Creating a Coordinated, Integrated Early Care and Education System:
State Early Childhood Administration

American families are faced with the challenge of finding and affording quality child care. Parents must navigate a patchwork system of providers, and for many, the system (or lack thereof) can make finding, accessing, and affording this care a nightmare. This is especially true for low-income families who must also navigate the subsidy system. And once in a program, dealing with the fragmentation of services further costs parents time and money. For example, when children age out of Early Head Start at age 3, parents are required to reapply for Head Start.

While Congress allocates billions of dollars to federal agencies for ECE, state governments are tasked with coordinating and combining the many different ECE funding streams allocated to them. The way states administer these funds can result in inconsistencies in program implementation and monitoring, leading to even more frustration for families. Requests for studies from the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) dating back to 1994 show a consistent belief that there would be sufficient funding to serve most children if duplication and overlap of ECE funds were reduced and states aligned programs more efficiently. States, on the other hand, frequently point to the federal government as the reason for the duplication.

Congress, however, intended for states to be more aggressive in coordinating ECE programs with the creation of the State Advisory Council (SAC) for Early Childhood Education and Care in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. SACs are responsible for supporting state efforts in identifying opportunities for collaboration and coordination among ECE programs and facilitating the development of high quality ECE systems. Despite SACs being required by law, only 45 states and the District of Columbia have functioning SACs.

Additionally, while GAO reports have provided more information on administration at the federal level, there remains little information about administration at the state level. A 2017 GAO report on the topic of fragmentation and overlap in ECE found that, at the federal level, there was improved coordination resulting in more efficient administration of funds. The report identified nine major programs with an explicit purpose of providing support to early learning or child care programs. To date, however, GAO has not looked at state implementation of the nine federal funding streams.

The Bipartisan Policy Center set out to examine in greater depth the issues of administration (governance), coordination, and integration by reviewing the requirements set forth in the various authorizing statutes and followed by federal agency requirements, as well as how the states were administering ECE funds. For all but one federal program, governors have wide discretion with regard to the administration and coordination of these funds.

With this in mind, BPC is making recommendations at the federal and state level with an eye towards further reducing duplication and improving results for families. These recommendations are summarized in the full report. The following summarizes the findings for Delaware.

### Strengths of Delaware’s Early Care and Education System

- Delaware administers five programs serving children—Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF); Head Start Collaboration Office; state Pre-K; Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); IDEA Part B, Section 619—under one agency, which improves efficiency and allows for better alignment of eligibility and monitoring requirements and quality improvement activities.
- CACFP is administered through the same agency as state Pre-K and CCDF, which improves efficiency and cost-effectiveness of monitoring and oversight.
- Delaware was awarded an Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership grant, which integrates Early Head Start services and resources into child care settings, aligns child care standards with Early Head Start Performance Standards, and creates opportunities for improving outcomes for children and families.

### Recommendations for Delaware’s Early Care and Education System

- Reduce duplication of monitoring and oversight processes by combining administration of CCDF Licensing, Subsidy, and Quality.
- Ensure the State Advisory Council for Early Education and Care, mandated by the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, is fulfilling its required activities, including conducting a statewide needs assessment on the quality and availability of early care and learning programs.
- Include licensing as the entry level for state Quality Rating and Improvement System to ensure program quality.
Flow of Federal Early Childhood Funds: Delaware

**Key:**
- Green arrow indicating Funding mandated for State Departments of Education
- Yellow arrow indicating Funding provided directly to local organizations
- Red circle indicating State does not receive funding

**Delaware Office of the Governor**

**Department of Health and Human Services**
- Office of Child Care
  - CCDF
- Office of Family Assistance
  - TANF

**Department of Agriculture**
- Food & Nutrition Service
  - CACFP

**Department of Education**
- Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
  - Part B, Section 619
- Office of Postsecondary Education
  - CCAMPIS

**State Advisory Council (SAC)**
The Early Childhood Council is governor appointed and makes recommendations to the governor, the General Assembly, and the Interagency Resource Management Committee. Its mission is to promote the development of a comprehensive and coordinated early childhood system, birth to age eight, which provides the highest quality services and environment for the state’s children and families.

