

2023

State Tribal Collaboration Act Annual Report



NEW MEXICO

Early Childhood

Education & Care Department

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Agency Overview

Vision:

All New Mexican families and young children are thriving.

Mission:

Optimize the health, development, education, and well-being of babies, toddlers, and preschoolers through a family driven, equitable, community-based system of high quality prenatal and early childhood programs and services.

Core Values:

- **Family Driven** - We recognize and value all types of family structures and strive to design, develop, and implement multilingual and multicultural programs that are informed and led by families, and meet their unique and diverse needs.
- **Organizational Excellence** - We act with a sense of urgency and hold ourselves and each other accountable to providing high-quality, equitable programs, and services. We are transparent in our actions and focus on delivering excellent customer service and getting the details of our core work right.
- **Integrity** - We value the trust and respect of our community and coworkers, and we work diligently to support and inspire each other. We commit to being consistent and to use data to make decisions and to improve our systems and processes.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration** - We value diversity in many forms and believe that it strengthens our team and our work. Guided

by mutual trust, compassion, and respect, we will operate with a generosity of spirit and inspire, challenge, and support each other to be our best.

- **Partnership** - We value relationships and work intentionally to build strong communities and deepen connections for families; always valuing and promoting the rich culture, language, and geographic diversity of New Mexico.

Our Commitment

Our commitment to New Mexicans is to create a cohesive, equitable, and responsive prenatal to five early childhood system that supports families, strengthens communities, and enhances child health, development, education, and wellbeing.



2022-2023 Tribal Goals and Objectives

In March 2023, ECECD updated Goal three of our five year Strategic Plan, **FLORECER**.

ECECD Strategic Plan Goal 3

ECECD will expand and deepen government-to-government relationships and agreements with all Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations with a focus on consultation, culture, language, data sharing, and facility improvements to improve outcomes for Native American families and young children.

Objective 3.1 An active and engaged ECECD Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition works with ECECD to support desired outcomes of each Tribal community.

3.1.1 Establish the Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition, with each Tribal community represented, to provide policy, budget, legislative, and advocacy recommendations to ECECD.

3.1.2 Develop and implement the Early Childhood Tribal Advisory work plan with action timeline.

3.1.3 Ground the Tribal Advisory Coalition through meetings in Tribal communities.

3.1.4 Bring together Tribal Advisory Council with other ECECD advisory groups to ensure mutual communication.

Objective 3.2 Tribal communities are supported by ECECD to address early childhood facilities needs.

3.2.1 Ensure resources are available for facilities assessments by Tribal communities.

3.2.2 Pursue investment in facility renovation and expansion resources.

3.2.3 Establish and implement guidelines for distribution and use of funding and procurement methods with mutual agreement between ECECD and Tribal leadership.

Objective 3.3 The Tribal investment strategy grows to support the defined outcomes of Tribal communities.

3.3.1 Continue implementing intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) between ECECD and Tribal communities.

3.3.2 Conduct ongoing, individual, and meaningful consultation with each Tribal community to identify and support the vision of each Tribal community for its prenatal-to-age-five services and programs.

3.3.3 Document implementation and progress through a reporting system.

3.3.4 Support Tribal communities to research and apply for grants and other funding opportunities.

Objective 3.4 Tribal communities are supported in the development of a culturally and linguistically relevant early childhood workforce.

3.4.1 ECECD engages with the Higher Education Department as it establishes technical assistance centers (TAC) to serve Tribal communities inclusive of early childhood.

3.4.2 ECECD supports the technical assistance centers as they implement early childhood culturally and linguistically relevant instructional materials; career pathways for Tribal educators; professional development in culturally and linguistically relevant pedagogy; and capacity building for early childhood policy development and implementation.

2022-2023 Tribal Goals and Objectives

Objective 3.5 Tribal communities and ECECD collaboration is supported.

3.5.1 ECECD designates 11 Tribal liaisons representing each program administered by the department.

3.5.2 Make infant and early childhood mental health consultants available in Tribal communities

3.5.3 Ensure the Professional Development Information System (PDIS) is accessible to Tribal early childhood professionals

3.5.5 Share information that is relevant to Tribal communities through dedicated webpages.



Strategic Plan Impact *and* Pillars

By 2027, ECECD aims to impact families, children, communities, and early childhood professionals through our ambitious goals.

- 5,000 additional children enrolled in high-quality NM PreK
- 20,000 more families receive affordable high-quality early care and education
- 33 counties in New Mexico supported by an active and engaged local early childhood coalition
- 5 regional equity councils are established
- 23 Tribes, Pueblos and Nations have improved early childhood facilities supported by a dedicated funding source and technical assistance
- 80 percent of families and babies with Plans of Care will be supported
- 2,000 additional infants and toddlers will have access to high-quality, inclusive child care
- 500 indigenous early childhood educators are supported in achieving higher credentials
- 5,000 additional families engage in evidence-based home visiting

As we move forward over the next five years, these four pillars will guide and help focus the work of the Department.



