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

In 2018, the Bipartisan Policy Center examined how states oversee federal and state funding dedicated to early childhood education, or ECE, programs. Now in 2021, we revisit each state system to understand enacted improvements and emerging challenges in state governance.

As the country adjusts to a new reality of work and home life amid the pandemic, American families are faced with the challenge of finding and affording quality child care, now more than ever. Early learning operates within a fragile business model, in which services cost more than most families can afford to pay. For this reason, states must administer funding with efficiency and effectiveness to ensure families are able to access programs and to maximize the reach of federal and state investments.

States are now responsible to distributing recent COVID-19 relief funding for child care—allocated through three successive relief packages by Congress in 2020—in addition to established funding streams that support multiple early childhood programs. The relief packages are intended to stabilize the fragile system that challenged access to affordable, reliable care. State governments are tasked with coordinating and combining the many different ECE funding streams allocated to them.

For all but one federal program, governors have wide discretion with regard to the administration and coordination of early childhood funding. The Bipartisan Policy Center set out to re-examine the issues of state governance, coordination, and integration by reviewing how states are meeting requirements set by federal statutes and agencies, as well as how states are capitalizing on the opportunity to create efficiency through their governance structures.

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 Connecticut.

More state data, including funding levels and demographic information, can be found at https://bipartisanpolicy.org/report/national-child-care/.

STRENGTHS OF CONNECTICUT’S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Connecticut administers four programs serving children—Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF); Head Start Collaboration Office; state Pre-K; IDEA Part C—under one agency, which improves efficiency and allows for better alignment of eligibility and monitoring requirements and quality improvement activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONNECTICUT’S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness of monitoring and oversight by aligning administration of the Child Care and Development Fund with state Pre-K and the Child and Adult Care Food Program.
- 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.
Connecticut Office of the Governor

Department of Health and Human Services
- Office of Head Start
- CCDF

Department of Agriculture
- Office of Family Assistance
- TANF

Food & Nutrition Service
- CACFP

Office of Postsecondary Education
- CCAMPIS

Department of Education
- Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
- Part B, Section 619
- Part C

Office of Early Childhood
- SAC
- Division of Licensing - Child Care Licensing
- CCDF
- Division of Quality Improvement - Child Care Quality Improvement System
- Division of Family Support, Birth to Three, Home Visiting
  - Part C
  - Universal Home Visiting
- Division of Early Care and Education - Child Care Subsidy
  - CCDF
  - State Head Start Supplement
  - CCDF
- Universal Home Visiting

Office of Family Assistance
- TANF

Office of Postsecondary Education
- CCAMPIS

Office of Child Care
- CCDF

Office of Health and Human Services
- TANF

Office of Education
- CCAMPIS

Office of Early Childhood Special Education
- Part B, Section 619

Office of Postsecondary Education
- CCAMPIS

Office of Family Assistance
- TANF

Office of Postsecondary Education
- CCAMPIS

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
- Part B, Section 619
- Part C

State Advisory Council (SAC)
The Early Childhood Cabinet (ECC) helped develop a high-quality, comprehensive system of ECE across early childhood programs in the state and advanced the integration of services to young children and families.

The Parent Cabinet is an advisory group that partners with OEC to elevate family voice; and develop family-driven policies, programs and practices.

Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)
Connecticut’s “Quality Improvement System” launched October 2022, is statewide and voluntary.

Local Institutions

State Pre-K

Head Start Collaboration Office
- CCDF

Parent Cabinet

Early Childhood Special Education
- Part B, Section 619

K-12 Education, School Nutrition Programs
- CACFP

Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership
- Grants to local organizations

Local Head Start Programs
### ECE Funding in Connecticut

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding from Nine GAO-Identified Programs</th>
<th>FY 2019 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2020 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2021 Funding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCDF Expenditure</td>
<td>$116,360,534</td>
<td>$95,804,850</td>
<td>$426,280,001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer from TANF</td>
<td>$26,678,810</td>
<td>$26,678,706</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Start Allocation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>$68,784,202</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Head Start</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA Part C, Allocation (infant/toddler)</td>
<td>$4,041,509</td>
<td>$4,136,154</td>
<td>$6,015,374</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEA Part B, Section 619 Allocation (3–5 years)</td>
<td>$5,028,809</td>
<td>$5,063,524</td>
<td>$7,502,702</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preschool Development Grant Birth-5</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$8,943,000</td>
<td>$8,943,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCAMPIS Grants</td>
<td>$584,404</td>
<td>$584,404</td>
<td>$774,834</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional ECE Funding Streams</th>
<th>FY 2019 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2020 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2021 Funding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TANF Child Care Expenditure (Direct)</td>
<td>$14,806,028</td>
<td>$35,911,736</td>
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<tr>
<td>TANF Pre-K / Head Start Expenditure</td>
<td>$82,700,647</td>
<td>$70,878,099</td>
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<tr>
<td>CACFP Allocation</td>
<td>$18,142,113</td>
<td>$15,022,798</td>
<td>$12,693,277</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**BPC Reviewed**

BPC reviewed the following federally-funded programs to assess the efficiency and integration of Connecticut’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 Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)
- 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNDER 3</td>
<td>103,691</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-4 YEARS OLD</td>
<td>73,866</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 YEARS OLD</td>
<td>38,239</td>
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</table>

### Percentage of Children in Poverty

12.7%