

***Rhode Island Early Learning Council Meeting and  
Early Learning Council Workgroup Meeting***

Wednesday, October 2, 2013 11:30-2:00  
CCRI-Knight Campus, Room 4090  
400 East Ave, Warwick

**Agenda**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Lead</b>
11:30-11:45	<b>Welcome /Meeting Overview</b>	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Deborah Gist
11:45-12:25	<b>Follow-up on Council Subcommittee Structure</b>	Leanne Barrett Elizabeth Burke Bryant Deborah Gist
12:25-1:25	<b>Access Update and Discussion of Priority Areas</b>	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Lawrence Pucciarelli
1:25-1:45	<b>Updates</b>	Melissa Emidy Leanne Barrett Judi Stevenson-Garcia Blythe Berger
1:45-1:55	<b>Public Comment</b>	Public Participants
1:55-2:00	<b>Next Steps</b>	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Deborah Gist

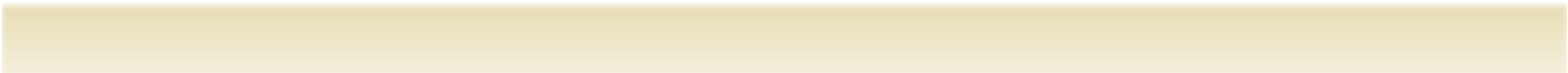


**RHODE ISLAND  
EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL  
AND WORKGROUP MEETING**



**October 2, 2013**

11:30-2:00 p.m.  
CCRI





# MEETING AGENDA

Welcome/Meeting Overview

Follow-up on Council Subcommittee Structure

Access Update and Discussion of Priority Areas

Updates

- RTT-ELC
- Final ARRA Report
- Enhanced Assessment Grant - State Collaboration Kindergarten Entry Assessment
- Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting
- Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (Successful Start)

Public Comment

Next Steps



# **FOLLOW-UP ON COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE STRUCTURE**



# SUBCOMMITTEE STRUCTURE: OVERVIEW

- ⦿ Goal: Clarify the subcommittee role and expand/diversify membership.
- ⦿ 5 Subcommittees with new combination of co-chairs: Access, Program Standards and Quality, Workforce, Early Learning Development Standards and Assessment, Data
- ⦿ Defined scope of work for each subcommittee with data driven approach.
- ⦿ Role definitions for both subcommittee co-chairs and members.
- ⦿ Strategies for more widely engaging a mix of policy, systems and implementation perspectives.
- ⦿ Stronger community outreach and communication.



## SUBCOMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

	Co-Chairs
Access	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Mary Varr
Program Standards and Quality	Karen Beese Elizabeth Burke Bryant Charlotte Moretti Michele Palermo
Workforce	Karen Beese Khadija Lewis Khan Sara Mickelson
Early Learning and Development Standards and Assessment	Allison Comport Maryann Finamore Judi Stevenson-Garcia
Data	Leanne Barrett Michael Bosworth

Early Learning Council Coordinator: Leanne Barrett



## HOW SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS WILL BE SELECTED

- ⦿ Subcommittee co-chairs will identify the types of expertise and/or perspectives they are seeking; membership opportunities will be widely published.
- ⦿ Membership will include participation from diverse perspectives from all parts of the early learning system (e.g. public schools, Head Start, centers, family child care) and roles (e.g. administrators, teachers of infants - kindergarten, trainers, state agencies, etc.) and different parts of the state.
- ⦿ Membership is open to all interested parties who can commit to the responsibilities of membership with a maximum of 20 members.
- ⦿ Should interest in the subcommittees go beyond the 20 person maximum, the co-chairs will prioritize and select members based on their expertise and perspective.
- ⦿ Efforts will be made to balance membership across subcommittees to maximize opportunities for participation.
- ⦿ All subcommittee meeting will continue to be open to the public and publicly posted.



## RI EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ROLE

- ◎ Use a data driven approach to understand gaps and barriers and make policy recommendations to the Council in the focus areas of the strategic plan (both within and outside the RTT-ELC grant work).
- ◎ Gather and provide stakeholder input to key initiatives.



# SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER ROLE

Term: 1 year; unlimited renewal.

Responsibilities:

- ⦿ Attend subcommittee meetings on a regular basis (4x per year).
- ⦿ Attend Council meetings with related agenda topics.
- ⦿ Read all advanced materials before the meeting and come fully prepared to engage in discussion.
- ⦿ Stay abreast of related local and national developments.



## SUBCOMMITTEE CO-CHAIR ROLE

Term: 1 year; maximum of 3 terms.

Responsibilities:

- ⦿ Recruit subcommittee members.
- ⦿ Plan and prepare for each subcommittee meeting.
- ⦿ Co-facilitate each subcommittee meeting.
- ⦿ Report out at Council meetings periodically.
- ⦿ Participate in periodic coordination meeting with other subcommittee co-chairs.



## How To SIGN-UP

- © Interested persons who are not already Workgroup or Council members are asked to fill out an interest form and send it to the Early Learning Council Coordinator.