Pillar 1 **Equity**

Develop and implement internal and external policies, procedures, and programs that reflect the diverse needs of staff, facilities, and the families and young children we serve.



Pillar 3 **Early Childhood Program Supports**

Improve the quality of early childhood programs through the development and implementation of capacity building programs that support continuous improvement.



Pillar 2 **Partner Engagement**

Engage partners, families, and the communities we serve throughout the policymaking and implementation process in meaningful ways that allow for authentic and actionable feedback.



Pillar 4 **Systems of Accountability**

Meaningful and transparent data is shared with stakeholders regularly, through the development and improvement of data collection and reporting mechanisms.

Statewide Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition



Tribal Advisory Coalition (TAC) at the Inn of the Mountain Gods, Mescalero Apache Reservation.

Statewide Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition

In FY23, ECECD, in partnership with the 23 Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations of our state, founded the Statewide Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition to create a **channel for regular communication and engagement with New Mexico's tribal communities**. The coalition highlights the distinct and unique American Indian cultures and languages across the state. The coalition will be formed of 30 members, including at least one representative from each of the 23 Tribes, Nations, and Pueblos in New Mexico. In its first year, the coalition has developed its mission and vision, developed policy priorities to share with ECECD and their home communities, and developed work plans on how ECECD can implement the coalition's policy priorities moving forward.

The coalition works towards five major goals:

1. Identify the strengths and gaps of early childhood education and care in each community
2. Learn from each other across tribal communities in order to develop culturally relevant and appropriate assessments, evaluations and innovative family engagement models
3. Develop best practices of collaboration in governance and financing structures
4. Communicate regularly with ECECD and make broad recommendations about tribal early childhood education and care needs
5. Strengthen ECECD's commitment to equity and quality early childhood education and care for all

Statewide Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition

Timeline

» **May 25, 2022:** Tribal Advisory Coalition Virtual Kick Off meeting

» **July 15, 2022:** First In person meeting

As a group, the coalition established our top policy priorities in Early Childhood Education: Language and Culture, Health and Safety, Wages, and Early Intervention.

» **September 16, 2022:** Virtual meeting

Worked closely with the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) analyst to pinpoint alignment between Coalition priorities and Tribal leader priorities, attended LESC interim committee meeting and relayed new information to coalition members, and began work on facility improvement policy options.

» **November 18, 2022:** In-person meeting

Presented work on facilities improvement policies for feedback from coalition. As a group, worked to align our policy priorities with the new ECECD Five-year Strategic plan (Florecer).

» **February 10, 2023:** In-Person Meeting, New Mexico History Museum, Santa Fe

At the coalition's first meeting under Assistant Secretary Sneddy, members worked together to establish a mission statement, vision, and goals for the Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition. ECECD presented to the coalition about the Early Childhood Governance and Finance Project, and worked in small breakout groups to identify how we can develop the Tribal Advisory Coalition to meet the needs of our Tribal communities.

» **April 14, 2023:** In Person Meeting, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Albuquerque

ECECD presented the synthesis of data from the visioning and goals exercise to coalition to solicit feedback and suggestion in pursuit of finalizing them for publication. The coalition worked in small groups to create work plans to identify actionable items that align with our goals for the coalition and ECECD's strategic plan. ECECD Policy analyst Mark Hume presented on the legislative process and timeline to coalition in preparation for the 2024 legislative cycle.

» **June 8 - 9, 2023:** Two Day retreat, Inn of the Mountain Gods, Mescalero Apache Reservation

The coalition's June two-day retreat focused on finishing the policy recommendations and work plans to inform leadership at ECECD about tribal policy priorities begun at the April 2023 meeting. ECECD's Special Projects Coordinator attended the June 2023 work session and developed two areas in the advisory coalition's policy recommendations that overlap with ECECD's funding priorities, domestic violence, and intimate partner violence. Additionally, coalition members were able to attend a public Tribal ceremony and dance hosted in the Mescalero Apache community. This allowed our coalition members to learn about Mescalero's culture and community firsthand.

Statewide Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition

As of June 2023, the advisory coalition has 23 members (including alternates) and ECECD is continuing to work to get representation from remaining tribal communities in New Mexico. Currently the Advisory Coalition has representation from the following tribal communities and programs:

- *Acoma Pueblo*
- *Mescalero Apache Nation*
- *Isleta Pueblo*
- *Navajo Nation*
- *Ohkay Owingeh*
- *Pojoaque Pueblo*
- *Sandia Pueblo*
- *Santa Ana Pueblo*
- *Santa Clara Pueblo*
- *Santo Domingo (Kewa) Pueblo*
- *San Ildefonso Pueblo*
- *Zuni Pueblo*
- *Saad K'idilye Dine Language Nest Program*
- *Education for Parents of Indian Children (EPICS)*
- *NM School for the Deaf*
- *NM School for the Blind and Visually Impaired*

Two Day Retreat Photos



Communication and Collaboration 2023

Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care

The Early Childhood Education and Care Department Act of 2019 mandated the appointment of an Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care, making this department a first in the nation to have a dedicated position to strengthen government-to-government relationships related to prenatal to age five programs and services NMSA 1978, § 9-29-3(B).

