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 Nebraska.

More state data, including funding levels and demographic information, can be found at https://bipartisanpolicy.org/report/national-child-care/.
Flow of Federal Early Childhood Funds: Nebraska

**KEY:**
- → Funding mandated for State Departments of Education
- ○ Funding provided directly to local organizations
- ○ State does not receive funding

**Nebraska Office of the Governor**

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

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

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

**Office of the Governor**

**Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)**
- Step Up to Quality has five levels with higher levels indicating higher levels of quality. The QRIS is statewide and participation is voluntary.

**Division of Public Health**
- Children Services Licensing
  - Part C

**Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Health Care**
- Division of Children and Family Services
  - Child Care Programs
    - CCDF
    - Subsidy
  - Early Development Network
    - Part C

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

**Office of Early Childhood**
- Office of Early Childhood
  - Step Up to Quality - Child Care Quality Rating Improvement System
  - Head Start Collaboration Office

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

**Office of Postsecondary Education**
- Office of Postsecondary Education
  - CCAMPIS

**Nebraska State Legislature**

**State Advisory Council (SAC)**
The Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) was established to advise and assist collaborating agencies in carrying out the provisions of state and federal statutes pertaining to early childhood care and education initiatives under state supervision. The ECICC collaborates with the Office of Special Education and the Head Start Collaboration Office, and is partially funded by the Division of Children and Family Services (CCDF) dollars. The ECICC also serves as the state ODC for IDEA Part C.

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

**Division of Children and Family Services**
- CCDF
- TANF

**Division of Children and Family Services**
- Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council
  - SAC

**Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)**
- Step Up to Quality has five levels with higher levels indicating higher levels of quality. The QRIS is statewide and participation is voluntary.

**State Pre-K**
- Based on state feedback, state Pre K, defined as programs for 3- and 4-year-olds, receives funding only from Dept. of Education and almost nothing from Department of Health and Human Services, and hence it is listed under Department of Education and not as co-led by the two departments.
**ECE Funding in Nebraska**

**Funding from Nine GAO-Identified Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2019 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2020 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2021 Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCDF Expenditure</td>
<td>$75,259,751</td>
<td>$73,660,815</td>
<td>$350,586,151</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer from TANF</td>
<td>$16,559,787</td>
<td>$14,371,787</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start Allocation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>$56,351,047</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Head Start</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA Part C, Allocation (infant/toddler)</td>
<td>$2,972,439</td>
<td>$3,022,084</td>
<td>$4,347,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA Part B, Section 619 Allocation (3-5 years)</td>
<td>$2,308,999</td>
<td>$2,324,939</td>
<td>$3,615,367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCAMPIS Grants</td>
<td>$269,641</td>
<td>$269,641</td>
<td>$347,020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional ECE Funding Streams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2019 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2020 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2021 Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TANF Child Care Expenditure (Direct)</td>
<td>$6,498,998</td>
<td>$4,002,989</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF Pre-K / Head Start Expenditure</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CACFP Allocation</td>
<td>$27,025,830</td>
<td>$22,084,620</td>
<td>$21,618,601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data not available for Nebraska*

**BPC Reviewed**

BPC reviewed the following federally-funded programs to assess the efficiency and integration of Nebraska’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**

- UNDER 3: 70,008
- 3-4 YEARS OLD: 54,588
- 5 YEARS OLD: 28,659

**Percentage of Children in Poverty**: 12.5%