Meeting Objectives:
• Approve Meeting Minutes from December 19, 2019 Meeting
• Hear updates on the Early Childhood Council Waivers
• Vote on Waiver Extension Application
• Learn about the CDHS Statewide Waiver
• Review ECLC Bylaws and Subcommittee Charges
• Hear updates from the Governor’s Office
• Learn about Early Childhood Legislation
• Hear from the Early Childhood Community during Public Comment

Attendees:
Mary Anne Snyder, Susan Steele, Tom Massey, Jehan Benton-Clark, Amanda Pelletier, Kate Reinemund, Pamela Harris, Jeanne McQueeney, Sue Renner, Ida Rhodes, Jai Scott, Ryan Beiser, Jeff Kuhr (phone), Gerri Gomez Howard, Anne-Marie Braga, Tracy Miller, Melissa Colsman, Kristina Heyl

Welcome and Business Meeting
Tom Massey called the meeting to order at 9:35am. He welcomed the group and asked for introductions from the Commissioners and the audience of early childhood stakeholders. He welcomed the two new state agency members to the Commission: Tracy Miller from CDPHE and Anne-Marie Braga from CDHS. Tom also thanked everyone who joined the ECLC Annual Report Reception stating that it was great to have the Governor there talking about early childhood and also hear from state agency leadership about their priorities and ways to partner with the Commission this year.

Approval of December 19, 2019 Meeting Minutes
Tom Massey called for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2019 meeting. Ryan Beiser moved to approve the minutes as distributed, Jeanne McQueeney seconded the motion; the minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Overview of CDHS Statewide Waiver
Teresa Ribble discussed that on November 1, the Department began offering a statewide waiver to early childhood centers to address teacher shortages. The waiver includes allowing a Provisional-Early Childhood Teacher (P-ECT) classification for individuals who don’t yet meet full ECT qualifications but are in a classroom while obtaining a nationally-recognized CDA credential and becoming fully ECT qualified. Teresa clarified that the statewide waiver is not a rule change, but it is available to everyone as long as they meet certain requirements (accept CCCAP, Level 3-5, etc) and that they have less than 50% of the teachers within each age group participating in a P-ECT program.

Early Childhood Council Waivers
Waiver #18-02 Denver Early Childhood Council
Waiver #18-02 created an Accelerated Early Childhood Teacher Career Pathway Program, which has been in place for 18 months and expires on March 1, 2020. The waiver allows for a milestone based program in which participants would be ECT qualified after completing 480 hours of experience at a high quality facility, two ECE college courses, and passing an ECT Milestone Culmination Assessment. During the waiver
period, the center would be using reflective supervision and mentoring for the participants, in addition to external coaching from the DECC. In addition, DECC implemented a “No Wrong Door” career support model. During the course of the waiver, 14 participants completed the program.

**Waiver # 18-01 Early Childhood Council of Larimer County**

Waiver #18-01 (P-ECT) allows Child Care Centers and Preschools, which meet specific conditions, to be allowed to hire people into an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) position who have certain education or experiences but have not yet met all of the ECT qualifications and allows them a period of up to 12 months to complete all ECT requirements. During this time, the center(s) provide additional supports, such as increased observations and reflective supervision. The waiver was granted on 8/13/18 for a period of 18 months. During the course of the waiver, 4 centers were able to employ P-ECTs in order to support teachers to reach full ECT qualifications as well as children and families to have supportive child care environments including the re-opening of a classroom that had previously closed due to staffing shortages.

**Discuss #18-01 Waiver Extension Application**

The Waiver Review Subcommittee members wanted to express their gratitude with the ECCLC for pursuing this waiver and sharing the data and results they have collected as well as the lessons learned with the Commission and the Office of Early Childhood. The members agreed that while the number of participants was small, the waiver was successful in bringing people into the field and increasing the quality in the programs who utilized the P-ECT waiver. For programs operating at Levels 3-5, the members recommend that the waiver be extended for 2 years with the same specifications and requirements as the previous waiver and requested that updates be given to the Commission at 12 months and 24 months. This includes a maximum of 2 P-ECT per program, regardless of size of the center or program.

Tom Massey called for a motion to approve the #18-01 Waiver Extension Application. Ida Rhodes moved to approve the waiver application, Melissa Colsman seconded the motion; the waiver application was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Kristina Heyl noted that it is the 6 month review from Mesa County; the ECLC approved their waiver for a similar model to Larimer County’s 6 months ago, and they have provided a written update on the progress of their waiver. She asked the Commission to review the write up.