# HOW TO CONTACT SUBCOMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

	Co-Chairs	Contact Information
Access	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Mary Varr	<a href="mailto:EBB@rikidscount.org">EBB@rikidscount.org</a> <a href="mailto:mvarr@whscda.org">mvarr@whscda.org</a>
Program Standards and Quality	Karen Beese Elizabeth Burke Bryant Charlotte Moretti Michele Palermo	<a href="mailto:KBeese@ohhs.ri.gov">KBeese@ohhs.ri.gov</a> <a href="mailto:EBurkeBryant@rikidscount.org">EBurkeBryant@rikidscount.org</a> <a href="mailto:clb0069@aol.com">clb0069@aol.com</a> <a href="mailto:michele.palermo@ride.ri.gov">michele.palermo@ride.ri.gov</a>
Workforce	Karen Beese Khadija Lewis Khan Sara Mickelson	<a href="mailto:KBeese@ohhs.ri.gov">KBeese@ohhs.ri.gov</a> <a href="mailto:k.lewiskhan@jhcdc.org">k.lewiskhan@jhcdc.org</a> <a href="mailto:sara.mickelson@ride.ri.gov">sara.mickelson@ride.ri.gov</a>
Early Learning and Development Standards and Assessment	Allison Comport Maryann Finamore Judi Stevenson-Garcia	<a href="mailto:Allison.Comport@ride.ri.gov">Allison.Comport@ride.ri.gov</a> <a href="mailto:mfinamore@westbaycap.org">mfinamore@westbaycap.org</a> <a href="mailto:Judi.Stevenson-Garcia@ride.ri.gov">Judi.Stevenson-Garcia@ride.ri.gov</a>
Data	Leanne Barrett Michael Bosworth	<a href="mailto:lbarrett@rikidscount.org">lbarrett@rikidscount.org</a> <a href="mailto:michael.bosworth@ride.ri.gov">michael.bosworth@ride.ri.gov</a>

Early Learning Council Coordinator: Leanne Barrett



# START UP TIMELINE

October

November

December



**Member  
Recruitment**

**1<sup>st</sup> subcommittee meetings under  
new structure**

**Agenda  
Planning**



**QUESTIONS?**



# **ACCESS UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIES**



# ACCESS UPDATE

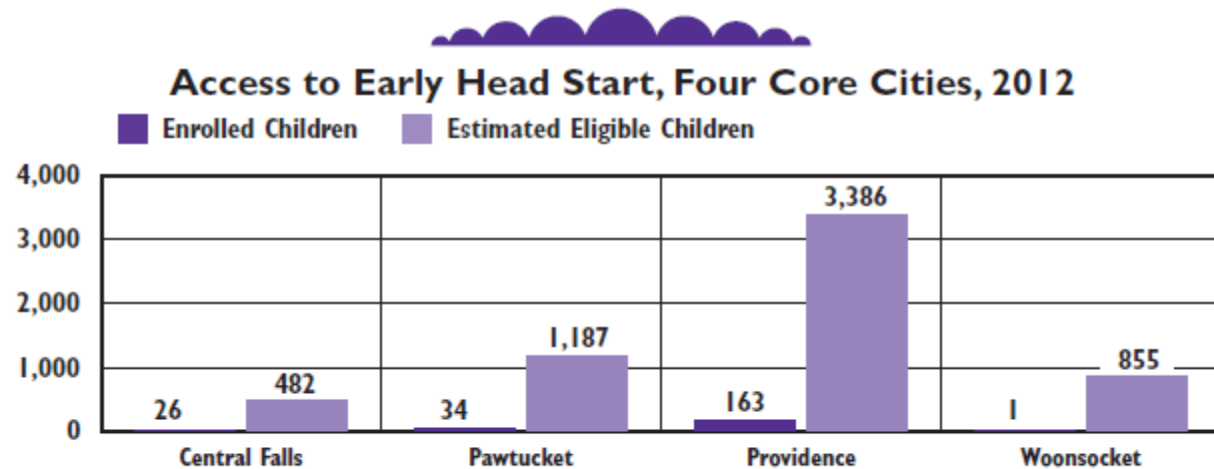
- ◎ **Child Care:** 12-month re-certification for Child Care Assistance Program launched July 2012. (Council recommendation).
- ◎ **Child Care:** New Child Care Transition Pilot Program launch October 1, 2013, extending eligibility to currently enrolled families whose income exceeds 180% FPL but falls below 225% FPL. (Council recommendation).
- ◎ **Child Care:** CCAP available for low-income families participating in job-training sponsored by the Human Resource Investment Council (Governor's Workforce Board) – first time for unemployed families not in RI Works.
- ◎ **Early Head Start/Head Start:** March 2013 federal sequester cuts have eliminated 370 Early Head Start/Head Start slots in Rhode Island. State funding stable for 130 slots.
- ◎ **State Pre-K** expansion plan increases funding by \$1 million for FY2015.
- ◎ **Early Intervention:** Proposed state changes to eligibility not anticipated to impact enrollment.
- ◎ **Full-Day Kindergarten:** New \$250,000 start-up fund available to help districts transition to full-day K.



