



At a Glance

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood

Beth Bye, Commissioner

Established – June 24, 2013 by Executive Order No. 35

Statutory Authority – Conn. Gen. Statutes Sec. 10-500 (P.A. 14-39 – An Act Establishing the Office of Early Childhood, Expanding Opportunities for Early Childhood Education and Concerning Dyslexia and Special Education)

Central Office – 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103

Number of employees – 102

Recurring operating expenses -

Federal: \$40,597,156

State: \$268,461,203

Organizational structure -

- § **Commissioner's Office**
- § **Division of Early Care and Education**
- § **Division of Quality Improvement**
- § **Division of Family Support**
- § **Division of Licensing**

Vision

All young children in Connecticut are safe, healthy, learning and thriving. Each child is surrounded by a strong network of nurturing adults who deeply value the importance of the first years of a child's life and have the skills, knowledge, support and passion to meet the unique needs of every child.

Mission

To support all young children in their development by ensuring that early childhood policy, funding and services strengthen the critical role families, providers, educators and communities play in a child's life.

Statutory Responsibility

The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) was created through Executive Order No. 35, effective June 24, 2013, and statutorily established through Conn. Gen. Statute Sec. 10-500 (P.A. 14-39 – *An Act Establishing the Office of Early Childhood, Expanding Opportunities for Early Childhood Education and Concerning Dyslexia and Special Education.*) As a cabinet-level state agency reporting directly to the Governor, the OEC is the lead agency for early care and education, workforce development, program quality and improvement, child care licensing, and family support. The OEC consolidates the funding streams, programs, and personnel of numerous early childhood services formerly dispersed across the Departments of Education, Public Health, Social Services, Developmental Services and the Board of Regents.

The Office of Early Childhood works to:

- § serve children and families through a two-generational approach;
- § coordinate and improve the delivery of early childhood services for Connecticut children;
- § ensure that child care and education programs for young children (1) are safe, healthy, and nurturing, (2) appropriately support children's physical, social and emotional, and cognitive development, and (3) are accessible to all children, particularly those at greater educational risk (including those from families in poverty, families with a single parent, families with limited English proficiency, and parents with less than a high school diploma);
- § support families raising young children to ensure the children's health, well-being and positive growth and development; and,
- § build and support a high-quality early childhood workforce.

OEC Program Divisions and Functions

Commissioner's Office

The Commissioner's Office assures that agency-wide administrative activities are coordinated and accomplished in an effective and efficient manner. The office provides the following services across the agency:

Business and Internal Support Operations

Fiscal staff manage the day-to-day financial functions, budgeting, reporting and year-end responsibilities for both state and federal funds. Other business operations include human resources, agency policies and procedures, internal and external audits, and contracts.

Communications

Communications responsibilities include public information, media relations, issues management and public affairs, website and social media, internal communications and crisis and emergency risk communications.

Government and Community Relations

The Government and Community Relations arm of the OEC is responsible for legislative and policy information, including:

- § Serving as the OEC commissioner's liaison to the General Assembly, Executive Branch and congressional delegation.
- § Outreach to early childhood organizations to build communication and collaboration.
- § Development and implementation of OEC legislative agenda.
- § Tracking and analysis of early childhood-related legislation.
- § Responding to legislative inquiries.
- § Preparing OEC legislative testimony and reports.

Legal Office

Legal office staff is responsible for managing the day-to-day legal functions of the agency.

Legal office attorneys assist the different divisions with advice regarding contracts, grant awards, program administration, discrimination complaints, audits, confidentiality requirements, ethics requirements, records retention, legislation, regulations, and other matters as they arise.

The background check unit processes approximately 12,000 background check requests per year pertaining to child care staff. The professional and para-professional staff serve as hearing officers in over 100 Care 4 Kids child care subsidy hearings per year. The attorneys represent the agency in approximately 12 child care license revocation hearings per year, with the paralegals serving as administrative staff in those hearings. In addition, staff manages approximately 200

yearly licensing enforcement cases and respond to approximately 50 freedom of information (FOI) requests annually.

