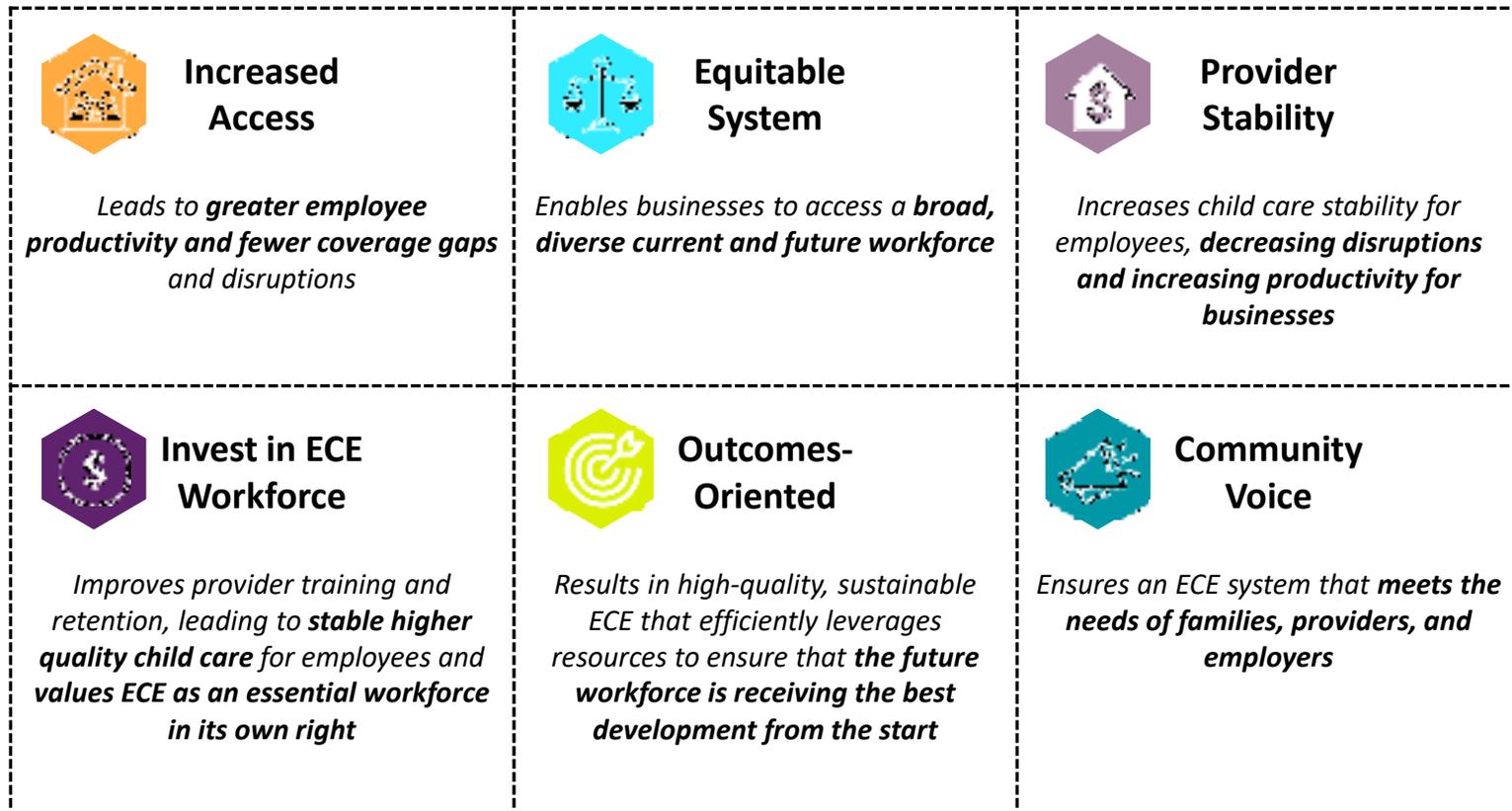
of private child care **providers in CT are women-owned businesses** <sup>8</sup>

First Things First. <https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/early-childhood-matters/brain-development/>. 2. Heckman (2019). "The Life Cycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program." 3. Center for American Progress (2020). "The Child Care Crisis Causes Job Disruptions for More than 2 Million Parents Each Year." 4. Belfield (2018). "The Economic Impacts of Insufficient Child Care on Working Families." 5. OEC & Other Early Childhood Partners (2021). "Overview of Early Childhood Services in CT." 6. United States Census Bureau. (2020). Household Pulse Survey 7. Council on Women and Girls (2021). "Essential Equity: Women, Covid-19, and Rebuilding CT." 8. Ibid.