**ACCESS HIGHLIGHTS:  
CURRENT STATE**



# EARLY HEAD START



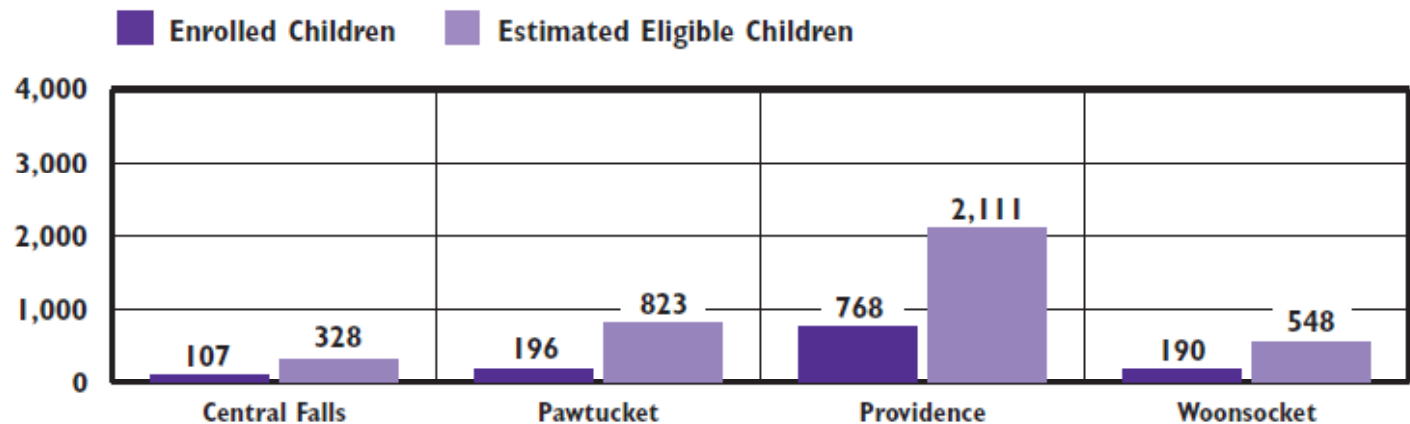
Source: Rhode Island Early Head Start program enrollment data compiled by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, October 2012. Estimated eligible children is the number of children under age three according to Census 2010 multiplied by the percent of children under age six living in families with incomes below 125% of poverty according to the Population Reference Bureau's analysis of U.S. Census 2007-2011 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates. Estimates for children living in families between 125% and 129% of poverty are not available.

- In 2012, 522 infants and toddlers were receiving Early Head Start services in Rhode Island, approximately 6% of the estimated eligible population.
- In the core cities, 4% of eligible children were enrolled in Head Start, compared with 10% in the remainder of the state.



# HEAD START

## Access to Head Start, Four Core Cities, 2012



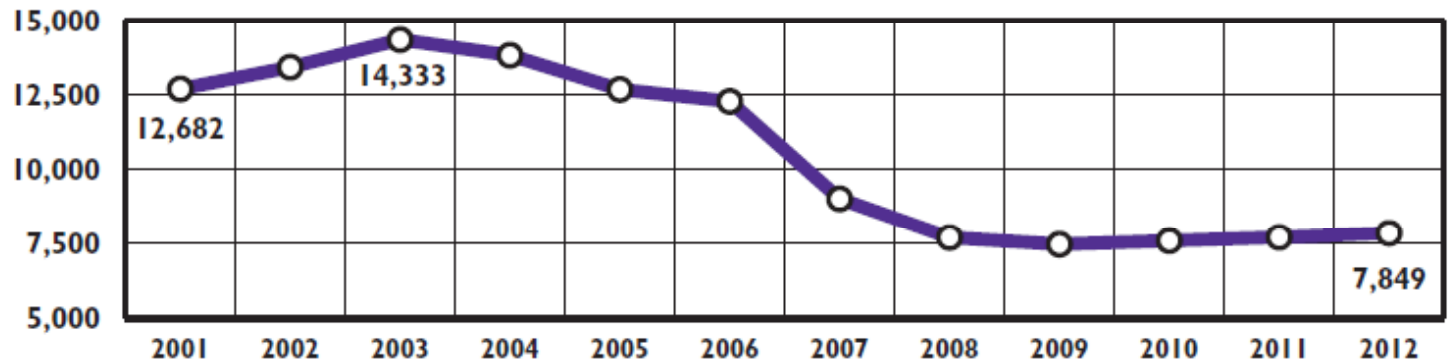
Source: Rhode Island Head Start program enrollment data compiled by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, October 2012. Estimated eligible children is the number of children ages three and four according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below 125% of poverty according to the Population Reference Bureau's analysis of U.S. Census 2007-2011 American Community Survey, five-year estimates. Estimates for children living in families between 125% and 129% of poverty are not available.

- In 2012, Rhode Island Head Start programs served 2,432 children, 40% of the estimated 5,607 eligible children.
- In the core cities, 33% of eligible children were enrolled in Head Start, compared with 53% in the remainder of the state.



# CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES

Child Care Subsidies, Rhode Island, 2001-2012



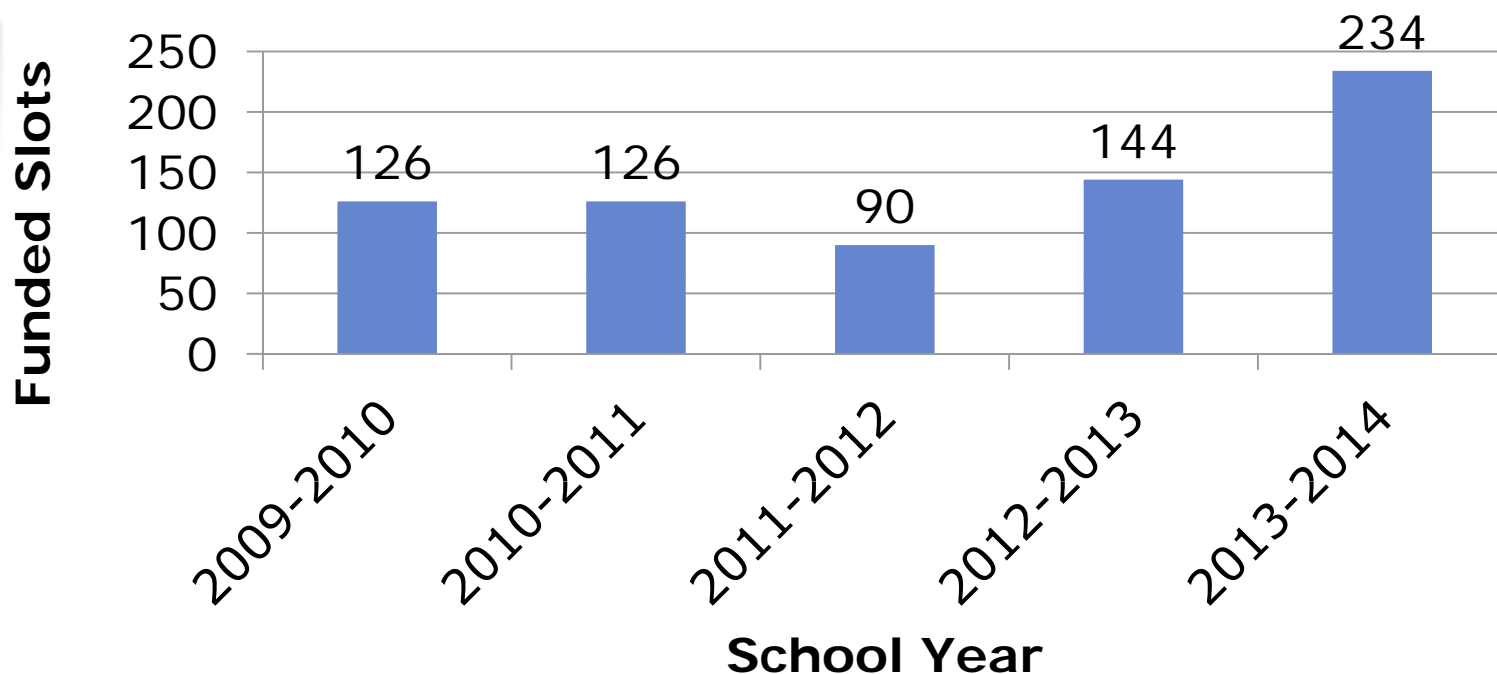
Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, December 2001 – December 2012.

- The number of children receiving child care subsidies increased steadily from 6,077 in 1996 to 14,333 in 2003. Since 2003, there has been a 45% decrease in the number of child care subsidies available.
- In 2012 in Rhode Island, 74% of all child care subsidies were for care in a licensed child care center, 25% were for care by a licensed family child care home, and 1% were for care by a non-licensed relative, friend or neighbor.
- ◎ 59% of children receiving child care subsidies attend a program in one of the four core cities; 41% attend a program in the remainder of the state; < 1% attend an out-of-state program.



# STATE PRE-K

## Rhode Island State Pre-K



- Rhode Island's Pre-K program is recognized as one of only four state Pre-K programs in the U.S. to meet all 10 recommended quality benchmarks.
- The 13 current Pre-K classrooms are located in Central Falls (1), Newport (1), Pawtucket (1), Providence (4), Warwick (2), West Warwick (2), and Woonsocket (2).

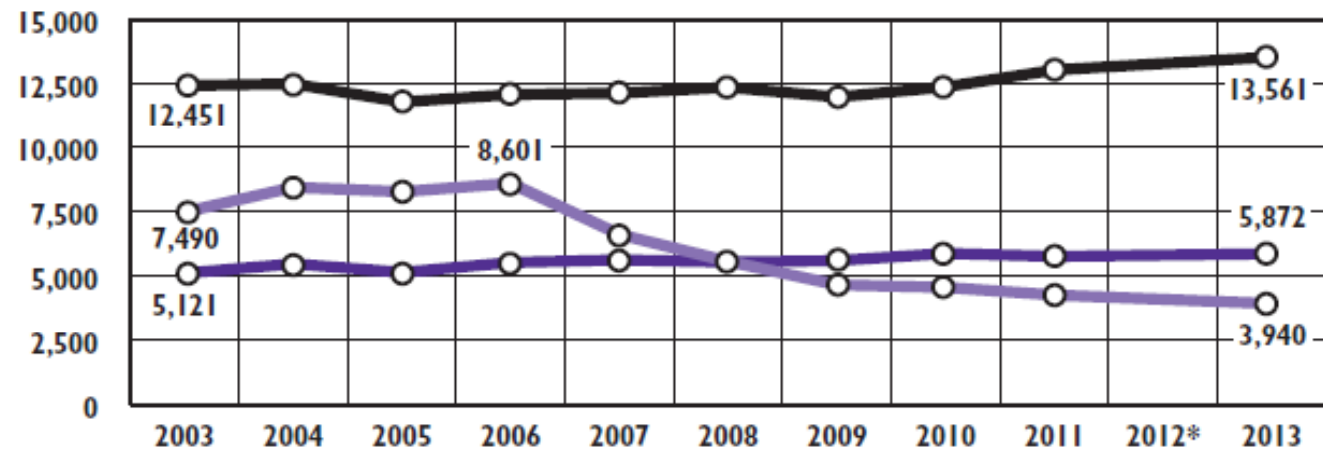


# EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM CAPACITY



Early Learning Program Capacity, Rhode Island, 2003-2013

■ Center Slots Under Age 3   
 ■ Center Slots Age 3 to 5   
 ■ Family Child Care Slots Age Birth to 12



Source: Options for Working Parents, slots in licensed child care centers and certified family child care homes, 2003-2006. Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, slots in licensed child care centers and family child care homes, 2007-2013.

*\*In the 2013 Factbook, data was collected as of January 2013, instead of December 2012.*

- Over the past 10 years, the number of licensed slots in child care centers has grown 15% for infants and toddlers and 9% for preschoolers.
- Since 2006, the number of slots in licensed family child care homes has declined 54%.