Key Duties of the Assistant Secretary

- Provide administration, coordination, and oversight of Indian early childhood education.
- Collaborate with state and federal partners and agencies, Tribal government, eligible providers and community partners.
- Consult with Nations, Tribes, and Pueblos for delivery of learning guidelines in language, culture, and history designed for Tribal & non-Tribal students.
- Assist school districts and educational agencies to expand appropriate Indian education programs for infants, toddlers, children, youth, and families pursuant to Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).
- Seek funding to establish and strengthen programs related to infants, toddlers, children, youth, and families.
- Ensure that language and cultural considerations are included in programs administered through the department.

Communication Policy

In June 2023, ECECD finalized its Tribal communication and collaboration policies as required by the 2009 State-Tribal Collaboration

Act. Through this Policy, the Agency will seek to improve and/or maintain partnerships with Tribes. The purpose of the Policy is to use or build upon previously agreed-upon processes when the Agency develops, changes or implements policies, programs, or services that impact Tribal sovereignty, self-government or the well-being of children zero-to-five from New Mexico's 23 Tribes, Pueblos, Nations, and Urban Indian population.

These policies are built upon the following principles of communication and collaboration between state and Tribal governments:

- A. Recognize and Respect Sovereignty** *The State and Tribes are sovereign governments. The recognition and respect of sovereignty is the basis for government-to-government relations and this Policy. Sovereignty must be respected and recognized in government-to-government consultation and collaboration between the Agency and Tribes. The Agency recognizes and acknowledges the trust responsibility of the Federal Government to federally-recognized Tribes.*
- B. Government-to-Government Relations** *The Agency recognizes the importance of collaboration, communication and cooperation with Tribes. The Agency further recognizes that its policies, programs and/or services may have Tribal implications or otherwise affect American Indians/Alaska Natives. Accordingly, the Agency recognizes the value of dialogue between Tribes and the Department with specific regard to those policies, programs and/or services.*
- C. Efficiently Addressing Tribal Issues and Concerns** *The Agency recognizes the value of Tribes' input regarding the Department's policies,*

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programs and/or services. Thus, it is important that Tribes' interests are reviewed and considered by the Agency in its policy, program and/or service development process.

D. Collaboration and Mutual Resolution

The Agency recognizes that good faith, mutual respect, and trust are fundamental to meaningful collaboration and communication policies. As they arise, the Agency shall strive to address and mutually resolve concerns with impacted Tribes.

E. Communication and Positive Relations

The Agency shall strive to promote positive government-to-government relations with Tribes by: (1) interacting with Tribes in a spirit of mutual respect; (2) seeking to understand the varying Tribes' perspectives; (3) facilitating communication, understanding and appropriate dispute resolution with Tribes; and (4) working through the government-to-government process towards a shared vision in areas of mutual interest.

F. Informal Communication

The Agency recognizes that formal consultation may not be required in all situations or interactions. The Agency may seek to communicate with and/or respond to Tribes outside the consultation process. These communications do not negate the authority of the Agency and Tribes to pursue formal consultation.

G. Educational Access

Providing access to education is an essential public responsibility and is crucial for improving the educational status of all New Mexicans, including American Indians/Alaska Natives in rural and urban areas.

H. Distinctive Needs of American Indians/Alaska Natives

The Agency will strive to ensure with Tribes the accountability of resources, including a fair and equitable allocation of resources to address these educational disparities. The Agency recognizes that a community-based and culturally appropriate approach to the educational well-being of students is essential to maintain and preserve American Indian/Alaska Native cultures.

I. Establishing Partnerships

In order to maximize the use of limited resources in areas of mutual interests and/or concerns, the Agency will seek partnerships with Tribes and other interested entities, including academic institutions and Indian organizations. The Agency encourages Tribes to advocate for local, state and federal funding for tribal programs and services to benefit all of the state's American Indians/Alaska Natives.

J. Intergovernmental Coordination and Collaboration

The Agency recognizes that the State and Tribes may have issues of mutual concern where it would be beneficial to coordinate with and involve federal agencies that provide services and funding to the Agency and Tribes.

K. Cultural and Linguistic Competence

The Agency shall endeavor to ensure for its policies, programs, and services, as well as the projects and activities it funds, to be culturally relevant and developed and implemented with cultural and linguistic competence.

ECECD's communication and collaboration policies defines the roles of Tribal liaisons within the Agency, how ECECD will work with Tribal advisory bodies to ascertain policy recommendations, the role of Agency-Tribal collaborative work groups, how to handle

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formal and informal communication with Tribal communities, governments and organizations. The policies also outline how the Agency will work effectively in cross-cultural environments and how it will provide culturally and linguistic training and guidance to ECECD staff. The policies also outline the process of Tribal consultation between ECECD and Tribal governments.

