States vary in the number of major agencies that administer early childhood programs:

- 1 State agency
- 2 State agencies
- 3 State agencies
- 4 State agencies
- 5 State agencies

Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Grantee States

March 2015
About this document

This document includes information about early learning governance structures in the 20 Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) States. This information is drawn primarily from a resource compiled by the Child Care State Systems Specialist Network, a service of the Office of Child Care in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, entitled “Early Care and Education: State/Territory Governance Structures”, as well as from public documents and websites hosted by the grantee States and from additional technical assistance organizations and websites hosted by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The specific names of State departments, agencies, and offices, as well as the relationships among them, are based on these public websites and documents.

State-level governance structures have the authority and responsibility to set policy; make program decisions; regulate, budget, and allocate funds; and collect and interpret data. The governance of early childhood programs is complex. Programs focused on young children are often located in different agencies and departments, and how the structures of those agencies relate to each other varies considerably from State to State. Each State’s governance structure has its unique advantages and disadvantages in terms of focus, funding, communication and coordination, influence on decision makers, and data sharing.¹ There are four basic types of governance structures for early care and education programs and functions:

- Programs and functions are located in multiple agencies with no formal coordination or collaboration.
- Programs and functions are consolidated in an independent State agency focused only on early education and care (e.g., Georgia, Massachusetts, and Washington).
- Programs and functions are consolidated in a State agency that has broader responsibilities beyond early education, typically the State Education Agency (e.g., Maryland).
- Programs and functions are located in multiple agencies but are under the purview of a coordinating office. This management structure crosses State agencies to create unified policy and implementation (e.g., Pennsylvania).

In this document, the following guidelines were used to represent relationships among governance structures within each State. However, the structure in one State may not be directly comparable to that in another State. The representation is not meant to show relative hierarchy of agencies across States, but rather the placement of programs within specific agencies.

- Building symbols reflect “agencies.” This may represent a stand-alone department within the State or a department that is part of a larger Executive Office or Secretariat. Generally, an “agency” is defined as having most or all of the following factors: a clearly identified distinctive mission, named leader, public “branding” or logo, distinct website, and legislative basis or designation. States may have other offices or entities that coordinate early childhood efforts, but they do not have most of these factors.

- The “ground” symbols underneath the buildings reflect structures that coordinate or oversee departments or major agencies shown as buildings—such as Executive Offices with coordination oversight of multiple departments or departments coordinating multiple major divisions. However, in most cases the coordinating agencies do not directly administer the programs shown on the floors of the building.

- The floors within buildings represent the following major Federal and State early childhood programs (whose names may vary across States): the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge grant (RTT-ELC); Preschool Development grants (Preschool Development); the Child Care and Development Fund subsidies (CCDF Subsidy); child care licensing and regulation (Licensing); Head Start State Collaboration Office, representing the federally-funded Head Start and Early Head Start programs that are administered primarily at the local level (Head Start State Collab Office); a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS); State-funded Prekindergarten or Preschool programs (Pre-K); a State Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC); Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 619 (IDEA Section 619); Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C (IDEA Part C); and Home Visiting, typically the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (Home Visiting).

As States continue the important and complex work of early learning system building for early childhood programs, early learning governance structures in many RTT-ELC states are in transition. Some States, such as Minnesota, have coordinating offices that are not represented in this document because they are still in the process of developing the key characteristics used in the definitions above.

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Early Learning Governance in Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge States

Key early childhood programs are grouped differently across major agencies in each state.

1 Delaware: The Office of Early Learning is a new, separate entity that coordinates the implementation of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant projects.
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**Kentucky**: The Kentucky Department of Community Based Services (DCBS) is responsible for all licensing rules and policy. DCBS subcontracts licensing inspections to the Office of Inspector General, which is located within DCBS.
Key early childhood programs are grouped differently across major agencies in each state.

3 **Michigan**: The TQRIS is implemented by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. The Michigan Department of Education is the lead agency.

4 **Michigan**: Executive Order No. 2015-4, which takes effect April 10, 2015, creates the Department of Health and Human Services. The Department of Human Services and Department of Community Health are abolished, and their responsibilities are transferred to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Early Learning Governance in Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge States

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**MINNESOTA**
- RTT-ELC
- Department of Education
  - Pre-K
  - ELAC
  - IDEA Section 619
  - IDEA Part C
- Department of Health
  - Home Visiting
- Department of Human Services
  - CCDF Subsidy
  - Licensing
  - TQRIS

**NEW JERSEY**
- RTT-ELC
  - Preschool Development
- Department of Education
  - Pre-K
  - ELAC
  - IDEA Section 619
- Department of Human Services
  - CCDF Subsidy
  - TQRIS
- Department of Children and Families
  - Licensing
  - IDEA Part C
  - Home Visiting
- Department of Health

**NEW MEXICO**
- RTT-ELC
- Department of Education
  - IDEA Section 619
  - IDEA Part C
- Department of Health
- Office of Child Development
  - CCDF Subsidy
  - Licensing
  - TQRIS
  - Head Start State Collab Office
  - Pre-K
  - ELAC
  - Home Visiting
  - Children, Youth and Families Department

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Oregon: The Oregon Department of Human Services administers the subsidy program, and the Department of Employment oversees the subsidy policy.
Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning is jointly administered by the Department of Education and Department of Human Services.

Rhode Island: The Executive Office of Health and Human Services oversees and coordinates the work of the Departments of Health and of Human Services, and also coordinates IDEA Part C program implementation.

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7 Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning is jointly administered by the Department of Education and Department of Human Services.

8 Rhode Island: The Executive Office of Health and Human Services oversees and coordinates the work of the Departments of Health and of Human Services, and also coordinates IDEA Part C program implementation.
Wisconsin: The ELAC is jointly administered by co-chairs in the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Children and Families.
References and Acknowledgments

This document was based on the following resources:


The following national resources were also used for this document, in addition to States’ own public websites and documents:


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