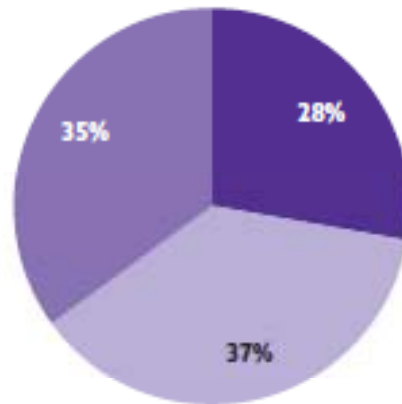
# EARLY INTERVENTION






## Early Intervention Enrollment, Rhode Island, 2012

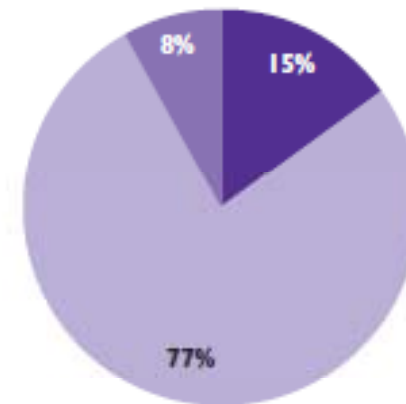
### By Age

28%		Birth – 11 months
37%		12 – 23 months
35%		24 – 35 months



### By Disability

15%		Single Established Condition
77%		Significant Developmental Delay
8%		Multiple Established Conditions



*n=3,967*

Source: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, 2012.

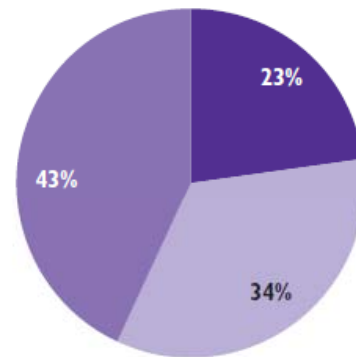
- In 2012 in Rhode Island, 3,967 children received Early Intervention (EI) services, 12% of the 33,788 Rhode Island children under age three.



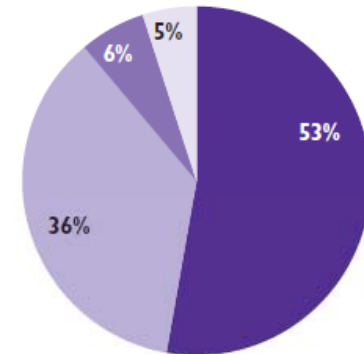
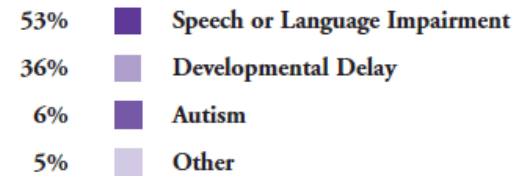
# PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

Preschool Special Education Enrollment, Rhode Island, 2012

By Age



By Disability



*n=2,927*

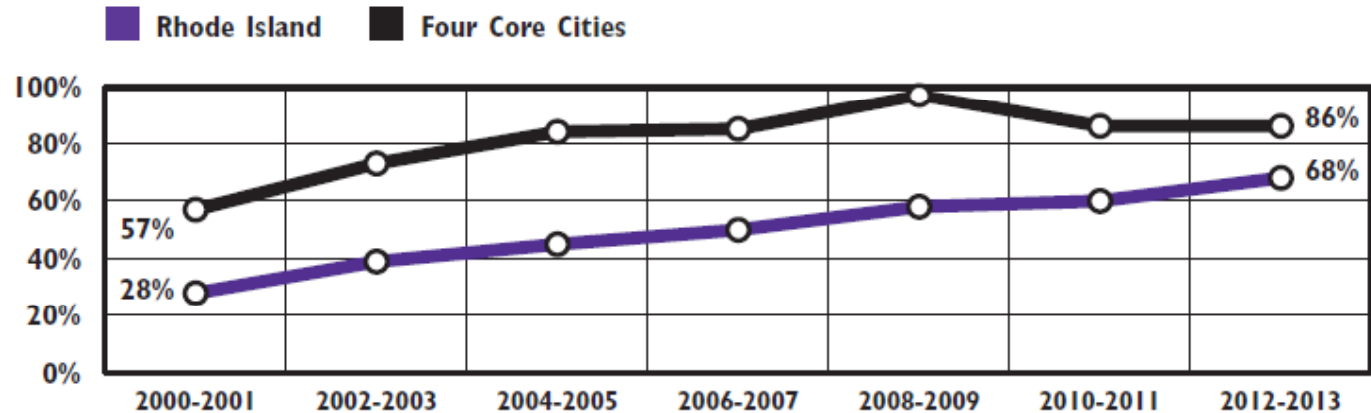
Source: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, June 2012 Special Education Census.

- ⊙ During the 2011-2012 school year in Rhode Island, there were 2,927 preschool-age children who received special education services.



# CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Children in Full-Day Public Kindergarten Programs, Rhode Island, 2000-2001 through 2012-2013 School Years



Source: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, kindergarten enrollment October 1, 2000 – October 1, 2012.

- In Rhode Island in the 2012-2013 school year, 68% of children who attended public kindergarten were in a full-day program, lower than the U.S. rate of 77%.
- As of the 2012-2013 school year, 21 of the 35 school districts offered universal access to full-day kindergarten programs. All charter schools and state-operated schools with kindergarten have full-day programs.

A young girl with dark hair in pigtails, wearing a striped shirt, is raising her right hand in a classroom setting. In the background, other children and a teacher are visible, along with educational posters on the wall.

# ACCESS PRIORITY DISCUSSION

- ❖ Considering the current climate, which Access strategies in our strategic plan should be prioritized or focused on this year in each area? (e.g. child care, Head Start/Early Head Start, Pre-K, etc.)
- ❖ Are there strategies that should be added? Or strategies that are no longer relevant and should be removed?