**Local Institutions**
- Department for Services for Children, Youth and their Families, Office of Child Care Licensing
  - CCDF
- Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Social Services
  - Child Care Services - Subsidy
    - CCDF
  - Temporary Assistance
    - TANF
  - Management Services, Birth to 3 Early Intervention System
    - Part C
- Department of Education, Office of Early Learning
  - SAC
  - Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership
  - Delaware First - Child Care Quality Improvement
    - CCDF
- Delaware Stars - Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement System
  - Not CCDF-funded
- Early Childhood Special Education
  - Part B, Section 619
- Head Start Collaboration Office
- Nutrition Programs Office
  - CACFP
- Early Childhood Assistance Program
- State Pre-K

**Quality Rating Improvement System (QVIS)**
Delaware Stars for Early Success has five levels with higher levels indicating higher levels of quality. The QVIS is statewide and participation is voluntary.
### ECE Funding in Delaware

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding from Nine GAO-Identified Programs</th>
<th>FY 2016 Funding</th>
<th>Numbers Served</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCDF Expenditure</td>
<td>$25,936,282</td>
<td>7,600</td>
<td>858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer from TANF</td>
<td>$0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start Allocation</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,693</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>$17,431,814</td>
<td>2,203</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Head Start</td>
<td></td>
<td>490</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA Part C, Allocation (infant/toddler)</td>
<td>$2,247,675</td>
<td>2,463</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA Part B, Section 619 Allocation (3–5 years)</td>
<td>$1,215,366</td>
<td>2,444</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Development Grant</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCAMPIS FY17 Grants</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise Neighborhoods FY16</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Additional ECE Funding Streams</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FY 2016 Funding</td>
<td>Numbers Served</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF Child Care Expenditure (Direct)</td>
<td>$71,533,643</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Reported</td>
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<tr>
<td>TANF Pre-K / Head Start Expenditure</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>CACFP Allocation</td>
<td>$15,424,737</td>
<td>20,583</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race to the Top, Early Learning Challenge</td>
<td>$49,878,774</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership</td>
<td>$1,100,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Reported</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### BPC Reviewed

BPC reviewed the following federally-funded programs to assess the efficiency and integration of Delaware’s early care and education system.

- Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)
- Head Start
- Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS)
- Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Development Grants (PDG)
- Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities (IDEA Part B, Section 619)
- Promise Neighborhoods
- Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP)
- Race to the Top, Early Learning Challenge

### Number of Children Under Age 6

- **UNDER 3**: 32,846
- **3-4 YEARS OLD**: 22,395
- **5 YEARS OLD**: 9,767

### Percentage of Children in Poverty

- **19.3%**

### Median Family Income

- **2-PERSON FAMILY**: $64,826
- **4-PERSON FAMILY**: $90,892
Eligibility Requirements Set by State

Child Care And Development Fund

Children up to age 13 are eligible; children with mental and physical disabilities and those in protective services are eligible through age 18. Parents are required to work a minimum of 20 hours per week. Education (high school, GED classes), job searching, and working are approved activities for eligibility. Training, ESL classes, and postsecondary education are approved if approved through TANF or SNAP. For initial and continuing eligibility a family of two must earn $2,708 or less per month and a family of four must earn $4,100 or less per month.

In 2018, states will begin to see an increase in CCDF funding due to the $2.37 billion increase to the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) passed in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCDF Allocation</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>$9,162,325</td>
<td>$8,749,965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>$17,566,562</td>
<td>$23,309,719</td>
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</table>

State Pre-K (FY17)

4-year-olds at or below 100 percent of federal poverty level are eligible for Early Childhood Assistance Program, the state’s Pre-K program.

Total State Spending on Pre-K: $6,149,300
Local Match: No
Total State Head Start Spending: Not Available
Total FY 2017 Enrollment: 831

IDEA Part C (infant/toddler)

Children age birth to 36 months with 25 percent or 1.75 standard deviation developmental delay in at least one of five developmental areas or with a developmental delay condition are eligible.

Eligibility Requirements Set Federally

CACFP

Public or private nonprofit child care institutions which are licensed or approved may participate. For profit centers must receive title XX funds for at least 25 percent of enrolled children or licensed capacity or at least 25 percent of the children in care must be eligible for free and reduced price meals. A family or group day care home must sign an agreement with a sponsoring organization to participate and must be licensed or approved.

Head Start

Children birth to age five living in poverty are generally eligible. Children with disabilities, children whose families receive TANF or SSI, children whose families are homeless, or children who are in foster care are categorically eligible.

IDEA Part B, Section 619 (3-5 years)

Children three to five years, who have any of the qualifying IDEA Part B overall conditions (Developmental Delay, Deaf-Blindness, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disabilities, Speech and Language Impairment, Visual Impairment, Autism and Traumatic Brain Injury) are eligible.

Preparing our children for future success should be an American issue, not a partisan issue. BPC is working to bring together voices from both parties to empower and support children and working families.

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