

Administration of Early Education and Care Programs

In recent years, the Minnesota Legislature has considered bills to restructure the administration of the early childhood education and child care programs. There are a variety of ways other states administer these programs, including housing programs in separate departments, one department, within offices within departments, among agencies, and in councils or cabinets. This information brief describes the current administrative structure of the early childhood education and child care programs in Minnesota and provides examples of other states that structure the administration of these programs differently.

Administration of Programs in Minnesota

Currently in Minnesota, the early education programs are administered by Early Learning Services in the state Department of Education and the child care programs are administered by Children and Family Services in the state Department of Human Services. Early Learning Services administers several early childhood education programs including early childhood family education, health and developmental screening, school readiness, Help Me Grow, Head Start, Even Start, early childhood special education, and early childhood intervention services. Children and Family Services administers the child care subsidy programs while child care licensing is administered by the Licensing Division in the state Department of Human Services.

In addition, there is a State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care that was created in law in 2008. The council is responsible for making recommendations on the most efficient and effective way to leverage state and federal funding streams for early childhood and child care programs; making recommendations on how to coordinate or collocate early childhood and child care programs in one state Office of Early Learning; reviewing program evaluations regarding high-quality early childhood programs; and making

recommendations to the governor and legislature, including proposed legislation on how to most effectively create a high-quality early childhood system in Minnesota in order to improve the educational outcomes of children so that all children are school-ready by 2020 ([Minn. Stat. § 124D.141](#)).

In 1995, the Department of Children, Families, and Learning was created as part of the omnibus K-12 finance bill. This department combined programs from the Department of Education and five other agencies into one department, including Head Start from the Department of Economic Security and the child care subsidy programs from the Department of Human Services. The goal of the Department of Children, Families, and Learning was to unify services for children and families into one state agency. The Department of Children, Families, and Learning was disbanded by executive order in 2003, the Department of Education was recreated, and responsibility for administering some of the other programs included in the Department of Children, Families, and Learning was transferred to other agencies. For example, the administration of the child care subsidy programs was transferred back to the Department of Human Services.

In Minnesota, one of the complicating factors in administering the early education and care programs within one agency is the fact that different local entities are responsible for the local administration of programs. Minnesota's 87 counties have the primary role in delivering social services, including child care assistance, in the state-supervised but county-administered social service system. Meanwhile, Minnesota's 337 school districts have the primary role in the local administration of most of the early education programs.

During the 2008 and 2009 legislative sessions, the Minnesota Legislature considered bills to restructure the administration of the early childhood education and child care programs, but none of these bills have been enacted.

Examples from Other States

Administration of Early Education & Care Programs

Administrative Structure	State	Year Created	How Was It Created?
Programs in separate departments	Alabama	2000	Law
	Minnesota	2003	Executive order
	New Jersey	2000	Law
	Nevada	n/a	n/a
	Tennessee	2005	Law
	Washington	2006	Executive order
Programs together in one department	Massachusetts	2005	Law
Programs together in an office in a department	Arkansas	1997	Law
	Maryland	2005	Law
Interagency Programs	Delaware	2000	Law
	Georgia	2004	Law
	Pennsylvania	2006	Executive order
Council/cabinet	Connecticut	2005	Law
	Hawaii	2008	Law
	New York	2003	Federal grant

Programs in Separate Departments

Alabama

The Office of School Readiness (OSR) was created in law in 2000 and is located in the state Department of Children's Affairs. It was created to establish collaborations at the state and local levels that will provide Alabama's four-year-old children with effective early childhood experiences and prepare them for school. The goal of the office is to achieve universal pre-kindergarten in Alabama by enhancing existing and establishing new prekindergarten programs. OSR solicits programs by request for proposals. OSR works in collaboration with local and state agencies by providing advocacy, technical assistance and teacher training, and funding to quality four-year-old classrooms.

The Head Start program is administered by the Head Start State Collaboration Office in the Department of Children's Affairs. The Child Care Services Division is separate under the state

Department of Human Resources and is the state's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrator, responsible for the child care subsidy program and quality initiatives. In addition, the division is also responsible for monitoring and licensing child care centers for compliance with minimum standards.

