



September 25, 2015

Dear Senator Martinez Humenik and members of the Early Childhood School Readiness Legislative Commission,

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) was reauthorized by legislation in 2013 as the entity charged to be the trusted and proactive champion for quality, outcome-focused early childhood programs and services for pregnant women and children birth to age eight in Colorado. This high-level, interagency, cross-sector, public-private commission accelerates and sustains Colorado's commitment to improve outcomes for young children by promoting a shared vision and strategic direction for an aligned system of services and supports.

Pursuant to C.R.S. 26-6.5-203 (2)(b), the Early Childhood School Readiness Legislative Commission (ECSRLC) is required to consult with the ECLC on matters related to early childhood and school readiness policy. This statute compliments the ECLC's priority, pursuant to C.R.S. 26-6.2-104, to identify opportunities for, and barriers to, the alignment of standards, rules, policies and procedures across programs and agencies that support young children. Out of a commitment to promote robust policy, a special meeting between the ECLC Executive Committee and Senator Martinez Humenik took place on Tuesday, September 27.

The ECLC Executive Committee requested a meeting with the chair and vice chair of the ECSRLC to provide input on potential early childhood legislative ideas. Senator Martinez Humenik, chair of the ECSRLC, was able to attend the meeting and provide an overview of ideas that have surfaced during recent ECSRLC meetings. The group discussed the following potential early childhood legislative ideas and the ECLC executive committee provided the following input in response to the ideas presented by ECSRLC:

- 1. Expansion of the 10 county limit on the CCCAP Cliff Effect Pilot Program:** The ECLC supports this idea to encourage more participation in the pilot program because it is important to support families on the road to self-sufficiency and reduce the number of families concerned that a pay increase may lead to denial of services.
- 2. Early Learning Challenge Grant/Race to the Top sustainability:** The ECLC feels strongly that there is no need for legislation to support sustainability because policy work is currently underway within the Office of Early Childhood. Should policy change emerge as a need, the ECLC looks forward to working with partners on a shared plan to move it forward.
- 3. Support to help parents and caregivers (FFN) better understand child development:** The ECLC has established a steering committee to coordinate child development messages and connect parents and caregivers to



community resources. It does not appear that this effort requires policy change.

4. **Support to address child care deserts:** The Office of Early Childhood is rolling out a new grant and loan program to support family, friend and neighbor (FFN) care on the path to licensing; no legislation is necessary.
5. **CCCAP access for teen parents required to work with child support enforcement:** This policy change requires careful discussion and input from partners, including stakeholders from counties, advocacy groups, and affected populations themselves and should be undertaken only after those discussions have proceeded. The ECLC suggests that the ECSRLC should not pursue this as an interim commission bill so that interested parties can work through the nuances of this policy change.
6. **Expansion of community-based Colorado Preschool Program providers:** The ECLC believes further discussion is needed and that a legislative solution is not necessary at this time.
7. **Portability of CCCAP across county lines:** The ECLC suggests postponing action to allow time for further discussion; a legislative solution is not necessary at this time.
8. **Modifying SB 10-191:** The ECLC does not support exempting Prek-K through 2nd grade teachers from educator evaluations and/or the student growth component. Early year educators contribute significantly to students' academic growth and good work is underway in communities around the state about how to best measure that growth that such a policy change could hinder. As we work to elevate educators in the early years, exempting them from quality evaluations or sending a signal that they do not contribute directly to individual students' growth could undermine this work.

The ECLC applauds the ECSRLC' approach to identifying 1-2 draft bill ideas that are bi-partisan and have a high potential for success. On behalf of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, we look forward to future work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anna Jo Haynes'.

Anna Jo Haynes
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Barbara Grogan'.

Barbara Grogan
Co-Chair