Research & Planning

The Research and Planning Division supports the OEC broad vision to ensure optimal child development for children birth through age five. The Chief Research and Planning Officer role is to marshal the power of evidence and information to understand where and how OEC can best direct state and federal resources to young children, their families and communities. This division builds on previous work of the Data & Accountability Coordinator whose main goal was to increase knowledge of OEC data metrics and performances measures. The Division prioritizes opportunities for intra-agency and inter-agency data sharing and development and enhancement of integrated data systems. Data-driven decisions hinge on the development of a data culture within the agency and this division is working with data specialists, technologists and program specialists to improve data quality. This division seeks ways to make agency data open and transparent to several audiences including legislators, parents, providers and the public.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning helps identify the organizational needs of the agency and develop solutions to emerging challenges and opportunities. It undertakes organizational assessments, facilitates priority setting and spearheads new organization-wide initiatives. Strategic planning also provides expertise in performance measurement and management, strategic communications and organizational change to help ensure the activities of the OEC are efficient and effective and staff are well managed and supported to accomplish the work of the agency.

Head Start State Collaboration Office

The Director of the Head Start State Collaboration Office facilitates state-level collaboration between Head Start/Early Head Start and state agencies that carry out activities designed to benefit low-income pregnant women, children from birth to school entry, and their families.

Division of Early Care and Education

The Division of Early Care and Education oversees and monitors state and federal grants, contracts and subsidies that support early care and education programs. The unit is charged with ensuring the funds are administered efficiently and are used for the purposes intended. These funds include:

1. Child Day Care Contract Program
2. School Readiness Grant Program
3. Smart Start Grant Program
4. State Head Start Supplement Program

5. Early Head Start Child Care Partnership
6. Even Start
7. Child Care Development Fund (including Care 4 Kids Subsidy Program)
8. Bond Funds for Capital Improvements

Child Day Care Program

Child Day Care programs provide early care and education to infants and toddlers, preschoolers and/or school age children who meet certain eligibility requirements, including incomes below 75% of the state median income. These programs are located in towns and cities across Connecticut. Section 8-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) specifies that the purpose of this funding be for the development and operation of child day care centers for children disadvantaged by reasons of economic, social or environmental conditions pursuant. The services provided through the Child Day Care contracts are supported through state funds.

CHILD DAY CARE CONTRACT PROGRAM	
Number of Communities	47
Number of Programs	51
Number of Sites	107
Sites that are also SR (40 PSR; 9 CSR)	49
Sites that are also SHS	17
Sites that are also PDG	10
Infant/Toddler Full-Time	1,306
Infant/Toddler Wraparound	178
Preschool Full-Time	2,044
Preschool Wraparound	626
School-Age Full-Time	233
School-Age Part-Time	213

School Readiness

School Readiness, a state-funded initiative, supports school readiness programs to provide access for 3- and 4-year old children to preschool programs. At least 60% of households serviced must have incomes under 75% of the State Medium Income. School Readiness is comprised of both Priority and Competitive Communities as defined in legislation and structured to:

- § promote the health and safety of children;
- § provide opportunities for parents to choose among affordable and accredited programs;
- § encourage coordination and cooperation among programs and services;

- § recognize the specific service needs and unique resources available to particular municipalities; prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delays in children;
- § enhance federally funded school readiness programs;
- § strengthen the family through encouragement of parental involvement;
- § reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special education.

SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM			
	Priority	Competitive	Total
Number of Communities	21	46	67
Number of Programs	230	82	312
Number of Children	10,546	1,420	11,966
Full-Day Spaces	7,137	638	7,775
School-Day Spaces	1,806	292	2,098
Part-Day Spaces	1,144	490	1,634
Extended-Day Spaces	459	NA	459

Smart Start

Smart Start serves children ages 3 and 4 years old in public school settings. It reimburses local and regional boards of education for capital* and operating expenses to establish or expand a preschool program under the jurisdiction of the board of education for the town. Smart Start services are supported through state funds.

*No new Capital Improvement Funds for FY 19.

SMART START	
Number of School Districts	24
Number of Classrooms	45
Children Served	665

State Head Start Supplement

Head Start is funded directly by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to community providers to provide comprehensive child and family services to low-income families with children ages 3 to 5 years old. Head Start is federally funded to serve approximately 6,000 children, and through the State Head Start Supplement, Connecticut provides supplemental funding to 11 of the 19 federally funded Head Start grantees to increase capacity by 320 preschool-aged children. These funds also extend the day/year of federally funded Head Start spaces and support quality enhancement activities in Head Start programs.

