

SEEDING CHANGE

INSIGHTS FROM THE EARLY CHILDHOOD GOVERNANCE FINANCE PROJECT

June 2, 2025



**NATIONAL
HUMAN SERVICES
SUMMIT 2025**



**Innovate, Elevate, Lead:
The Future of Human Services**

Panelists



“MODERATOR”

Marie St. Fleur, JD
Executive Consultant
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Early Childhood Governance and
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Chief Executive Officer
Louisiana Policy Institute for
Children



Christina Santaniello
Associate Commissioner, NH
Department of Health
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Innovate, Elevate, Lead:
The Future of Human Services



Panelists

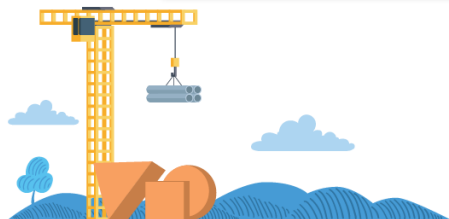


Christina D'Allessandro
Director of Early Childhood and Family
Supports
New Hampshire Charitable Organization
Foundation



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Deputy Director Center For Early Learning
Funding Equity
Northern Illinois University

Innovate, Elevate, Lead:
The Future of Human Services



Learning Objectives:

- Highlights strategies from LA, NH, and IL on early childhood governance & finance.
- Focus areas: collaboration, funding alignment, and community engagement.
- Goal: Equip leaders with actionable practices to drive systemic change.

Louisiana

Family Voice - Sustainable Governance

- **Geaux Far Louisiana, working with LPIC, advances an equitable early care and education (ECE) system focused on access, quality, workforce support, sustainable funding, and family/provider voice.**
- **A 35-member Steering Committee—including parents, providers, advocates, and public leaders—drives decision-making and ensures family and provider voice and leadership.**
- **Codified Ready Start Network Model to drive local planning.**

Louisiana

Sustainable Governance and Funding

- Governance and financing strategies are aligned statewide to maximize impact, expand access, and ensure quality, stability, and affordability for families and the ECE workforce.
- Championed state-local matching funds and grant alignment to increase investment and impact.
- Prioritize sustainable funding, highlighted by Louisiana's first local ECE fund, Millage —\$21.3M annually to support over 1,000 young children in Orleans Parish.

Collaborative Leadership- NH



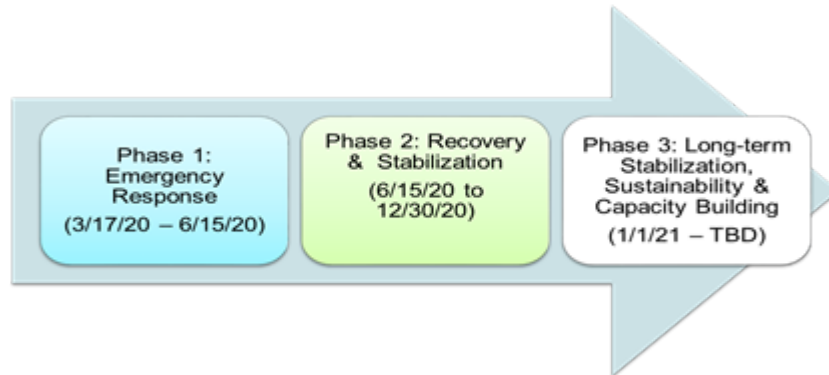
Council for Thriving Children was created by the Governor's Executive Order in 2022