Biweekly Calls

Tribal Biweekly calls are conducted to provide agency updates, share information on early education and care initiatives, inform Tribal education leaders about what is happening at a national and local level, and give opportunity for authentic dialogue between the state and tribes. Participation averages between 40-50 Tribal early childhood representatives and experts from across the Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations.

FY23 Call Topics

- FY24 Budget & Strategic Plan Preschool Development Grant
- Moments Together
- Child Care Development Fund
- Statewide Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition
- Introduction of Tribal Liaisons in ECECD
- Early Childhood Day at the Legislature

- School House Connections
- Fathers New Mexico
- Project ECHO
- New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI)
- New Mexico School for the Deaf (NMSD)
- Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Council (ECEC)
- Save the Children
- Hantavirus
- Parents Reaching Out

Policy Analyst position

ECECD and The Pritzker Foundation have invested in New Mexico to build upon the prenatal to age three (PN-3) work of ECECD focusing on supporting the physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development beginning prenatally, to build a strong foundation for success in school and in life. As a part of PCI's investment's – funding has been granted to develop strong PN-3 policies, practices and process that support the 23 Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations as it relates to the State Tribal Collaboration Act Policies. The position of a Native American Policy Analyst was created through this partnership and is in collaboration with the University of New Mexico's Native American Budget and Policy Institute (NABPI).

2023 House Bill 148 (HB 148) - This bill amends the duties of the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) by requiring ECECD to enter into **Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)** with Indian Nations, Tribes, Pueblos, or Tribal organizations to plan, conduct, administer, and reimburse early childhood education and care programs. Although ECECD standardized the practice of entering into IGAs with tribal communities since 2021 under its Tribal Investment Strategy funding stream, HB 148 continues that future executive administrations are required to honor IGAs made with Tribal communities. **HB 148 provides a stable foundation for collaboration between the State of New Mexico and Tribal communities so early childhood education and child care continue to expand and flourish.**

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Impacts of the Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA)

Zuni Pueblo

- Staff trained in (Making It Work) curriculum development to create a framework for Head Start Early Learning outcomes by retaining local language
- Four staff applied the Child Development Associate (CDA) level

Sandia Pueblo*

- Established ability to directly contract with private Occupational Therapist (OT) and Speech–language Pathologist (SLP). This allowed us to not only help the children who would have qualified for Individualized Education Program’s (IEP), but also the children that have a need but don’t quite have an eligibility to qualify for an IEP
- During 2023, 14 out of the 41 students at the Pueblo of Sandia Child Development Center received services throughout the summer

Jemez Pueblo

- Provided Experiential Outdoor Learning Space serves 200-300 children
- Outcomes include the ability and ease to offer outdoor cultural and language opportunities that our children require to learn and thrive.

Taos Pueblo

- Hired a Coordinator to assist our Resiliency Team with basic organizational and planning efforts
- Started a Taos Pueblo Play Group for early childhood students. This is open to all families 0-5

Mescalero Apache Tribe*

- Served 21 children by providing consistent, culturally-relevant developmental support. Eight received Physical Therapy (PT) and 16

received SLP therapy

- Program Investment in technology for therapy equipment

Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo

- Host the annual Child Find conference
- Recruitment and Retention stipends for staff
- Recruit and retain one new Teacher Assistant and hire a Head Start Director

Pojoaque Pueblo

- Retention stipends to all staff who serve 35 children.

Isleta Pueblo*

- Serves 38 staff and 82 children and families
- Staff trained in Conscious Discipline
- Collaborated with Native American Fathers association to start a curriculum for fathers in the community, and aided in retaining staff.

Zia Pueblo

- 54 children served
- Retention of staff
- Increased Professional Development;
- Increased School readiness by providing family engagement and take-home educational kits for three months to five years of age.

Jicarilla Apache Nation

- Completed facility assessment to be included in the FY25 Infrastructure Capitol Improvement Plan (ICIP) application.

Santa Clara Pueblo

- Support Staff retention for 15 staff members that support 18 children and 18 families.

* denotes a multi-year agreement

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Zia Pueblo

- Growing in Beauty: Growing in Beauty has been providing Early Intervention services to children in multiple counties in the Northwest region of our state for over 20 years. They are experts in the work of integrating ways of knowing and child rearing that are important to Diné people with the principles of Early Intervention under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- In Fiscal Year 2023, Growing in Beauty served 127 children, most of whom resided in McKinley and San Juan Counties.