# ACCESS PRIORITY DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

- ❖ Child Care
- ❖ Head Start/Early Head Start
- ❖ Pre-K
- ❖ Full-Day K
- ❖ Early Childhood Special Education



# UPDATES



# RTT-ELC: ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

- ❖ Administrative Update
  - ❖ Staffing
  - ❖ Communication
- ❖ Project Highlights
  - ❖ Program Quality Improvement
  - ❖ Program Standards Alignment
  - ❖ Early learning and Development Standards
  - ❖ Child Assessment
  - ❖ Data
  - ❖ Workforce



# ARRA GRANT

- ❖ \$665,000 grant, 2010-2013
- ❖ Key Accomplishments:
  - ❖ Strategic Plan
  - ❖ RTT-ELC Grant!
  - ❖ New Early Learning & Development Standards (birth to 5)
  - ❖ T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood
  - ❖ Professional development system planning
  - ❖ Cost of quality analysis & recommendations
  - ❖ Expert help with licensing revisions
  - ❖ Higher Education Study
  - ❖ Workforce Study (with RTT-ELC)
- ❖ Sustainability



# ADDITIONAL UPDATES

- ❖ Enhanced Assessment Grant - State Collaboration Kindergarten Entry Assessment
- ❖ Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting
- ❖ Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (Successful Start)



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**



# UPCOMING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Subcommittee	Date
Access Subcommittee	October 15, 2013 12:00-1:30 pm Rhode Island Foundation
Early Learning and Development Standards and Assessment	TBD - December
Program Standards and Quality	TBD - November
Early Learning Workforce Development	TBD - November
Early Learning Data System	TBD - December



# NEXT MEETING

❖ **Next Council and Work Group Meeting:**

**December 11, 2013**

**11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.**

# ***Rhode Island Early Learning Council and Early Learning Council Workgroup Meeting***

Wednesday, October 2, 2013 11:30-2:00 p.m.  
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## **Meeting Summary**

### **AGENDA SUMMARY**

The Early Learning Council/Early Learning Council Workgroup agenda addressed the following topics:

- Follow-up on Council Subcommittee Structure
- Access Update and Discussion of Priority Areas
- Updates
- An opportunity for public comment
- A review of the next steps in the process

### **KEY POINTS**

Key discussion points from the meeting are summarized below:

#### **FOLLOW-UP ON COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

Commissioner Deborah Gist, Elizabeth Burke Bryant and Leanne Barrett explained the new Early Learning Council Subcommittee structure. (see slides) The following key points were made:

- The goal for the new structure is to meaningfully engage as many interested people as possible without being overly demanding on people's time. We hope to refresh the work of the subcommittees by expanding and diversifying membership to a large variety of stakeholders across the state including practitioners, policy makers and people involved in system implementation. People who are interested in the subcommittees but are unable to commit to the time involved can still attend meetings as a member of the public or be included on mailing lists.
- We have reduced overlap at subcommittee meetings by combining the original seven subcommittees into five subcommittees. Based on the Early Learning Council's strategic plan, the Race to the Top goals and the goals of the state, each subcommittee will establish progress indicators to track the work going forward.
- Subcommittee co-chairs have been adjusted to include people with community based perspectives. Some of the specific changes to each subcommittee include the following:
  - The Access Subcommittee has added Mary Varr as a new co-chair along with Elizabeth. She will provide the perspective of a Head Start, State Pre-K, and child care program in Woonsocket. There will be 2 to 3 meetings a year.
  - The Program Standards and Quality Improvement Subcommittee is a merger of the Program Quality Standards Alignment and Measurement Subcommittee and the Program Quality Improvement Subcommittee. Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Michele Palermo, and Karen Beese will co-chair this subcommittee with Charlotte Moretti, who brings the perspective of the child care community.
  - The Workforce Subcommittee will reach out to people involved in higher education to assist in creating professional development opportunities for the early childhood

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## **Meeting Summary**

workforce. Khadija Lewis Khan continues to bring her programmatic perspective to her co-chair position along with Karen Beese and Sara Mickelson.

- The Early Learning and Development Standards and Assessment Subcommittee combines the Early Learning and Development Standards Subcommittee and the Developing and Supporting Effective Early Childhood Assessment Standards Subcommittee. This newly formed subcommittee will merge assessment topics for both early learning and childhood health and development. Maryann Finamore, Allison Comport and Judi Stevenson-Garcia will be co-chairs for this subcommittee.
  - The Data Subcommittee, co-chaired by Leanne Barrett and Mike Bosworth, is building the longitudinal data system that will give us the information we need to support the work of the Early Learning Council and the subcommittees.
- As the Early Learning Council Coordinator, Leanne will ensure that the work of all the subcommittees is tied to the strategic plan. The process for the new subcommittees will be data driven and data will be reviewed at every subcommittee meeting. All subcommittees should review data regularly regarding progress toward goals and review data relating to low income children, children involved in the child welfare system, English language learners, and children with disabilities.
  - Everyone is encouraged to reach out to others who might be interested in participating on subcommittees. This is the time when new people can become engaged in the work of the Early Learning Council.
  - We want all interested parties, including current subcommittee members, to sign up for the newly formed subcommittees using our sign-up form. The forms will be available through a link in the Early Learning Council's eNews and on the [www.earlylearningri.org](http://www.earlylearningri.org) website. People can indicate whether they want to be on one or more subcommittees or if they want to be included on the mailing list. We will keep track of subcommittee membership and who are the interested parties so all people will remain continually informed. There will be a period of recruitment until November 1<sup>st</sup>, at which time the new subcommittees will be formed. Provided there is still available space, interested people can still join after that time.
  - There is no longer a conflict of interest issue so all vendors can participate on subcommittees. Early Learning Council and Workgroup membership is not required for subcommittee membership.