STATE HEAD START SERVICES	
Head Start Grantees/Delegates	# of Spaces
19	320
Bridgeport	20
Norwalk	15
Danbury	18
East Hartford	36
Hartford/Bristol	36
Manchester	15
Meriden	18
New Britain	17
New Haven	29
New London	17
Norwalk	15
Norwich	17
Stamford	20
Waterbury	14
West Haven	16
Windham	17

Care 4 Kids Subsidy Program

The Care 4 Kids (C4K) subsidy program helps low- to moderate-income families in Connecticut pay for child care costs for children birth to age 13, if the child has special needs, under age 19. Families earning up to 50% of the State Medium Income (SMI), who are either working or participating in an approved education and training program, are eligible to enroll. At the 12-month redetermination, a family can earn up to 65% of SMI. Families either must be working or participating in a state approved education and training activity. A combination of state and federal funds supports the Care 4 Kids subsidy program. In FY18, 5,440 providers served 24,914 children.

Early Head Start Child Care Partnership

Early Head Start (EHS) is funded directly by the U.S. Department of HHS to community-based organizations to provide year-round comprehensive child and family services to low-income pregnant women and families with children birth to 3 years old. EHS settings include center-based, family child care and home-based (home visiting). Three EHS CT grantees were awarded a federal grant to partner with home-based and center-based child care programs to provide comprehensive services based on the EHS model. The OEC provides state funds to support

children in the three federally funded EHS-CC Grant Partnership Programs whose families are not eligible for the Care4Kids subsidy program.

Even Start Literacy Program

Even Start is a program that gives families access to the training and support they need to create a literate home environment and to enhance the academic achievement of their children.

Five primary components are integrated to create a comprehensive program, with all families participating in all components. Local programs build on existing community resources to offer educational and support services to help parents and children learn and succeed together. The following are the five components: 1) Early Childhood and/or School-Age Education; 2) Adult Education; 3) Parents and Children Learning Together (PACT); 4) Parent Education and Support; and 5) Home Visits to Support Educational Programs.

EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM	
Grantees	3
Number of Families	44
Number of Adults	46
Number of Children	46

Bond Funds for Capital Improvements

Capital Improvements through State Bond Funds*, provide facility improvements and repair needs in facilities that house school readiness programs and state-funded child day care centers under two separate bond funding sources:

- § Grants-in-aid fund facility improvements and minor capital repairs to facilities that house school readiness programs and state-funded day care centers in two cohorts totaling \$17,816,817 were completed in FY19. The grant was capped at \$95,000 per site; however, programs with multiple sites received \$95,000 per site. Projects include playground updates, security systems, new windows and/or doors, HVAC updates, etc.;
- § Urban Act Grant funds are used for the purpose of redirecting, improving and expanding state activities which promote economic and community development and improve the quality of life for urban residents. Grants totaled \$7,650,000 - \$4,650,000 for the Bristol Preschool Child Care Center to renovate a former public school building and \$3,000,000 for the Children's Learning Center of Fairfield County to assist with property identification, acquisition and planning for a facility to replace its current Maple Avenue facility.

*No new Capital Improvement Funds for FY 19.

MINOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM	
Number of Communities	69
Number of Programs	111
Number of Sites	156
Number of State-Funded Spaces	8,888

Division of Quality Improvement

The Division of Quality Improvement is responsible for advancing the quality of the workforce and early childhood services for young children in family child care homes, centers and school based programs. The division's activities include:

1. Workforce Registry
2. Workforce Professional Development
3. Standards, Curriculum and Assessment
4. Data and Accountability

Workforce Registry

Registry staff housed in this unit are responsible for the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry, including uploading and coding professional development qualifications, administering scholarship funds, processing licensing Head Teacher, ECTC and Technical Assistance Provider applications, providing career counseling, supporting program requirements, and other key functions to support individuals and programs.

Workforce Development

Workforce Development activities address systems, policies and practices to support the goal of developing a highly qualified and effective workforce for all children birth to age five. Collaborative partners include higher education institutions, professional development providers and members of the early childhood workforce.