Ramah Navajo Chapter - School District at Pine Hill

- The Pine Hill Early Childhood Program has been providing Early Intervention services to the families and children of Ramah Navajo School District for many years. They are experts on their beautiful and resilient community and have worked to ensure that every family is aware and can access their full array of early childhood services.
- In Fiscal Year 2023 they served 17 children in Cibola County

The Amaranth Sowing Seeds Curriculum Project

- Established free workshops for any New Mexico Tribal community
- Can be leveraged to support learning in the home as well as in pre-schools and Kindergartens in which Early Learners may be enrolled

Tribal Consultations:

- Acoma Pueblo (*NM CCDF Tribal Collaboration Meeting & Head Start Graduation*)
- Indian Pueblo Cultural Center - *Corn Maiden Early Learning Center in Albuquerque*
- Mescalero Apache Tribe
- Navajo Nation – Window Rock, AZ
- Navajo Nation School Taskforce Safety (*Shiprock, NM June 29, 2023*)
- Navajo Tech University (*Crownpoint, NM*)
- New Mexico School for the Blind & Visually Impaired
- New Mexico School for the Deaf
- Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo
- Pojoaque Pueblo
- Taos Pueblo

Cross Agency 2023 Legislative Debrief

ECECD partnered with the Public Education Department (PED) and the Higher Education Department (HED) to produce a comprehensive policy brief on cradle-to-career Indian Education legislative wins during the 2023 session for the Spring Government-to-Government meeting

Communication *and* Collaboration 2023

STCA Training *and* Certification

ECECD values diversity, equity and inclusion. Pursuant to the State-Tribal Collaboration Act, approximately 90% (219) of all ECECD employees have completed the Building Cultural Equity with Native Nations training in FY23. This training is provided by the state personnel office with assistance from the Indian Affairs Department. The training supports:

- The promotion of effective communication and collaboration between state agencies and Indian Nations, Tribes, and Pueblos;
- The development of positive state-Tribal government-to-government relations; and
- Cultural competency in providing effective services to American Indians or Alaska Natives.

ECECD has prioritized the practice of including a land acknowledgement before meetings and formal presentations to honor, recognize, and respect Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land.

As part of our five-year strategic plan, ECECD created the position of **Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Specialist**, which has now been filled. This is a transformative role committed to advancing equity so that all children and families, regardless of their background, have the same opportunity to live happy and healthy lives. This position will work collaboratively with the Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Childhood Education and Care to:

- Design, develop, manage, and implement innovative programs using diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) best practices in support of ECECD's strategic plan; ensuring

policies, procedures, program design, and other ECECD functions are evaluated using an equity perspective as part of the decision-making process;

- Coordinate with ECECD divisions and external stakeholders;
- Oversee equity related outreach activities and public meetings;
- Manage selected equity projects including community engagement and co-creation activities, research, and reporting;
- Coordinate with other departments and external stakeholders to ensure timely and effective completion of project work as well as to establish trust and to build and strengthen partnerships.

July 2023 – June 2024

Under a new Professional Services Contract for FY24, CEP will work in partnership with NM ECECD to:

- Design the Council and orient council members to their roles
- Develop the guiding team for the council with roles (convener, facilitator, content expert, lived experience(s))
- Review and adopt the mission, vision, guiding principles, and agreements
- Develop a feedback loop from key stakeholders in the council
- Establish meeting cadence and group norms
- Identify and prioritize tests of change connected to the ECECD 2021-24 Strategic Plan and Needs Assessment
- Review and understand ECECD process maps
- Understand how the ECECED system is navigated through the lens of the user to identify inequities in service delivery

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- Review and work with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) consultant who will conduct the analysis
- Identify gaps and system barriers to promote opportunities to reduce/eradicate these challenges
- Identify key outcomes and strategies to address barriers connected to family experiences , within the system prioritized by the council (i.e., Childcare home and center providers, Home Visiting)
- Consider what adjustments should be made within the ECECD system connected to processes, practices, and policies as learning happens from implementing community-centered solutions
- Identify priorities to focus ECECD statewide equity efforts.

Method **ECECD Staff are Notified of STCA**

Since July 1, 2020, the Cabinet Secretary has established meaningful ways of communication with staff. This includes quarterly all-staff hybrid meetings. These all-staff meetings provide opportunity to inform staff about

Tribal collaboration in pursuant of STCA and investments made to support Tribal priorities.

As we enter FY24, ECECD will continue to improve on methods to inform ECECD staff on STCA and will work with the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department to ensure the agency is in compliance with training to better serve the Tribes of New Mexico.

Cultural Competency Presentation to ECECD Staff

In October 2022, policy analyst Mark Hume presented on the STCA to ECECD Staff at the all-staff meeting. This presentation focused on providing background and context on the STCA and state-Tribal interaction to ECECD staff. The presentation provided an overview and history of state-Tribal collaboration, culminating in the codification of the act in 2009, and the application of the act within ECECD. Additionally, the presentation focused on how to improve cross-cultural interaction between ECECD staff and Tribal leadership, staff and communities.



Communication and Collaboration 2023

Current and Planned Program and Services

Early Care, Education, and Nutrition Division (ECECN) - Child Care Services

(ages 6 weeks - 13/18 years)

Child Care Services ensure equal access to high-quality, healthy, safe, and supportive child care environments, providing services to children between the ages of 6 weeks to 13 years of age or up to 18 years of age if special supervision is required. Families can apply for child care assistance online through the Am I Eligible survey and search for a child care provider in their area through the [New Mexico Child Care Finder](#) online portal.