**Legislative Updates**

Bill Jaeger from Colorado Children’s Campaign shared the 2020 Legislation & Budget Items of Relevance to Early Childhood handout. He reviewed the legislation and budget items with the Commission. Bill stated that legislation around early childhood workforce is especially important for the Commission to be highlighting and discussing in the community.

**Updates from the Governor’s Office**

Scott Groginsky thanked the Commission for submitting a letter to the Colorado State Board of Education that recommends that the reporting system for state level Kindergarten Readiness data be revised to allow for analysis of children's school readiness by each of the six domains. He stated that the State Board is considering revising the reporting system at their next meeting in March. Scott also shared that the Governor’s Office working with partners is completing the prenatal-to-age three National Governors Association Grant, with supporting community conversations to help inform the Governor’s prenatal-to-age three policy agenda. Scott shared that universal preschool expansion is likely a proposed ballot initiative. The Governor’s Office will be reaching out to partners to be involved in planning for policy and implementation issues if the ballot measure is successful. He asks that the ECLC consider endorsing the universal preschool expansion initiative.
Lastly, Scott reminded the Commission that at the December ECLC meeting he reviewed the Governor’s Early Childhood Education Budget Priorities and asked the ECLC to consider endorsing the budget. Susan Steele called for a motion to endorse the Governor’s Early Childhood Budget. Jeanne McQueeney moved to endorse the Governor’s Early Childhood Education Budget Priorities, Pamela Harris seconded the motion; the budget priorities were approved for endorsement by unanimous voice vote with one abstention by Melissa Colsman.

Public Comment & Commissioner Updates
Kristina Heyl stated several groups reached out to ask about endorsement or supporting different initiatives or legislation or agendas. She shared that with the leadership and support of Governor Polis in this area, he is really encouraging the ECLC to be proactive and lead in some of these areas that relate to the ECLC’s mission and vision and priority areas. She proposes that the Commission develop a set of standards or a protocol in order to have a very clear and transparent process for when organizations want to seek endorsement or support for something, to have a consistent set of expectations and guidelines for the Commission. Kristina asked for Commissioner volunteers to be part of a small group to work on a procedure; Pamela Harries, Jehan Benton-Clark and Sue Renner volunteered.

Fair Family Medical Leave Act
Jacy Montoya Price discussed the connection between paid leave and early childhood including: that Paid family and medical leave bolsters child and maternal health, child development, and involved parenting; Paid leave is associated with reduced infant mortality; and each week of paid leave up to 12 weeks also reduces the odds of a new mother experiencing symptoms of postpartum depression. Jacy shared that the Raise Colorado Coalition is working on drafting legislation for paid family and medical leave that is equitable for all in Colorado. She informed the Commission of several resources to stay up to date on the Fair Family Medical Leave Act including the Denver Post, Colorado Independent and CPR News.

Legislative Priorities for Food Security
Joel McClug shared that Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger has been working to fill gaps in resources and networks that can help to end hunger in our state. Joel reviewed Blueprint to End Hunger’s’ policy agenda that included increased funding for WIC and SNAP programs. He asked that the Commission consider endorsing the policy agenda.

Our Voice Newsletter Update
Kristina Heyl announced that the ECLC is in the process of taking over ownership of the Our Voice Newsletter from the Early Childhood Colorado Partnership.

Kristina Heyl received a letter in opposition to HB 1006, which is the bill around increasing access to early childhood mental health consultants and supports for teachers from Mary Russell, who runs a program in Ridgway CO. She talked with her and let her know that the Commission is not taking positions on legislation at this time but will share the email with the Commission.

Christina Walker shared that Raise Colorado is working with Governor Polis’ Office, the Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Leadership Commission to support listening sessions across Colorado focused on prenatal, infant and toddler issues, including health access and affordability, family economic security, early care and development, food access and nutrition, and social connections and relationships. The format and approach for the Prenatal-to-Age three listening sessions are very similar to the Senate Bill 63 Discussions, with a toolkit and mini-grants available to support local efforts. The toolkit and mini-grant application will be available on February 28 and the Listening Sessions must be held in March 2020.