- Intentional with Family Voice
- Early Childhood Integration Teams

Deep Partnership with Philanthropy

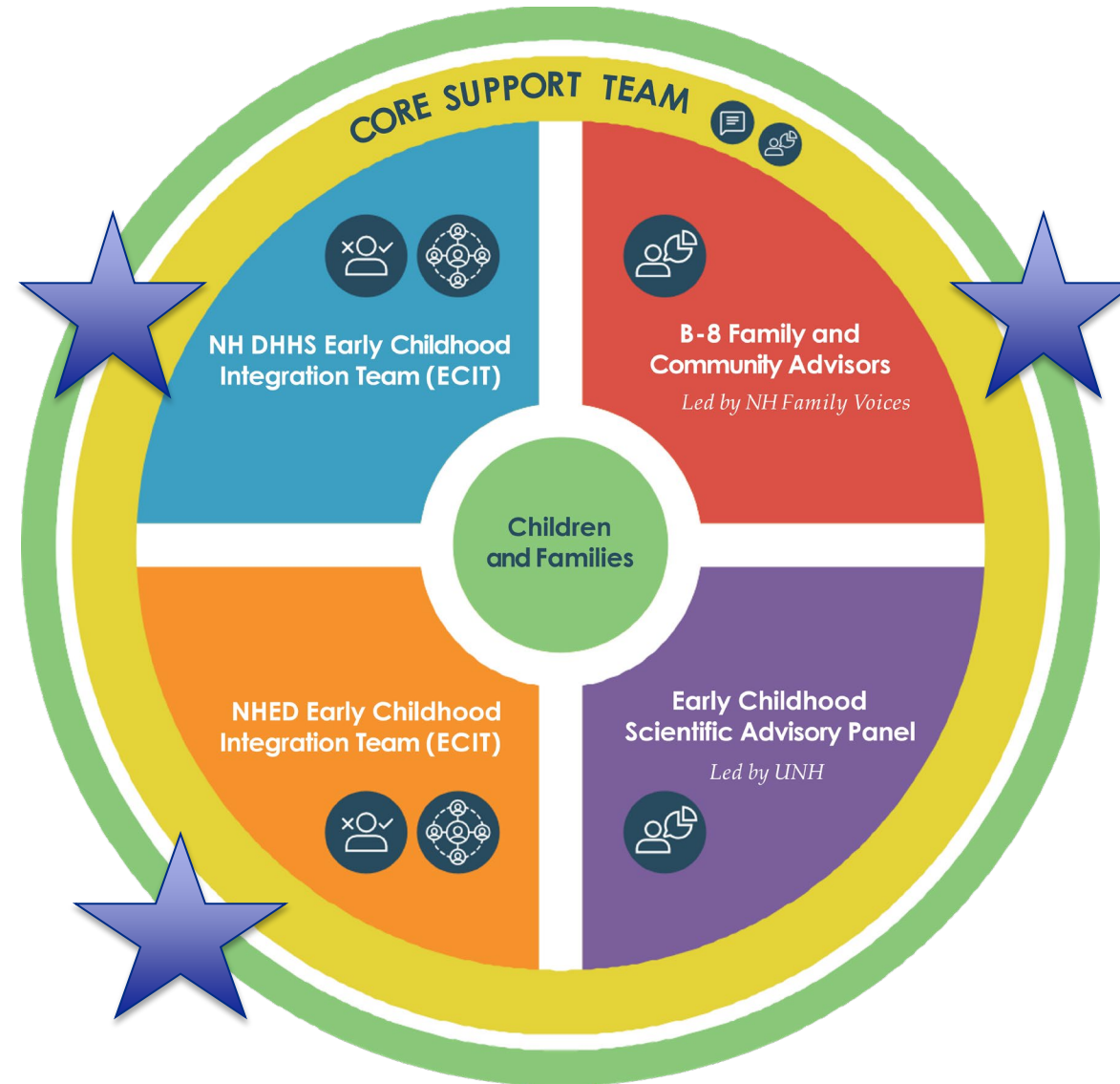
- Solidified during the pandemic
- Strengthened as we moved out of and forward
- Data and Research
- SRCF Fellow Fall 2025

Funding and Procurement - NH



- Partnerships and engagement grew along the way
- ARPA-D as an opportunity to strengthen the system for the future
- Engaged with a variety of stakeholders in multiple ways for six months
- Smaller group with broad representation helped to focus priorities:
 - Access
 - Workforce
 - Quality
 - Stronger System
- Policy changes to reach more families

Community Engagement- NH





- Governor J.B. Pritzker created the Commission to make recommendations for transformative changes to governance and financing for children ages 0-5
- Established a Division of Early Childhood within existing Department of Human Services agency to smooth the transition to a new, unified agency
- Public Act 103-0594 created the new agency with \$13 million to aid the three-year transition
- Transition Advisory Committee (TAC) established with public/private structure to advise the new agency, building on the existing Early Learning Council
- New Agency will bring together child care, preschool, home visiting, and Early/Head Start for cohesive funding and design