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham continues to support family-focused initiatives which includes eliminating costs for child care for most New Mexico families. This dramatic

expansion of cost-free services builds on the administration’s prior work to provide affordable child care to more New Mexico families. The centerpiece of this continued effort is the expansion of child care to qualifying families earning up to **400 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) – \$120,000 a year for a family of four.**

In May 2023, ECECD proposed changes to its Child Care Assistance (CCA) program regulations. The changes adopted, effective August 1, 2023, are outlined below:

- Maintain income eligibility for CCA to 400 percent Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Increase monthly per-child reimbursement rates
- Require a three-month notice if the department decides to reinstate CCA copays
- Establish a more equitable copay schedule in regulations

Children Served by Child Care Assistance (CCA) in Child Care

County	Licensed Centers	Licensed Homes	Registered Homes	Children served by CCA in Licensed Centers	Children served by CCA in Licensed Homes	Children served by CCA in Registered Homes
BERNALILLO	298	67	133	10018	648	197
CIBOLA	5	6	22	169	66	15
LUNA	10	5	17	115	63	21
MCKINLEY	6	1	105	108	27	16
OTERO	16	10	24	649	88	38
RIO ARRIBA	12	1	18	168	14	9
SAN JUAN	38	2	34	1543	10	33
SANDOVAL	30	6	61	1327	42	27
SANTA FE	54	7	5	704	20	14
SOCORRO	6	1	21	85	7	10
TAOS	14	1	4	141	3	2
VALENCIA	33	2	19	1055	25	18

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AI/AN Children Served by Child Care Programs in FY23

County	AI/AN Children
Bernalillo	968
Catron	1
Chaves	6
Cibola	107
Colfax	1
Curry	10
De Baca	0
Dona Ana	69
Eddy	3
Grant	5
Guadalupe	0
Hidalgo	0
Lea	7
Lincoln	12
Los Alamos	0
Luna	1
McKinley	151

County	AI/AN Children
Mora	0
Otero	31
Quay	0
Roosevelt	1
Rio Arriba	18
San Juan	990
San Miguel	1
Sandoval	141
Santa Fe	32
Sierra	0
Socorro	7
Taos	15
Torrance	1
Valencia	52
(blank)	7
Total	2637

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Family Nutrition Bureau

(ages 1-18 years)

Family Nutrition Bureau (FNB) administers two USDA Child Nutrition Programs which provide federal funds to participating institutions to initiate and maintain non-profit food service programs for eligible children and adults. Two programs under FNB include the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) open to all ages and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), which serves children ages 1-18. Summer Meal Sites Listed at: summerfoodnm.org

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

County	Number of Centers Providers	Number of Home Providers	Number of children receiving meals in Centers	Number of children receiving meals in Homes	Number of Tribal Homes in the CACFP Program	Number of children receiving meals by Tribal Homes in the CACFP Program
BERNALILLO	306	306	10,382	1,027	195	1,280
CIBOLA	7	7	253	153	26	147
LUNA	20	20	619	139	22	119
MCKINLEY	19	19	348	391	97	359
OTERO	34	34	3,148	158	30	191
RIO ARRIBA	25	25	594	64	18	63
SAN JUAN	69	69	2,053	118	35	146
SANDOVAL	35	35	1,047	309	74	389
SANTA FE	47	47	1,264	41	7	48
SOCORRO	6	6	52	83	20	84
TAOS	11	11	218	13	4	14
VALENCIA	27	27	851	60	20	77

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) - Summer 2023

Number of SFSP Sites

- BERNALILLO - **138**
- CIBOLA - **1**
- LUNA - **0**
- MCKINLEY - **67**
- OTERO - **6**
- RIO ARRIBA - **17**
- SAN JUAN - **23**
- SANDOVAL - **2**
- SANTA FE - **17**
- SOCORRO - **1**
- TAOS - **0**
- VALENCIA - **7**

Number of meals served to SFSP* To date

- BERNALILLO - **200,576**
- CIBOLA - **4,562**
- LUNA - **0**
- MCKINLEY - **56,777**
- OTERO - **4,111**
- RIO ARRIBA - **14,522**
- SAN JUAN - **34,990**
- SANDOVAL - **5,081**
- SANTA FE - **62,672**
- SOCORRO - **533**
- TAOS - **0**
- VALENCIA - **10,801**

*Number of CACFP children receiving meals in Centers and Homes is a monthly average, number of children receiving meals in Tribal homes is a distinct count

Communication and Collaboration 2023



Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren addressing Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care Cotillion Sneddy. Joined by Speaker Crystalyne Curley, Council Delegate Vince James, Navajo Head Start Director of Educational Services Dr. Rolanda Billy, ECECD ECEN Director Sandy Trujillo-Medina.



Pueblo of Nambe Governor Nathaniel Porter signing the PreK expansion agreement, joined by Home Visitor Sierra Paniagua; Education Advocate Samantha Viarrial; Community Health Representative Monica Vigil; Jovanna Archuleta, Early Childhood Community Outreach Director for the LANL Foundation; ECECD Assistant Secretary Sneddy, and ECECD ECEN Director Sandy Trujillo-Medina.

