

Early Childhood Funding Commission Technical Working Group

Cost Estimation Guiding Questions

October 2020

Commission and Technical Working Group Charge

The Governor's Commission on Equitable Early Childhood Education and Care Funding is charged with studying and making recommendations to establish funding goals and funding mechanisms to provide equitable access to high-quality early childhood education and care services for all children birth to age five, and advising the Governor in planning and implementing these recommendations. The Commission will submit recommendations to the Governor in January 2021.

The Commission's Technical Working Group will be made up of staff from ISBE, IDHS, DCFS, and GOECD and will conduct vetting and due diligence on the recommendations, prioritizing cost estimation.

Cost Estimation Goals and Work Plan

To fulfill its charge and provide sufficient information to the Governor to support decision making, the Commission needs an estimation of current spending on early childhood education and care (ECEC) services and an estimation of the total cost necessary to create a new state ECEC agency. This will require the following steps:

1. Identify all current budget and expenditures related to ECEC across ISBE, IDHS, DCFS, and GOECD, including direct services, infrastructure and support contracts, and administrative capacities.
2. Prepare to simulate centralization of these entities into a standalone ECEC agency by standardizing or aligning language used in ECEC-related extracts from budgets and expenditures across ISBE, IDHS, DCFS, and GOECD.
 - a. Will want to include personnel, nonpersonnel, external contracts, etc.
 - b. Possible alignment could follow cost estimation spreadsheet template, with categories such as: central operations, infrastructure, program administration, etc.
3. Simulate centralization of these entities into a standalone ECEC agency to determine:
 - a. What cost savings would be generated and what additional expenditures would be needed to launch and sustain a new ECEC agency?
 - i. This would include any start-up contracts or other expenditures to support launching a new agency.
 - b. Impact on current state agencies – what additional staff or other expenditures, if any, would be needed to stabilize operations at ISBE, IDHS, and DCFS if ECEC is moved into its own agency?

Timeline

To be responsive to the Commission, the goal will be to complete the above work plan by October 23.

Follow-Up Work

Following completion of the above cost estimation, the Technical Working Group (or a sub-set of its members, or with the addition of other state agency staff members) may identify and explore further vetting and due diligence questions related to the following aspects of implementing the Commission's recommendations: labor, talent, and human capital; statutes, regulations, and policies; other fiscal and budget considerations; etc.