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## Advancing these 6 components will also benefit employees and businesses

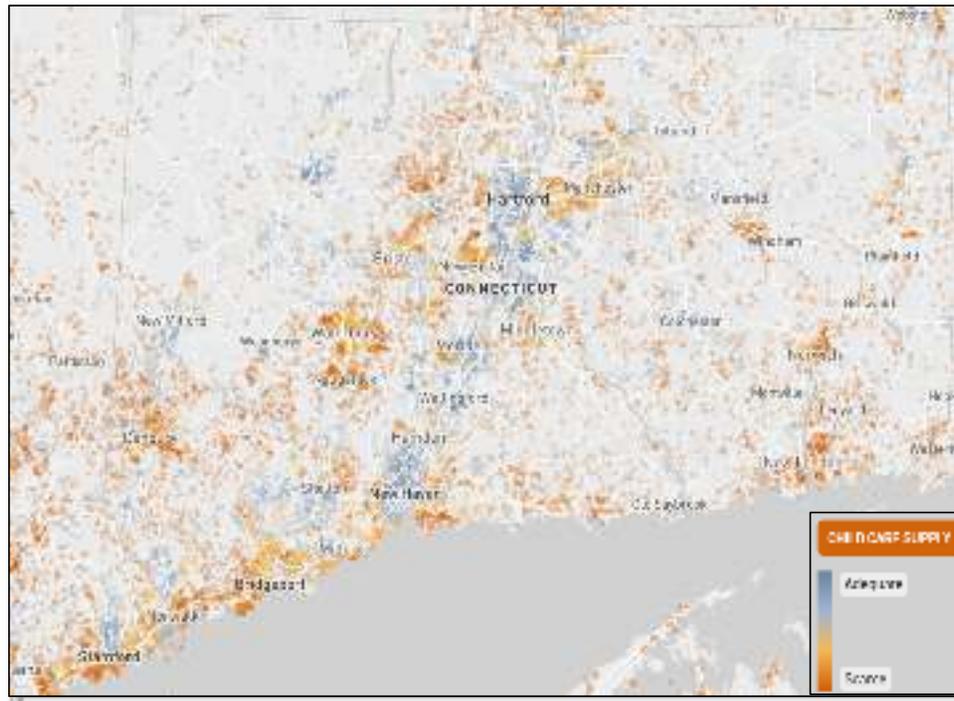


# To advance this vision, OEC is leveraging federal funds for a variety of initiatives

 <b>Increased Access</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More families eligible for subsidy</li><li>• Employment &amp; Training</li><li>• Increased family income</li><li>• No summer child care fees</li></ul>	 <b>Equitable System</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishment of OEC Parent Cabinet</li><li>• Funding distribution based on Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)</li><li>• Family Child Care Role</li></ul>	 <b>Provider Stability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stabilization funding</li><li>• Payment of Parent Fees</li><li>• State funded providers held harmless during pandemic</li></ul>
 <b>Invest in ECE Workforce</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Investment in Lab Schools</li><li>• Staff compensation in funding</li><li>• Professional Development</li></ul>	 <b>Outcomes-Oriented</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Technology advancements</li><li>• Connection with SDE data</li><li>• Outcomes-based contracting</li></ul>	 <b>Community Voice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Businesses at local child care decision making tables</li><li>• Increased family voice</li></ul>

## ▶ CHILD CARE IN CONNECTICUT: ACCESS

Many parents in Connecticut struggle to identify child care that is conveniently located and at an affordable price



*Click the link below to access the interactive map*

### Pre-COVID-19 Access

- **44%** of people in CT live in a child care desert compared to the national average of **51%**<sup>1</sup>
- **58%** of residents in lower-income neighborhoods live in child care deserts in CT
- **48%** residents in rural and urban communities live child care deserts, while only **43%** of suburban residents do

Note: A child care desert is any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots.

1) Center for American Progress. <https://childcaredeserts.org/?state=CT&urbanicity=All>



▶ GWC COWAG CONVENING OF BUSINESSES ON CHILD CARE  
Next Steps

▶ POST-CONVENING SURVEY RESULTS

Of the 20+ organizations represented at the convening, 10 provided responses to the survey sent out following the event



SOCIAL FINANCE | 5



▶ \$400 BILLION TO BUILD HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING SYSTEMS FY 2022-2027  
Build Back Better Framework

Revised: November 3, 2021 (House Rules Committee Print 117-18)

## CHILD CARE AND PREKINDERGARTEN IN THE BUILD BACK BETTER ACT: A GUIDE FOR POLICYMAKERS



### CREATING A BIRTH THROUGH FIVE CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING ENTITLEMENT

As outlined by the White House, the Biden administration's [Build Back Better \(BBB\) framework](#) would create an ambitious \$400 billion early childhood initiative – funding both universal prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds and initiatives designed to improve affordability, quality, and compensation within the child care arena.

On October 28, 2021, Speaker Nancy Pelosi shared nearly 1,700 pages of companion text (H.R. 5376). Based on the [House Rules Committee's modified Print 117-17](#), this guide is intended to familiarize policymakers with the major early childhood proposals contained therein. Readers should note that this language is under active debate and that modifications are likely. *(Note: The current version of this document has been updated to reflect substantive changes included in the House Rules Committee's Print 117-18, reported by the Committee on November 3, 2021. For the convenience of the reader, modifications from the original are reflected in italicized blue text.)*