The following comments and questions were made:

- Will the current members of the subcommittees be notified about the sign-up requirement?  
A: We will reach out to the people who have already been engaged in subcommittee work, but everyone, even current subcommittee members, are encouraged to submit a form.

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## **Meeting Summary**

- For each of the subcommittees, including the newly combined subcommittees, is the focus of the work the same as it was before?  
A: The strategic plan contains goals and objectives which define the focus of each subcommittee's work. Those will remain the same.
- If the number of people interested in joining a subcommittee exceeds 20 and those additional people are willing to make a commitment and can provide diversified perspectives, then the membership limit can be reevaluated. We don't want to turn away interested participants.
- Representatives from both health and mental health areas should be included in subcommittee membership.
- How do we plan to notify people that subcommittee membership is open? Are the co-chairs responsible for outreach or will the Early Learning Council reach out too?  
A: It will be included in an eNews and we will talk about it at the Rhode Island Early Childhood Conference this weekend. Additionally, we encourage everyone to reach out to any contacts they have who might be interested or who could provide a diverse perspective.
- We need to think about including representation from families enrolled in the childcare and early learning system. Because there are often barriers to participation for that group, subcommittees should think about focus groups as a way to gather feedback from them.

## **ACCESS UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF PRIORITY AREAS**

Elizabeth Burke Bryant updated the Early Learning Council on access issues and Kristin Lehoullier facilitated a discussion of priority access areas. (see slides) The following comments and questions were made:

- Child Care
  - Do we know what programs the children receiving child care subsidies are attending? Are they in programs that are BrightStars rated? When DCYF funds childcare slots, we should encourage enrollment at higher quality sites.  
A: At this time, there are 5,000 children in BrightStars rated programs and one third of those children receive DHS CCAP subsidies. DHS will be incorporating BrightStars ratings into its system so that information will be more readily available.
  - Childcare co-pay amounts should be capped at 10%.
  - Although quality awards are helpful, programs can't balance their budget with DHS subsidies. Many higher quality programs limit the number of CCAP children they enroll because they need full pay children to balance their budget. We need to focus on the discrepancy between actual costs and subsidies and the ability of programs to balance their budgets.
  - We should flag strategy 3.14 because teenagers that have completed high school should have access to child care subsidies.

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## **Meeting Summary**

- We have to monitor carefully how many programs are offering infant toddler care because many of those programs are struggling financially.
- Eligibility thresholds in the Child Care Transition Pilot Program need to be made permanent.
- We need more support for children with special needs in community based childcare settings.
- **Head Start/Early Head Start**
  - What is the reason that eligible children are not enrolled at Head Start and Early Head Start?  
A: Due to a lack of federal funding, there are not enough available slots, especially in the core cities. The sequester cuts exacerbate this problem.
  - Do you know the number of children on Head Start waiting lists? There might be barriers to the enrollment of eligible children other than the availability of slots.  
A: There are waiting lists at all Head Starts and they got longer after the sequester cuts. We will include that number in the future.
  - What happens to the children who lose their slots at Head Start? Those children don't usually have access to childcare assistance because they don't come from working families so what other services are available to them?  
A: We have to put something in place to help those children before kindergarten. If any of those children are eligible for subsidies, we should assist them in accessing that resource. Head Start works with families to find other placements, but it is not always possible because of barriers like education, employment and transportation.
- **Pre-K**
  - According to the transition plan in the funding formula, there will be 22 state pre-k classrooms next year.
  - Although we are happy that the pre-k expansion was funded, the delayed funding caused many issues. Programs lost income because already enrolled children got accepted into the pre-k lottery in August and programs were not able to fill all of those emptied slots in other classrooms by September. Also, accepted families were distressed because they lost deposits they had placed at programs to hold their slot. We are determined not to have a delayed response again.
- **Full-Day K**
  - We need more advocacy for full time kindergarten because the research shows that half day kindergarten doesn't support early literacy. At a minimum, we want 100% access to full day kindergarten in core cities.
  - A lot of quality early childhood programs have begun to offer full day kindergarten programs. Can these programs, if they have CECE approval and can prove quality, partner with districts that do not provide full day kindergarten?  
A: A partnership between districts and private programs is complicated for many reasons. We can explore that option, but there are logistical barriers that might prevent that partnership, for example provider status and teacher certification.

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## **Meeting Summary**

- Early Childhood Special Education
  - Early Intervention enrollment increased from 3,967 in 2012 to 4,200 in 2013.
  - Why is the number of children served by preschool special education less than the number of children served by Early Intervention and why does the number of children enrolled in preschool special education increase with age?

A: There are different eligibility requirements for the two programs, so some children may qualify under Early Intervention and not for preschool special education. We are looking at this discrepancy. It may be that the eligibility categories at transition are wrong and we are inadvertently dropping children who still need services. The increased number of older children enrolled in preschool special education may indicate that we are re-enrolling, when they are older and their disabilities are more severe, those same children that we dropped at transition time. For all these reasons, it is crucial that children who age-out of Early Intervention be in quality programs so they can be continually monitored.
  - Some of the children who qualify for special education at older ages might be children who were identified in early childhood programs as needing services but who couldn't access those services. It takes a long time to identify eligible children and services are often unavailable once that process is complete.
  - We are not screening enough children and, after screening, we are not referring enough children who need services. Expansion of the home visiting programs will hopefully improve referral rates.
  - Many of the children that fall through the cracks are children with mental health needs. It is hard to get services for behavioral issues even if children have a diagnosis. There are no services to support them to stay in care. This is an especially vulnerable population, particularly the infants and toddlers.
  - In November, there will be an issue brief on young children with disabilities and developmental delays.
- Other ways to reach children who are not enrolled in traditional child care and early learning programs should be considered by the Access committee, like the practice based literacy program, should be included in our discussions.
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## **UPDATES**

The Early Learning Council was updated on the following:

- 1) Melissa Emidy provided an update on the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. (see slide)  
The following comments were made:
  - A communication blueprint has been developed that will be the framework for all communications moving forward.
  - The Program Quality Grants distributed over \$340,000 to centers, family child care homes and public schools. The DHS Quality Awards will be released soon.
  - The DCYF child care regulations were posted today and the family childcare home regulations will go to public hearing as soon as NARA provides some missing information.