Standards, Curriculum and Assessment

The division's work in the area of Standards, Curriculum and Assessment supports programs, families, providers, and communities to help young children grow and learn using a cycle of intentional teaching in which children's learning and development is supported in a purposeful manner based upon each child's unique needs and interests. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) provide common language around what children from birth

to age five should know and be able to do. Instruction and assessment is composed of planning experiences to support children's development, gathering information about how they are progressing and adjusting what is being done to support them based upon this information.

Division of Family Supports

The Division of Family Supports administers state and federally funded initiatives to:

- § Strengthen the capacity of families to meet the developmental and health related needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities, and
- § Prevent child abuse and neglect by helping families and communities be responsive to children, ensuring their positive growth and development.

These efforts include contracting with a broad range of organizations to implement evidence-based programs to families and their children; collaborate with community stakeholders; fund and support innovations in the field; and conduct research to assess the effectiveness of programs and developing strategies for improvement.

Connecticut Birth to Three System

Birth to Three supports families in enhancing their child's development and connecting to their communities when infants and toddlers have significant developmental disabilities or delays. Family and other caregivers receive coaching during everyday activities with their child in order to address priority outcomes that the family has identified. All children referred to Birth to Three are evaluated in five developmental areas. Eligible children who are 16 months old or older are also screened for autism. The family of an eligible child is offered an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) that is tailored to address the family's priorities, resources and concerns and the child's development. In FY19, 28 agencies supported families in all 169 municipalities in Connecticut. On any given day, the families of approximately 5,600 children had IFSPs and over the course of FY19 the families of 11,996 eligible children received supports from Birth to Three.

Home Visiting Programs

Home visiting provides voluntary, evidenced-based home-based supports to at-risk parents, both prenatal with young children. The goal is to promote positive parenting, improve maternal and child health, and promote healthy child development. The OEC administers state and federally funded home visiting programs:

- § State Funded: Nurturing Families Network used Parents as Teachers Model with the addition in 2019: Child First, Nurse Family Partnership, Minding the Baby and Family Check-up.

- § Federally Funded: Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant program includes four models: Child First, Early Head Start, Nurse Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers.

Help Me Grow

Help Me Grow is a program for children up to age 5 experiencing the challenges of growing up. It provides parents and providers access to a variety of community resources that address a child's behavioral or developmental needs. Help Me Grow also provides access to monitoring of child development through the Ages and Stages and Ages and Stages- Social Emotional assessments. This year, Help Me Grow is piloting joint regional meetings with Department of Public Health's Connecticut Medical Home Initiative. These meeting will convene early childhood and childhood stakeholders in collaborative opportunities that focus on children's medical, behavioral and development needs.

The Division of Family Supports also supports training:

- § Mind Over Mood Initiative (MoMs) In-Home Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
The division supports training of community providers to address maternal depression via in-home supports that are paid for by Medicaid and some commercial insurance. This year, Mind Over Mood is focusing on increasing the number of bilingual therapists able to provide cognitive behavioral therapy to Spanish-speaking families throughout the state.
- § Family Development Training and Credentialing
This model teaches students and human service providers a strength-based approach to working with families and communities. In collaboration with the University of Connecticut Center for the Study of Culture, Health and Human Development, the OEC provides this training to help families build skills needed to attain healthy self-reliance.
- § Touchpoints
Touchpoints is a registered training program from the Brazelton Center. This model builds on provider experience and education to enhance practice and service delivery.

Division of Licensing

The Division of Licensing administers the Child Care Licensing and Youth Camp Licensing Programs. Licensed settings include family child care homes, group child care homes, child care centers and youth camps. The child care licensing specialists and supervisors, nurses, health program staff, administrative and support staff assure that licensed child care facilities and youth camps operate at or above the required standards established by state statutes and regulations.

This is accomplished through technical assistance, application processing, facility monitoring, complaint investigation and enforcement activities. The Division licenses more than 4,000 child care facilities and youth camps.