In the 2009-2010 state budget, the OSR is part of a larger budget item associated with social services programs administered by the Department of Children's Affairs. This budget item also includes Head Start Program activity.

For more information: <http://children.alabama.gov/Default.aspx?catid=12&subid=11>

New Jersey

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) of the New Jersey Department of Education was established in law in 2000 and has programmatic responsibility for preschool through third grade (PK3) programs. Working with PK3 programs across the Department of Education, the DECE is responsible for the development, implementation, and alignment of program components with a focus on standards, curricula, and assessment. DECE collaborates with the regional Head Start office to administer Head Start programs statewide. DECE is part of the larger Department of Education budget item.

School districts are the primary service delivery sites for the state's prekindergarten programs. Districts covered by the Abbott Preschool Program, which resulted from a 1998 state Supreme Court ruling mandating comprehensive preschool for certain high poverty areas, receive direct funding from the state. Non-Abbott districts may apply for funding through New Jersey's Early Childhood Program Aid and Early Launch to Learning Initiative programs. While most school districts operate early education programs through their public schools, some contract out to Head Start or private child care centers.

The Division of Family Development in the state Department of Human Services administers the child care subsidies, while the Office of Licensing in the state Department of Children and Families administers child care licensing.

For more information: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/>

Washington

The Department of Early Learning was established by executive order in 2006 and houses the Division of Child Care and Early Learning, formerly part of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, also known as ECEAP, which used to be part of the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development and the Early Reading Initiative, formerly part of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Department of Early Learning also administers the Head Start program and child care licensing. The department has its own budget.

DSHS administers the child care subsidy program.

Both local governments and school districts, as well as private and nonprofit agencies, may apply for funding to provide early education through Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.

For more information: <http://www.del.wa.gov/>

Other States

Nevada and Tennessee structure the administration of the early childhood education and child care programs within different departments as well. For more information see:

http://dwss.nv.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=46&Itemid=76

<http://www.tennessee.gov/education/earlylearning/index.shtml>

Programs Together in One Department

Massachusetts

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts created a Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) in law in 2005. EEC combines all functions of the former Office of Child Care Services, which included all child care subsidy and quality initiatives and licensing for child care centers and family child care homes, with those of the Early Learning Services Division from the Department of Education (prekindergarten and parenting programs, preschool special education and early learning standards). The Department of Early Education and Care also administers the Head Start program in collaboration with the Massachusetts Head Start Association.

Local school districts may apply to the department for funding to be service providers for the state Universal Prekindergarten and Preschool Scholarship programs. About 96 percent of local school districts were prekindergarten service providers in 2008. The Department of Early Education and Care has its own budget.

For more information: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/>

Programs Together in an Office within a Department

Arkansas

A 1997 law established the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education within the Arkansas Department of Human Services. The purpose of the division is to enhance the coordination of child care and early childhood education programs within the state. The division is responsible for all regulatory, compliance, programmatic, and administrative aspects of early care and education in the state, including the following programs: Arkansas Better Chance (pre-K services for children with developmental and/or socioeconomic risk factors); Child Care Licensing and Accreditation; Family Support (subsidized care for low-income families); and Special Nutrition. The division also provides program development and outreach, including

enhancement and training grants for teachers, parent information and referrals, and an early literacy program.

The Arkansas Head Start Association and Head Start State Collaboration Project administer the Head Start program. Head Start programs are locally administered by nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and public school systems, with funding coming from the Department of Human Services through the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education.

For more information: <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/>

Maryland

The Division of Early Childhood Development in the Department of Education was created by law in 2005 and combines several programs from the former Early Learning Branch in the Department of Education, and the Office of Children, Youth, and Families in the Department of Human Resources (DHR). In 2006, by executive order, child care subsidy administration (Maryland's Purchase of Care (POC) program) was transferred into the Division of Early Childhood Development as well. The division is part of the budget item for the Department of Education.

Public school districts are the primary providers for the state public prekindergarten program, which is available to economically disadvantaged or homeless four-year-olds. School districts also participate in the delivery of the state-funded Judith P. Hoyer program, which establishes integrated early education centers at or near public schools located in Title I districts (districts that serve areas of high concentrations of children from low-income families) throughout the state.

The Head Start program is also administered by the Department of Education.

