

ISSUES IN THE DESIGN OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

INFORMAL DIALOGUE WITH CSFP CFOS

2-11-22



THREE TOPICS TO COVER IN THE HALF HOUR OR SO WE HAVE TOGETHER

- What are the Key EC System Design Questions?
- What are some interesting existing state design examples?
- What are the opportunities and concerns presented by the soon to be created “local Lead” effort in Colorado to bring the EC world under one structural and regulatory agency (the Department of Early Childhood [DEC])?

KEY EC SYSTEM DESIGN QUESTIONS

- 1) Who decides the shape of the program?
 - 1) What is the desired mix of public and private providers?
 - 1) Are “micro-providers included (for example, Family Friend and Neighbor care and co-ops)?
 - 2) What children should be included in the program?
 - 1) Infants, toddlers and preschoolers?
 - 2) Universal, selective or voluntary?
 - 3) Should special attentions be paid to certain students (like students from poor families or with special learning needs)?
- 2) What evidence of quality for providers must be provided?
- 3) How is all of this paid for?

INTERESTING STATE EXAMPLES

- North Carolina
 - County based system, much autonomy and authority given to each count to raise funds, engage local businesses and provide programs.
 - Programs vary county by county.
- Maryland
 - Focused exclusively on children in the year before kindergarten and children from low-income families two years before kindergarten.
 - Committed to a mixed public and private system, costed out the quality of the system they wanted and are working to fund it.
- Colorado before UPK
 - These are the number of pre-K slots we can afford. School districts and private providers can apply for funding some of those slots. For most public and private providers this requires the braiding of multiple funding streams.

UPP RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE “LOCAL LEAD”

- Things to know before signing up!
 - The goal is to create a working infrastructure for Early Childhood in each community that meets the needs of that community for kiddos birth to the year before kindergarten.
 - No restriction on the type of entity that can and should serve in that role (for example, school districts, county agencies, Early Childhood Councils or consortia of EC providers or parents).
 - The entities will be chosen through an application process. It is up to each application to answer the design questions with which we opened this session and select the partners to execute it.
 - Plans could include establishing an early childhood funding zone.
 - As usual, priority will be given to the lowest price bid.