Improvements/Achievements 2018-2019

Whole Family Approach – 2Gen

In 2015, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to enact a 2Gen (Two Generation) initiative in statute. The statute established the 2Gen Advisory Board that engages the executive, legislative, and judicial branch, along with the private sector and parents, to advise the state on the 2Gen approach. Three work groups of the 2Gen Advisory Board, focused on parent engagement, workforce, and benefits cliffs, work collaboratively on whole-family solutions.

In 2017, the Office of Early Childhood was designated in statute as the lead coordinating agency for 2Gen in the executive branch. In 2018, a Statewide 2Gen Coordinator position was developed, now based out of the Office of Early Childhood. In 2019, legislation charged the Office of Policy and Management with developing an interagency 2Gen plan that for family economic success that will involve core agencies that intersect with families: Office of Early Childhood, Department of Labor, Department of Social Services, Department of Housing, Department of Children and Families, State Department of Education, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, and others.

The Office of Early Childhood is leading in cross-agency data sharing, integrating whole family approaches in its home visiting programs, and partnering with academia to pilot innovative 2Gen research projects that link child care and workforce.

Shelter Diversion

The OEC is investing just under \$1 million in the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) homeless diversion fund for families with children under the age of 6 over the next three years. Avoiding traumatic outcomes such as shelter experience and ensuring children are in safe and healthy environments is at the core of OEC's mission.

Shelter Diversion is a strategy that prevents homelessness by helping people to identify immediate alternative housing arrangements and facilitates a return to permanent housing, avoiding a trip to an emergency shelter for any length of time. Flexible funding is critical, as services are tailored to individual families and may include:

- § Conflict mediation (with a landlord, family or friends);

- § Financial, utility, and/or rental assistance;
- § Short-term case management focused on housing stabilization.

The Rate Card rewards the agreed-upon outcome: For each family with a child under 6 that is diverted from a shelter experience and subsequently stays out of the homeless system for 12 months, OEC commits \$100 to the *be homeful campaign*, CCEH's statewide diversion fund. Each Coordinated Access Network (CAN) also has the ability to earn an annual bonus up to \$10,000 if it exceeds its previous year's diversion rate. This is a first of its kind investment by an early childhood agency toward reducing child homelessness.

Workforce Demonstration Initiatives

- § Bristol Manufacturing Training: Due to a growing labor shortage within area manufacturers, the leadership of Bristol Adult Education and Rowley Spring and Stamping, a local manufacturer, created a partnership in 2013 to train adults for a career in manufacturing, calling it the Adult Education Diploma and Certification (AEDAC) program. Upon completion of the program, participants qualify for jobs where they can earn livable wages and access full benefits.

In early 2019, OEC, UConn and Bristol Adult Education collaborated to recruit, implement and evaluate the AEDAC, targeting a cohort of parents with a child under 6. Students will now have access to on-site child care, funded by the OEC so they can complete the 12-week program and ultimately earn a higher wage for their family. The curriculum consists of both classroom education and hands-on manufacturing floor time. UConn will evaluate job placement and future earnings of the participants.

- § Supporting Adult Learners at Adult Education: Through a two-generational approach, the Office of Early Childhood is investing in a small-scale demonstration project at four adult education centers that will provide on-site child care to a cohort of students enrolled in adult education courses, with the goal of increasing enrollment, retention and graduation among families with young children. A University of Connecticut-School of Social Work research team will evaluate the outcomes of the project. The communities of Bristol, Danbury, New London and Vernon served 42 adults with 58 children in the spring and expect to expand that number for the fall 2019 semester.

OEC, UConn and the State Department of Education developed this project after many conversations with parents and adult education providers who consistently cited child care as a major barrier to enrollment and completion. In addition to the anecdotal feedback received, literature supports the linkage of child care and other support services to increase family economic mobility.