For more information: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/

Interagency

Delaware

In 2000, the Delaware Legislature authorized the establishment of the Delaware Early Care and Education Office (DECEO), an interagency office located in the Department of Education. The DECEO promotes an interagency approach to the delivery of early care and education services in Delaware. The Departments of Health and Social Services; Services for Children, Youth, and Families; and Education each fund a staff position to support the work of DECEO. The office is responsible for administration of the state's early learning guidelines, Early Success plan, teacher support programs, and Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP). DECEO administers both early childhood education and child care programs. The office is part of larger budget items for the Departments of Health and Social Services; Services for Children, Youth, and Families; and Education.

ECAP funds are allocated to private agencies, public schools, and Head Start agencies for delivery of early childhood education services. All school districts in the state offer ECAP services.

The Head Start program is administered by the Head Start Collaboration Office located in the Department of Education. Child care licensing is administered by the Office of Child Care Licensing in the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Families.

For more information:

http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/students_family/earlychildhood/earlycare.shtml

Georgia

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning was established by law in 2004. The department oversees all child care and education programs for children birth to five (including the Head Start Collaboration Office and the Even Start program), child care quality initiatives, child care regulation, and federal nutrition programs (Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program). The department has its own budget.

Public school districts serve as providers of the state prekindergarten program. School districts can also apply in collaboration with nonprofit agencies to receive state funding as providers of the Even Start Family Literacy Program through the Department of Early Care and Learning.

Child care subsidy and early intervention are administered in the Department of Human Resources and preschool special education is in the Department of Education. The Department of Early Care and Learning coordinates with Departments of Education and Human Resources to streamline and integrate services for children birth to five.

For more information: <http://dec.al.ga.gov>

Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning was established by executive order in 2006 and brings programs involved with early learning and child development, previously located in the Departments of Education and Public Welfare, together in one office. Programs include Head Start, prekindergarten programs, early intervention (Part C programs and preschool early intervention programs), child care, family support, and similar programs. This office functions as an office on the organization charts of both the Department of Education and the Department of Public Welfare. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning has its own budget as a collaborative office of the Departments of Education and Public Welfare.

For more information:

http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/cwp/view.asp?A=179&Q=124393

Council or Cabinet

Connecticut

Established in law in 2005, the Early Childhood Cabinet is charged with advising on school readiness issues, evaluating current school readiness programs, and assisting in developing budget scenarios for early childhood education programs. In 2007, that legislative mandate was expanded to include development of an Accountability Plan, a Quality Improvement Plan, a Preschool Facilities Plan, an Early Care and Education Workforce Plan, and a study of student progress from preschool through the third grade. The Early Childhood Cabinet is a public-private partnership that includes representatives from the Departments of Education, Children and Families, and Public Health. The Early Childhood Cabinet is part of the larger Department of Education budget item.

School readiness programs in Connecticut are locally administered by child care centers, Head Start agencies, and public schools. In participating communities, the school district superintendent and an elected official help to establish a local School Readiness Council to provide direction to these programs. In 2008, 38 percent of school districts offered the state's school readiness program.

The Head Start program is administered by the Head Start State Collaboration Office in the Department of Social Services. Individual Head Start programs are administered by local community action agencies, nonprofits, and education agencies. Connecticut's child care subsidy program is administered by the Department of Social Services. Child care licensing, as well as related technical assistance, monitoring, and enforcement is administered by the Department of Public Health.

In 2006, a separate entity, the Early Childhood Policy and Research Council, was created by executive order to make policy recommendations, develop collaborations with businesses, and oversee the state's Early Childhood Investment Plan. In 2009, the council recommended to the governor that the state streamline the governance structure for early childhood programs by creating a small Office of Early Childhood, or by moving all child development functions to the Department of Education.

For more information: http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/Content/Education_Cabinet.asp

Other States

Hawaii and New York also have councils responsible for administering programs for early childhood education and care. For more information see:

http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol05_Ch0261-0319/HRS0302L/HRS_0302L-0003.htm

<http://elc.k12.hi.us/index.htm>

<http://www.ccf.state.ny.us/Initiatives/EccsHome.htm>

For more information about early education and child care programs, visit the education area of our web site, www.house.mn/hrd/hrd.htm.