# ***Rhode Island Early Learning Council and Early Learning Council Workgroup Meeting***

Wednesday, October 2, 2013 11:30-2:00 p.m.

CCRI-Knight Campus, Room 4090

400 East Ave., Warwick, RI

## **Meeting Summary**

- The Alignment team is working on aligning forms, processes and the common application to make it easier for programs to apply to DCYF, RIDE and BrightStars and to allow for improved monitoring.
  - The new Early Learning and Development Standards are posted on the RIDE and [www.earlylearningri.org](http://www.earlylearningri.org) website and will be available soon in booklet form. Trainings are being rolled out now.
  - The Department of Health team has posted an LOI to establish a referral service for pediatricians who conduct child screenings.
  - The Data team is working on getting the data system up and running, with a focus on the program portal.
  - The Workforce study deadline has been extended to Saturday so we can engage more participants at the Rhode Island Early Childhood Conference. We have also been visiting centers to explain the importance of the study and how it will inform the Professional Development/Technical Assistance Center. The survey is posted on the Early Learning website. Both directors and teachers need to complete the survey.
  - The Professional Development/Technical Assistance Center is moving forward on a revised timeline and should be in place by December.
- 2) Leanne Barrett provided an update on the recently completed the ARRA Grant. (see slide) The following key point was made:
- In order to sustain the progress made by the ARRA grant, support has to come from state agencies and departments. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is committed to supporting the Council. Ideally, state departments will come together to use funds across agencies to continue supporting the Council's Strategic Plan.
- 3) Judi Stevenson-Garcia provided an update on the State Collaboration Kindergarten Entry Assessment grant. The following comments and questions were made:
- The 10 state consortium that Rhode Island has joined, has been awarded a \$6 million, 4 year grant to develop, pilot and implement a Kindergarten Entry Assessment. The grant award will be shared with the whole consortium, which includes nine states and Washington D.C. North Carolina is the lead state. North Carolina invited Rhode Island to participate in the grant consortium because of our Race to the Top work and our new Early Learning and Development Standards.
  - The main purpose of the assessment is to inform teachers about children entering kindergarten.
  - Our first goal under the grant is to get an understanding of the standards that all the states are using to assess. We plan to pilot the whole assessment by 2015.
  - The Assessment subcommittee will be regularly involved with the Kindergarten Entry Assessment, but we might have to establish a state level committee specifically focused on just this grant work.
  - The same assessment will be developed for all the 8 states and Washington DC.

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## **Meeting Summary**

- 4) Blythe Berger provided an update on two home visiting grants and a third Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant. The following comments and questions were made:
- We will be using a \$1 million home visiting grant to sustain the work that we have accomplished over the last 2 years. Another home visiting grant, \$6 million for two years, will allow us to expand the Healthy Families America home visiting program to 400 additional families in 4 new communities (East Providence, Coventry, Westerly, and Warwick). To ensure the funds are being used efficiently, we will build the referral system and align the services that these families will need.
  - With the help of a third grant, the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant, we plan to create a system to address the effects of toxic stress in the birth to three population. We will construct systems to identify, as early as possible, children who might be at risk for toxic stress and we will establish professional development for home visitors and health care providers so they will be equipped to address the needs of these families. Since we don't have the expertise at the R.I. Department of Health to evaluate the toxic stress information, we will have to retain outside assistance for this work.
  - How many children do you think you will reach with the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant?  
A: The grant is for \$140,000 a year for 3 years so it is really just systems building. The goal is to define "toxic stress" specifically for Rhode Island and to ensure that once a child is identified by the Health Department, that child and family receives needed services.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following comments and questions from the public and members of the Early Learning Council were made:

- Now that providers are starting to receive resources from the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, where can people come together to suggest adjustments that should be made or provide thoughts on implementation?  
A: These types of conversations should happen at the subcommittee level. We realize that the implementation stage requires more diversified viewpoints and that is one of the reasons behind the expansion of the subcommittees' membership. The subcommittees will listen to all questions and ideas and will report those to the Early Learning Council so the best decisions can be made. If you have ideas that need to be addressed prior to a subcommittee meeting, reach out to the subcommittee co-chairs or to Melissa.
- The Rhode Island Early Childhood Conference is this weekend. We expect 100 participants at the Leadership Day on Friday and 300 participants at the Annual Conference Day on Saturday.
- The 2008 BrightStars standards will be closing as of October 15 and we will be transitioning into the 2013 BrightStars standards. The 2013 standards are available now as part of the DHS CCAP regulations posted on the Secretary of State's website. We don't have a date for full

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implementation, but there will be a policy meeting next week to finalize policies and timelines. We are committed to transitioning in the best way possible and we will listen to all issues in order to ensure that the transition goes smoothly.

**NEXT STEPS/WRAP UP**

The theme for the December Early Learning Council meeting will be workforce.