Home Visiting Procurement and Rate Card

- § State-funded Home Visiting Programs went through a re-procurement process in February of 2019 for the first time since 1995. This re-procurement resulted in the addition of four evidence-based home visiting models for a total of five: Parents as Teachers, Child First, Nurse Family Partnership, Minding the Baby and Family Check-up. Several larger cities submitted joint proposals with collaborative partnerships with home visiting programs in their region. As a result of these collaborative partnerships, contracts were reduced from 34 to 16 contracts to increase efficiency, leverage capacity and resources, and improve quality. This will reduce administrative costs and extend home visiting funding to support more families.
- § In 2018, the OEC launched the Outcomes Rate Card (ORC) pilot with the federally funded evidence-based home visiting programs. In 2019, the ORC pilot expanded to include all state and federal evidence-based home visiting programs. An ORC is a procurement tool through which government defines a menu of outcomes it wishes to “purchase” (e.g., healthy birth outcomes, completion of a degree/training program, or emergency room visits) and the amount it is willing to pay each time a given outcome is achieved. The OEC ORC focuses on outcomes that generate value to families, communities, and government with a specific lens on two generational impacts.

Child Care Licensing

- § The Licensing Division has implemented a new policy to offer assistance to newly licensed child care programs and new program directors. The purpose of the Initial Technical Assistance (ITA) is to empower newly licensed programs and providers and newly designated directors with an awareness of how and where they can locate the information, tools, and resources available to assist them in maintaining compliance with the child care regulations. The goal is to improve outcomes for programs, providers, and families by promoting the sustainability of compliance over time.
- § A communication campaign reminds parents to seek TLC: Trusted Licensed Care and point them to the resource and referral agency website for assistance in finding licensed child care. The campaign seeks to inform individuals of the benefits of becoming a licensed child care provider. All licensed providers are provided a window cling to help them advertise themselves as a Trusted Licensed Care provider.
- A communications campaign reminds those caring for infants to always follow safe sleep practices when caring for infants. Such practices include placing infants on their backs to

sleep, clearing cribs for sleep, sleeping close but not with infants, setting up sleep support plans, creating smoke-free environments and not overheating infants. To support provider's compliance with safe sleep practices, the OEC distributed sleep sacks to Connecticut licensed child care programs throughout the state.

- The Division launched online license renewals for licensed child care centers, group child care homes and family child care homes. This eases the burden on providers and creates efficiencies.

Criminal Background Checks

- § The Legal office collaborated with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to reduce the timeframe for the OEC to receive criminal background check results from four months in mid-2018 to an average of eight days.
- § The OEC is developing a Background Checks Information System to provide the status and results of child care background checks to licensing staff as well as child care centers. This will keep child care staff better informed and make significant improvements in implementing and enforcing background check requirements.

Early Care and Education

- § Due to changes in the Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), Connecticut requires all Care 4 Kids providers to complete a health and safety orientation and ongoing annual professional development. In order to support providers to meet this requirement, OEC provides an online Health and Safety Orientation offered through Child Care Education Institute (CCEI) for family child care and center-based providers. CCEI specializes in providing online training and certificates, childcare registry development, and administrative solutions for the early care and education industry. Once the provider completes the orientation, the provider has access to a training library to continue professional development for one year.
- § OEC, in collaboration with the University of CT's NEAG School of Education, has just enrolled the fifth cohort in the Prek-to 3rd Grade Leadership Program. This program is designed to increase the knowledge of pre-service and in-service leaders about this unique developmental period. This 10-month executive style learning program covers modules on curriculum and instruction, assessment practices with young children and evaluation of teachers and programs and leading for equity, excellent and early success.

- § As part of the CCDF Plan, OEC has funded seven new Family Child Care (FCC) Networks as part of a pilot program. FCC Networks include four key components:
1. Locate family child care networks in communities and establish local partnerships to support the work of family child care providers.
 2. Deploy specialized-trained individuals to deliver services to family child care providers.
 3. Deliver training for providers in the community and follow-up coaching in the home to improve the provider's practice.
 4. Use formal assessments to assess the effectiveness of the consultation provided to participants. Consultation focuses on program improvement which moves family child care providers toward high quality.

Care 4 Kids Eligibility System

- § The Care 4 Kids program underwent a major migration to ImpaCT, a management, payment and reporting system at the Department of Social Services (DSS). The OEC Data & Accountability Coordinator worked as the business lead on the ImpaCT Shared Services project for the requirements, design, testing and implementation. The project was a combined effort between the Department of Social Services, the Office of Early Childhood, Department of Administrative Services BEST, operations and systems contractors at United Way of Connecticut and Deloitte Consulting, and DXC and other support service providers. The system uses the Enterprise Master Person Index (EMPI) as the unique identifier for clients in benefits programs such as Care4Kids, DSS TANF, Medicaid and SNAP.