Katie Facchinello shared that April is Child Abuse Prevention month and announced Illuminate Colorado’s Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign for more information visit [illuminatcolorado.org/pinwheels](illuminatcolorado.org/pinwheels).
ECLC Annual Review of Bylaws and Subcommittee Charges
Susan shared that there is one suggested change to the ECLC Bylaws at this time to allow for non-commission members to be co-chairs of the Subcommittees. The members asked that non-commission members be appointed as Subcommittee co-chairs by approval by the full Commission.

Susan Steele called for a motion to approve the proposed change to the ECLC Bylaws. Sue Renner moved to approve the proposed change to the Bylaws, Jehan Benton-Clark seconded the motion; the Bylaws were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Kristina Heyl reminded the Commission that at the ECLC Retreat, information about the ECLC organization and committee structure as well as the charges for each of the subcommittees was shared. ECLC Staff has worked with the Subcommittees to draft some updates to the subcommittee charges. At the Retreat, the Commission also discussed whether this structure is the right structure for the ECLC and considered a few additional changes, such as whether to develop an advocacy or legislative subcommittee and whether to elevate the ECPD Advisory Working Group to a full Subcommittee or not. The group discussed the considerations and changes to the organization structure. The Commission will vote on the considerations for the organization structure at the April 23rd ECLC meeting.

Department Updates

Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)
Tom Massey shared updates at the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. The current uninsured rate for kids in Colorado is less than 3%. HCPF is working to ensure that number does not increase and that kids remain covered and connected to care. Tom discussed an area for future work with partners is around the factors that impact overall health; these factors sometimes have nothing to do with “insurance” and are known as social determinants of health. Examples include access to healthy food, clean water and housing. Tom stated that Colorado was selected to participate in a national initiative called “Aligning Early Childhood and Medicaid”. HCPF is partnering with CDHS on this project to enhance alignment across Medicaid and state agencies responsible for early childhood programs with the goal of improving the health and social outcomes of low-income infants, young children, and families.

Colorado Department of Human Service (CDHS)
Anne-Marie Braga discussed her role at the Department of Human Services as the Deputy Executive Director of Community Partnerships. She stated that as part of her work she is working to break down silos within the Department between offices. One way she is doing this is by mapping the programs within the Office of Early Childhood and Children Youth and Families that interact.

Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Updates
Mary Anne Snyder announced that the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan developed as part of the year one Preschool Development Grant (PDG) B-5 are now live. Both documents can be accessed on the PDG page on the Office of Early Childhood website. As part of disseminating the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan the OEC has been visiting communities across Colorado this February to gather with local early childhood stakeholders and discuss the findings. OEC leadership and PDG team members visited Pueblo, Grand Junction and Fort Collins, and also participated on a webinar.

Colorado Department of Higher Education
No updates at this time

Colorado Department of Education (CDE)
Melissa Colsman discussed updates on early childhood efforts at the Department of Education. She stated that CDE is working with CDHS and Governor’s Office to reiterate program based licensing options for school district based programs. CDE is partnering with National P3 Center to conduct focus groups with community
providers on Kindergarten transitions as well as Kindergarten readiness. Melissa shared that CDE is conducting their annual preschool state meeting next week and are starting to plan around the possible expansion of CPP through legislation. CDE is bringing the final packet of READ act rules to State Board of Education; Melissa noted that there were many changes to the Act around teacher training. She stated that there will be a public information campaign around the changes to the READ Act and that CDE will have the results from the final phases of developing the information campaign soon. Melissa will bring findings to next ECLC meeting.

**Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)**

Tracy Miller discussed CDPHE’s Maternal Child Health Framework. She shared the seven priorities for 2021-2025 including: increased prosocial connection, create safe & connected built environments, improve access to supports, increase social emotional well-being, promote positive child and youth development, increase economic mobility and reduce racial inequities. Tracy reviewed the next steps and timeline for the framework with the state implementation date in October 2020 and the local implementation date starting in October 2021.

**Co-Chairs’ Final Thoughts and Adjourn**

Kristina Heyl mentioned that every other meeting the agenda items are switching between department updates or subcommittee updates; the update not shared during the meeting will be a written update. She asked the Commission members to review the written subcommittee updates in their packets.

Susan Steele appreciated the great ideas and conversation today; she thanked all for joining and those who presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29pm. The next meeting on April 23, 2020 will be at a new location at the Colorado Health Foundation (1780 Pennsylvania Street, Room 124; Denver, CO).

*Note: Any presentation requested by the ECLC does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the product, process, service, or organization by the ECLC.*

For information about future meeting dates, times and locations, visit [www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org).