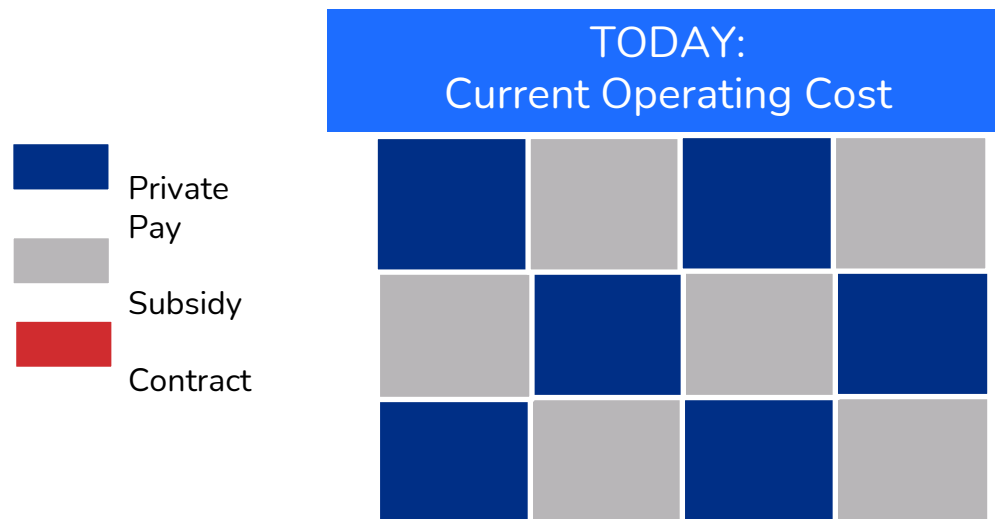
READY ILLINOIS Simpler, Better, Fairer

Recommendations of
the Illinois Commission
on Equitable Early
Childhood Education
and Care Funding

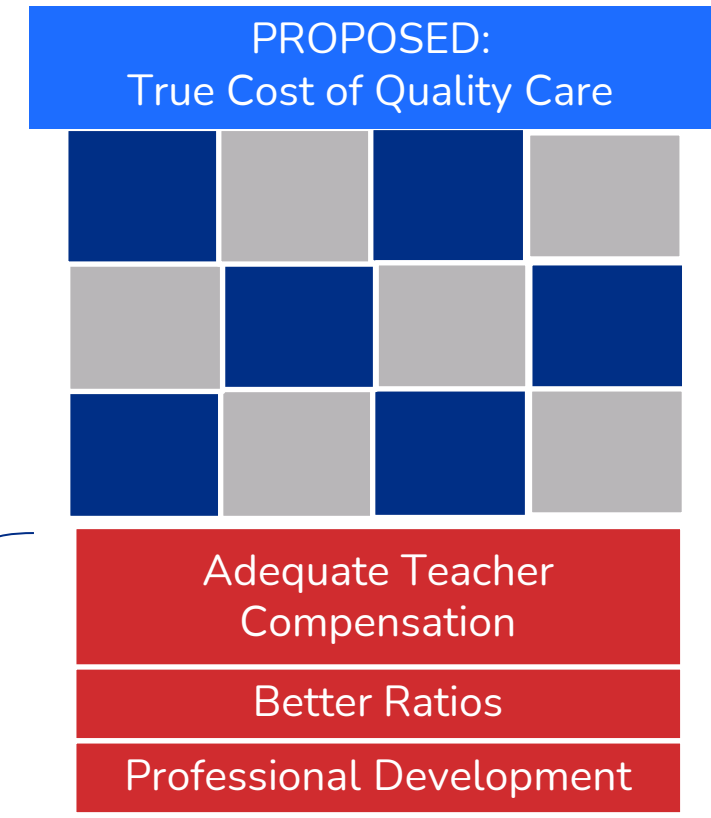
SPRING 2021



A foundational funding contract (or grant) can provide the necessary resources to support **higher wages** for the child care workforce and **support quality** across the field.



Foundational Contracts can support **compensation and quality**.



For full Video: <https://celfe.org/resources/foundational-investments-in-child-care/>

Local and Community Infrastructure ensure Parent, Provider and Community Voice in State Funding and Policy Decision-Making

Birth to Five Illinois works in every community in the State to:

- Provide a statewide mechanism to engage local community members
- Understand how families are accessing local ECEC services
- Inform decisionmakers and the community of the ECEC services families need
- Create Action Plans that clearly identify the need for expansion of quality early learning in every Region
- Bring local community members together to take action to advance ECEC access and expansion



Key Takeaways

1. Collaboration across sectors strengthens early childhood systems.
2. Aligning and diversifying funding increases impact and efficiency.
3. Community input leads to smarter, more equitable policy decisions.
4. Structural reforms ensure sustainability beyond leadership changes.



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JUNE 1-4

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**WATCH FOR THE OVERALL
CONFERENCE SURVEY TO PROVIDE
FEEDBACK**