The Care 4 Kids eligibility project includes reporting and analysis for caseload, rates, and cost projections. Other work included data analysis and presentation of OEC data metrics and performance measures, as well as collaboration with other OEC divisions and other state agencies in identifying and establishing linkages between programs and data reporting elements. The team will continue to integrate input from providers and the development staff to provide direction in the continued development of the Early Childhood Information System (ECIS). A Feasibility Report for an ECIS Data Governance Dashboard was developed through a grant from the University of Pennsylvania with ECDataWorks providing technical assistance.

Quality Improvement

- § Registry: Scholarship awards totaling \$1,047,861 were provided to individuals pursuing competency development, including associate's and bachelor's degree and meeting state

and national educator requirements. Scholarship funds are accessed via the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry (www.ccacregistry.org).

- § Workforce Development: The Home Visiting Core Knowledge and Competencies field draft is complete and has been issued to the Home Visiting Consortium for field testing as the final step before adoption and publication.
- § Foundations of Coaching: The OEC partnered with other Connecticut entities to produce a video series called *Foundations of Coaching in Early Childhood: Partnering with Parents and Professionals*. This video series describes the process of coaching as a professional learning practice and support for families and programs across every setting. The elements described in the video exemplify the core knowledge and competencies that coaches should know and be able to do. OEC staff and professional learning entities use the videos and the CT Core Knowledge and Competencies for Technical Assistance Providers to train CT technical assistance providers in evidence-based professional learning practices. The video series is available to the public at www.foundationsofcoaching.com.

The Office of Early Childhood, under a contract with United Way for the period July 1 to December 31, 2018, supported workforce development through the following activities:

- § The OEC's Program Leadership Initiative offered (1) course for the Connecticut Director Credential. Of the (38) participants, (29) individuals successfully completed the course. All attendees were individuals currently holding leadership positions within Connecticut programs for young children.
- § Program administrators were also supported through 53 individual scholarships for specific director coursework (non-degree) plus fees and books, representing an investment of over \$45,000.
- § Accreditation Quality Improvement Support (AQIS): Individualized on-site support was provided to programs seeking NAEYC Accreditation. Under the project managed by United Way, 30 licensed and licensed-exempt programs are actively pursuing national accreditation, 3 programs withdrew, 20 programs achieved accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and 7 programs have not achieved accreditation to date.
 - Group support for NAEYC Accreditation was delivered to 22 licensed and licensed-exempt programs pursuing accreditation renewal. Of these sites 1 program closed, 1 program withdrew from receiving supports, 19 programs achieved accreditation by

the National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1 program has not achieved accreditation to date.

- NAEYC overview sessions supported 11 programs to learn about the accreditation process and changes to the system; 68 attended.
- Study Group Sessions offered opportunities to explore best practices through 34 sessions, with 176 individual participants.
- AQIS services continued under a contract with the RESC Alliance for the period January 1 through June 30, 2019. AQIS facilitators supported a caseload of 35 programs. Of these, 15 programs achieved NAEYC Accreditation, with 19 programs continuing their work toward the goal and one program choosing not to move forward in the process.

§ Standards Curriculum and Assessment: The Quality Improvement Division continued to support providers in the use of the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS). The Connecticut Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (CT DOTS), an assessment system based on the CT ELDS, was released in fall 2019.

- 60+ trainers were identified, trained and approved for each of three trainings related to the CT ELDS and CT DOTS.
- OEC provided ongoing support to CT ELDS and CT DOTS trainers by providing professional development, ongoing technical assistance, and access to documents
- 435 early care and education providers completed Introductory CT DOTS training in the fall of 2018 and 66 administrators completed training on CT DOTS.
- 113 early care and education providers completed an introductory training on the CT ELDS and 34 individual completed intermediate training on the CT ELDS
- Additional trainings were offered by approved trainers as a fee for service or through other funding sources outside of OEC.
- The OEC coordinated printing and delivery of 25,000 copies of CT ELDS and CT DOTS documents (User's Manual, Observation Progression Book and Flipchart) and 50,000 CT ELDS Action Guides.