

# Final Recommendations and Implementation Report

Illinois PDG B-5 ECCE Governance  
Strategic Planning Facilitation

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MAKING RESEARCH RELEVANT

improving service use, access, equity, coordination, and collaboration were particularly sparse. When information was available, documents tended to focus on strengths rather than challenges and weaknesses of a state’s current governance structure.

Although we selected and interviewed experts who worked with multiple states on governance, including some familiar with Illinois and therefore in a position to provide advice and commentary relevant to Illinois, it was a small sample. We also only interviewed one person who personally had experience being part of a state governance system-change process. It could have been beneficial to interview additional state administrators who lead or are currently managing ECCE programs within a new governance structure.

## Review of Illinois’ Current Governance Structure

This section provides a summary of Illinois’ ECCE governance structure, including a description of GOECD, several agencies administering ECCE programs in the state, and the state’s Early Learning Council (ELC). Illinois has a mixed-delivery system for its ECCE programs that is spread across several state agencies and numerous state and federal policies and funding sources. The four key agencies and the 14 ECCE programs they administer are listed in Exhibit 1. Each program is described in greater detail in Appendix C.

### Exhibit 1. Illinois State Agencies for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programs

Illinois Agency	ECCE Programs
Illinois Department of Human Services (ILDHS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), with funding from the Child Care and Development Block Grant</li> <li>2. Early intervention</li> <li>3. Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting</li> <li>4. Illinois Head Start State Collaboration Office</li> <li>5. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low-income families buy food.</li> <li>6. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) provides temporary financial and health-care coverage for pregnant women and families.</li> <li>7. Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides food assistance to women, infants, and children. It helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well and stay healthy.</li> </ol>
Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Prevention Initiative, as part of the Early Childhood Block Grant</li> <li>9. Preschool For All (PFA), as part of the Early Childhood Block Grant</li> <li>10. Title I Preschool: Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Act as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)</li> <li>11. Early childhood special education programs, federally funded through IDEA Part B, Section 619</li> </ol>

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (ILDHS)	12. Child-care licensing of non-school-based child-care centers and homes 13. Foster care and adoption services
Illinois Department of Human Services (ILDHS)	14. All Kids, using both Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Along with these four state agencies, GOECD also is part of the Illinois' ECCE governance structure. GOECD serves as a coordinating body for the state agencies that administer ECCE programs. GOECD does not have any fiscal or administrative authority in its role as a coordinator with these agencies, or the ECCE programs the agencies administer. The purpose of GOECD is to coordinate various state initiatives to create an integrated system of quality ECCE programs across agencies (GOECD, 2019a). GOECD's primary function is to support the governance and system building of ECCE programs throughout the state. GOECD's roles are to:

- Cocreate and advance a comprehensive vision for early childhood systems,
- Provide leadership on the issues that are relevant across state agencies,
- Facilitate sharing of ELC recommendations through state agencies, and
- Convene the interagency team of early childhood program managers across agencies to facilitate implementation of recommendations to multiple systems from the ELC.

Another primary role of GOECD is to support the work of the state's statutory advisory council, the ELC. Illinois' the ELC is a public-private partnership that was created under Public Act 93-380 to coordinate existing programs and services for children from birth to age 5. The ELC is the leading advisory body for Illinois' early childhood system. Its membership includes public agency representatives, service providers, private funders, advocates, and family organizations. The ELC consists of a full council, an Executive Committee, four other standing committees, and multiple subcommittees. The ELC's Executive Committee guides the work of the other four standing committees. The committees and subcommittees of the ELC are listed in Appendix C.

All 10 governance documents reviewed provide a rationale for Illinois' current multi-agency ECCE governance structure of individual agencies, with a central coordinating body – the GOECD. Eight of the 10 documents reviewed focused on specific desired outcomes expected from the current multi-agency governance structure related to creating a shared vision for the ECCE system and improving the quality, access, coordination, and funding of the ECCE system. These expected outcomes from the Illinois governance structure include:

- Creation of a shared vision
- Improvement in quality and access

- Coordination of services
- Funding opportunities to improve funding allocation and distribution

## Review of Other States' ECCE Governance Structures

Although governance looks different in every state, most governance structures fall into one of three basic models: coordinated governance (coordination), consolidated governance (consolidation), or creation of a new agency (creation) (Regenstein & Lipper, 2013). In the coordination model, early childhood programs and services are housed in various government agencies, and these agencies are expected to work together to collaborate and coordinate their efforts. This coordination can be accomplished through interagency agreements; an advisory board, such as a children's cabinet; or the state governor's office. In a consolidation model, all or most early childhood programs and services are administered by a single existing executive branch agency. Most often, this agency is the state education agency. In the creation model, the state creates a new executive branch-level agency, or a new entity within an existing agency, with accountability for all early childhood programs and services.

### Governance Structures Used by Other States

We reviewed the governance structures of 12 states and the year the governance structure was created (Exhibit 2). Four of the 12 states we reviewed have a coordinated entity structure, similar to that in Illinois. Four states have independent agencies. Two states have structures classified as "other." In the case of Pennsylvania, although the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning is a consolidated agency, we classify it as "other" because it is part of two cabinet-level state agency departments: education and human services. Wisconsin also is categorized as "other" because its governance structure is unclear; it seems to be comprised of five or more offices with no clear coordinating body. Finally, two states, Maryland and Louisiana, have consolidated agency structures.

#### Exhibit 2. States Reviewed and Their Governance Structure

State	Governance Model	Year Created
Alabama	Independent agency	2015
Colorado	Coordinated entity	2012
Georgia	Independent agency	2004
Louisiana	Consolidated entity	2012–15
Maryland	Consolidated agency	2015
Massachusetts	Independent agency	2005
Nebraska	Coordinated entity	Unknown
Ohio	Coordinated entity	2019