

Finance and Economic Development Committee
Early Childhood Leadership Commission
Committee Report
8 December, 2010

The Financing and Economic Development Committee met on October 15 and November 9, 2010. The Committee discussed different resources for understanding funding and modeling cost, quality and access including the Colorado Early Childhood Cost model and the Prevention Leadership Council (PLC) ASPIRE data. The Committee determined the policy questions they would like answered by these mapping and modeling efforts, the scope of resource information they would like to collect, as well as the extent of updates and improvements to the Colorado Early Childhood Cost model.

The Committee also discussed the upcoming release of the Early Childhood Development Toolkit for Employers, produced by Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC). The toolkit was launched on December 1, 2010 at a luncheon featuring Governor-Elect John Hickenlooper as the keynote speaker. Information on the Early Childhood Leadership Commission is included in the toolkit. The committee discussed partnerships between Early Childhood Councils and local businesses. The need to help build additional capacity for these partnerships was suggested.

The Financing and Economic Development Committee proposes the following discussion and action items for the Early Childhood Leadership Commission:

Action 1: Discuss Mapping and Cost Model Projects Purpose and Policy Questions summary document.

Discussion: The purpose of the cost modeling and mapping projects is to: a) understand the resources and gaps in resources for children, as defined by the Early Childhood Colorado; b) develop a plan to maximize and create efficiencies in current resources, prioritize other needed services and supports, and set goals for financing and sustainability of an early childhood system; and c) use the information produced by these projects to generate public and political understanding of the current environment and support for the goals of the ECLC. These projects will provide answers to policy questions concerning resources, workforce, facilities and issues of quality in both public and privately-funded programs and services.

Action 2: Discuss Early Childhood Colorado Framework Supports and Services and Public Funding Streams document.

Discussion: This document outlines the major supports and services that fall under the four domains of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework – Early Learning, Family Support and Parent Education, Social, Emotional, and Mental Health and Health. The document also includes most of the major public funding streams for these supports and services. The Finance and Economic Development Committee will use this document to

define the scope of supports and services to be included in the cost model and mapping project and to organize the mapping information.

Action 3: Discuss cost model scope of work and progress on model development.

Discussion: The Colorado Early Childhood Cost Model will be an interactive web-based tool that can be used by Commissioners and other stakeholders to design and evaluate access and quality scenarios across the early childhood system. The tool will provide estimates on current and projected costs of the system components, map current state, local and private funding streams and provide analysis on the return on investment (ROI) of early childhood funding based on various user scenarios. A contract with Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates, the group that designed the current Colorado Early Childhood Cost model, is under review with an estimate that work will begin in January 2011.

Action 4: Discuss the mapping scope of work and progress on the mapping project.

Discussion: The mapping project will use the Early Childhood Colorado Framework Supports and Services and Public Funding Streams document to define those supports and services to be mapped. The map will capture available funding for each program and service category and determine any gaps in funding based on an assessment of need. The Committee has agreed to map both public and private dollars, to the extent possible. It was agreed that multiple strategies must be deployed in order to gather the full scope of information, and that precision of the information will vary based on the source. In addition, it was agreed that additional expertise and advice may be required to help develop the correct assumptions concerning gaps in funding. An RFP (request for proposal) for this project is in development and, once approved, will be released for this project.