New Mexico PreK

(ages 3-4 years)

New Mexico PreK (NM PreK) services are offered in community and school-based settings. NM PreK offers high-quality early education focused on school readiness. **NM PreK supports linguistically and culturally appropriate curriculum** and provides developmentally appropriate activities for New Mexico children.

ECECD executed Intergovernment Agreements with New Mexico PreK with Navajo Nation, To'Hajiilee, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Pueblo of Nambé, and Pueblo of Tesuque, allowing for greater educational sovereignty in the operation

of New Mexico PreK classrooms within the context of Tribal education systems. This added flexibility allows individual Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations to tailor the PreK curriculum and standards to the unique needs of their communities. Most of these new Tribal PreK classrooms will be embedded within existing Tribal Head Start programs.

The Tribal PreK expansion is a part of a larger **nearly \$100 million expansion** effort creating **3,033 new PreK slots**, significantly expanding instructional hours, improving compensation for PreK teachers, and achieving universal PreK access for four-year-olds.

Communication and Collaboration 2023

Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program

(Prenatal – age 3)

The Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program promotes children growing and developing at their own pace. However, sometimes children have special developmental needs or health concerns that may put them at risk for, or cause, a developmental delay. Early Intervention promotes child development and supports families whose child has, or is at risk for, a developmental delay or disability.

The ECECD FIT program conducted a Tribal Needs Assessment. Feedback was received from at least one community member from all 23 Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations. Recommendations from the Tribal Needs Assessment resulted in a set of recommendations, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Educating Tribal Leaders about Early Intervention, FIT, the process of Early Intervention, and how to advocate
- Ensuring language and culture are integrated into Early Intervention
- Extending the age of children eligible for FIT to 5 years, as many Native American communities lack FIT services, and COVID impacted children in these communities greatly.

These recommendations have informed the work of the ECECD FIT program as well as the FIT Interagency Coordinating Council’s Tribal and Underserved Populations Committee. Some results from these recommendations include participation in ECECD Tribal Biweekly Communication Meetings, presentation at the annual ECECD/PED Government to Government Conference, collaboration with EPICS on the Native American Special Education Conference, and work towards establishing a Family Infant Studies certificate with Central New Mexico

Community College (CNM) so that there are more early intervention professionals in the workforce.

A total of 1372 Native American children in New Mexico were served in the FIT program in Fiscal Year 23.

Number of AI/NA Children Served Statewide by FIT in FY23

County	Number of Children
Bernalillo	285
Cibola	60
Curry	9
De Baca	1
Dona Ana	43
Eddy	3
Grant	5
Guadalupe	1
Lincoln	9
Los Alamos	3
McKinley	246
Mora	2
Otero	55
Rio Arriba	27
Roosevelt	4
San Juan	406
San Miguel	2
Sandoval	104
Santa Fe	40
Socorro	23
Taos	7
Torrance	4
Union	4
Valencia	16
Total	1372

Communication *and* Collaboration 2023



Number of AI/NA Children Served Statewide by Families FIRST in FY23

County	Pediatric	Prenatal
Bernalillo	48	41
Chaves	45	18
Cibola	8	5
Curry	39	18
Dona Ana	106	127
Eddy	9	17
Grant	11	7
Lea	36	33
Lincoln	35	21
Luna	7	13
McKinley	4	6
Otero	34	32
Quay	2	1
Roosevelt	20	6
Rio Arriba	-	1
San Juan	2	18
Sandoval	4	8
Santa Fe	3	1
Sierra	1	2
Socorro	1	3
Torrance	6	1
Valencia	47	32
(blank)	10	15
Total	478	426

Families FIRST

(Prenatal – age 3)

Families FIRST (Families and Infants Receive Services and Training) is helping build strong families through medical, social, and educational support from registered nurses and resource referrals to promote healthy infants and children in New Mexico. Families FIRST providers work on the following key areas:

- Care coordination services to Medicaid-eligible pregnant individuals.
- Conduct ongoing assessments to address holistic needs
- Coordinate resources with family and community
- Educate clients and their families on topics related to their pregnancy and postpartum experience as well as newborn and pediatric topics

Communication and Collaboration 2023

Home Visiting

(Prenatal - age 5)

Home Visiting provides a coordinated continuum of high-quality, community-driven, culturally and linguistically appropriate home visiting services that promote maternal, infant, and early childhood health, safety and development, as well as strong parent-child relationships.

Number of Assessments Completed by Home Visiting in FY23

County	All Children	AI/AN Children
Bernalillo	1041	96
Cibola	145	62
Luna	550	0
McKinley	260	185
Otero	89	1
Rio Arriba	104	13
San Juan	205	138
Sandoval	68	24
Santa Fe	386	8
Socorro	142	42
Taos	179	20
Valencia	199	8
Total	3368	597

Policy, Research, and Quality Initiatives (PRQI)

The Policy, Research and Quality Initiatives Division (PRQI) manages data systems within the department, tracks programs and services provided by the department to

children and families around the state and ensures compliance with state and federal laws and regulations.

