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 North Dakota.

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

**STRENGTHS OF NORTH DAKOTA’S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM**
- CACFP is administered through the same agency as Pre-K, which improves efficiency and cost-effectiveness of monitoring and oversight.
- Head Start Collaboration Office and Pre-K are co-located, which can improve alignment and coordination of programs.
- Pre-K is co-administered with CCDF, which can improve alignment and coordination of programs.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORTH DAKOTA’S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM**
- Facilitate cross-agency communication to ensure seamless coordination and transition for IDEA Part C (infants/toddlers) and Part B, Section 619 (3-5 year olds).
- Increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness of monitoring and oversight by aligning the administration of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) with 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.
- Include licensing as the entry level for state Quality Rating and Improvement System to ensure program quality.
Flow of Federal Early Childhood Funds: North Dakota

KEY:
- Funding mandated for State Departments of
- Funding provided directly to local
- State does not receive funding
- Partnership with funding provided by state department

North Dakota Office of the Governor

State Advisory Council (SAC)
The Early Childhood Council, appointed by the governor, provides a biennial report with findings and recommendations to the governor and the legislative assembly. The Council reviews availability and provision of early childhood services; identifies opportunities for public and private sector collaboration; and identifies ways to assist with the recruitment and retention of providers.

Early Childhood Education Council
- SAC

Department of Health and Human Services

Office of Head Start
- CCDF

Office of Child Care Assistance
- TANF

Office of Family Assistance
- TANF

Developmental Disabilities Section
- Part C

Economic Assistance Section
- TANF

Early Childhood Section
- Child Care Licensing
- Head Start Collaboration Office
- Part B, Section 619
- Quality Improvement (CCDF)

Food & Nutrition Service
- CACFP

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

Bright & Early
- Child Care Quality Rating Improvement System

State Legislature

State has an approval process for programs that apply to offer Pre-K curriculum and program jointly administered by the Department of Public Instruction.

Office of Postsecondary Education
- CCAMPIS

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

Office of Family Assistance
- CCDF - Subsidy

Office of Child Care Assistance
- CCDF

Office of Head Start-Child Care Partnership
- Grants to local organizations

Local Institutions

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

Bright & Early North Dakota has four levels with higher levels indicating higher levels of quality. The QRIS is statewide and participation is voluntary.

Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)

Student Support and Innovation, Office of Early Learning
- Part B, Section 619

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

Student Support and Innovation, Office of Early Learning
- Part B, Section 619
- CACFP

Local Head Start Programs

Bright & Early North Dakota has four levels with higher levels indicating higher levels of quality. The QRIS is statewide and participation is voluntary.
BPC Reviewed

BPC reviewed the following federally-funded programs to assess the efficiency and integration of North Dakota’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

### ECE Funding in North Dakota

<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>$18,698,354</td>
<td>$22,596,067.42</td>
<td>$114,283,933</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer from TANF</td>
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<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Start Allocation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>$23,491,492</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Head Start</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEA Part C, Allocation (infant/toddler)</td>
<td>$2,301,492</td>
<td>$2,333,044</td>
<td>$3,587,364</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEA Part B, Section 619 Allocation (3–5 years)</td>
<td>$839,308</td>
<td>$858,335</td>
<td>$1,314,403</td>
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<td>CCAMPIS Grants</td>
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<td>$0</td>
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### Additional ECE Funding Streams

<table>
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<tr>
<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>$1,116,895</td>
<td>$1,238,548</td>
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<tr>
<td>TANF Pre-K / Head Start Expenditure</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>CACFP Allocation</td>
<td>$8,371,684</td>
<td>$7,072,847</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Number of Children Under Age 6

- **UNDER 3**
  - 30,043

- **3–4 YEARS OLD**
  - 21,107

- **5 YEARS OLD**
  - 10,520

### Percentage of Children in Poverty

- **10.5%**