Kellogg Initiative

- The W.K Kellogg Foundation awarded ECECD \$1 million over five years to increase the number of early childhood educators in NM and to create a bilingual/multilingual early childhood pathway.
- ECECD has engaged in conversation with representatives from PED and HED who attended among a total of 27 community organizations and support agencies at the first convening on May 18-19, 2023.
 - » 13 institutes of higher education represented at convening
 - » Included deans and provosts, directors, students, professors and other community agencies
 - » Collaborated with Project ECHO and Adobe Think Tank in monthly work groups to address topics that emerged from the convening
- Kellogg funding is also being used to provide \$1,500 stipends for bilingual and Indigenous students working toward an associate degree in early childhood.
 - » \$78,000 awarded to students so far.
 - » Application for Fall, 2023 is now open.

How to Apply

Visit eceedscholarship.org for more information and to apply.

Communication and Collaboration 2023

Chief Health Officer

The Chief Health Officer position in the Office of the Secretary is a first in the nation for a cabinet-level early childhood department. It was created to strengthen the connections between health and early childhood. The Chief Health Officer oversees a team consisting of the Prevention, Health and Wellness Director, the Thriving Families Coordinator, the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator, a Data Analyst, and the CARA navigator.

Current Areas of Focus:

- Thriving Families (an inter-agency collaboration to prevent abuse and neglect)
- Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant
- Data sharing and linkages to improve health outcomes
- Strengthening connections and improving communication between the healthcare system and home visiting and FIT programs
- Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act (CARA) program (an inter-agency collaboration for babies born exposed to substances)

New Mexico Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO)

The New Mexico Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) operates as part of a larger national system of state collaboration offices funded by the federal Office of Head Start. The federal government created the system of state Head Start Collaboration Offices to facilitate partnerships between HS programs and other state and Tribal early childhood education, child care, and family support services. These offices are particularly important for state administration because Head Start funding is provided from the federal government directly to local Head Start programs and

AI/AN Region XI

Head Start Program

County	Total Slots
Alamo Early Childhood Center-HS	64
Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council	36
Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos Inc.	41
Haak'u Learning Center-Acoma Pueblo	90
Jicarilla Apache Head Start Program	102
Mescalero Apache Head Start Program	120
Ohkay Owingeh Tribal Council	81
Pueblo of Isleta	87
Pueblo of Laguna Department of Education	115
Pueblo of San Felipe (IMPD)	96
Pueblo of Zuni Head Start Program	153
Ramah Navajo Head Start	60
Santa Clara Pueblo Tribe	38
Santo Domingo Pueblo Tribe (Kewa)	120
Taos Pueblo	36
The Navajo Nation Tribal Government	495
Walatowa Head Start Language Immersion Program Jemez Pueblo	68
Total AI/AN EHS	334

Communication and Collaboration 2023

agencies. New Mexico’s HSSCO is administered by ECECD. Congress and President Lyndon Johnson established Head Start (HS) in 1965 as part of the War on Poverty to provide early learning opportunities for children ages 3 to 5 living in poverty. The federal government added the Early Head Start (EHS) program in 1995 to provide supports to infants and toddlers, pregnant mothers, and families with children in poverty from birth to age three. The programs provide a wide range of services, including EHS home visiting, physical and social emotional health screenings, early childhood education, nutrition assistance, family engagement, and fatherhood initiatives.

HS and EHS programs in New Mexico reflect key characteristics of the state—a mix of rural and urban communities with significant cultural and linguistic diversity. New Mexico is served by three regions in partnership with the HSSCO. Region VI directs programs within the state. Region XI serves Tribal areas and Region XII oversees the Migrant and Seasonal

AI/AN Region XI

Early Head Start Program

County	Total Slots
Alamo Early Childhood Center EHS	44
Jicarilla Apache Early Head Start Program	65
Pueblo of Isleta	48
Pueblo of Laguna Department of Education	52
Santo Domingo Pueblo Tribe (Kewa)	94
Taos Pueblo	14
The Navajo Nation Tribal Government	17
Total AI/AN EHS	334

programs across the country. There were 34 HS and EHS programs operating in New Mexico in 2022-2023. The 34 grantees also included 16 Tribal grantees, including the Navajo Nation. These programs provided 8,793 funded slots across New Mexico in 2022-2023; 2,362 in EHS and 6,445 in HS, including 99 slots in Migrant and Seasonal HS programs administered jointly with the Texas HSSCO.

Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS)

Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) are a critical part of the Prenatal-to-Five (PN-5) early childhood system; working to give vulnerable children an opportunity to succeed in school and life. These federally funded programs throughout the country and in New Mexico make an impact on communities by providing comprehensive educational, emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological services that support thriving children and their families.

Upcoming 2023-2024 Priorities of the HSSCO include:

1. Promote partnerships with state child care systems, emphasizing the Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership Initiative and access to comprehensive services
2. Work with state efforts to collect data regarding early childhood programs and child outcomes
3. Support the expansion and access of high-quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff
4. Collaborate with state quality rating improvement systems such as QRIS
5. Work with state school systems to ensure continuity between Head Start programs and receiving schools

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