



Early Childhood Governance

**Presentation to the Kentucky General Assembly Special Committee
Early Childhood Education Task Force**

Thur., Oct. 20, 2022

- Who is NCSL
- Terms and Definitions
- Types of Governance Approaches
- A Look Across the Country
 - Deep dive into five state examples
 - Legislative Trends (2021-22)
- Policy considerations
- Next steps



Agenda

Exploring Early Childhood Governance &
Legislative Trends Across the Country



Strengthening the legislative institution

How NCSL Strengthens Legislatures



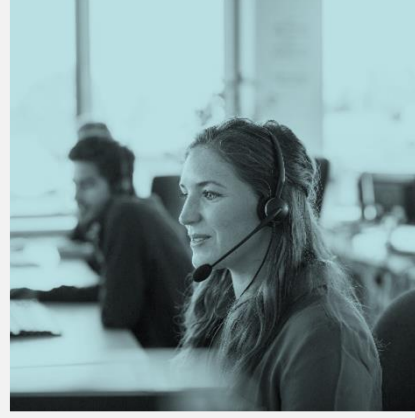
Policy Research

NCSL provides trusted, nonpartisan policy research and analysis



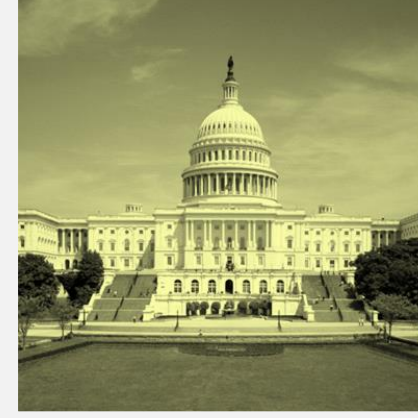
Connections

NCSL links legislators and staff with each other and with experts



Training

NCSL delivers training tailored specifically for legislators and staff



State Voice in D.C.

NCSL represents and advocates on behalf of states on Capitol Hill

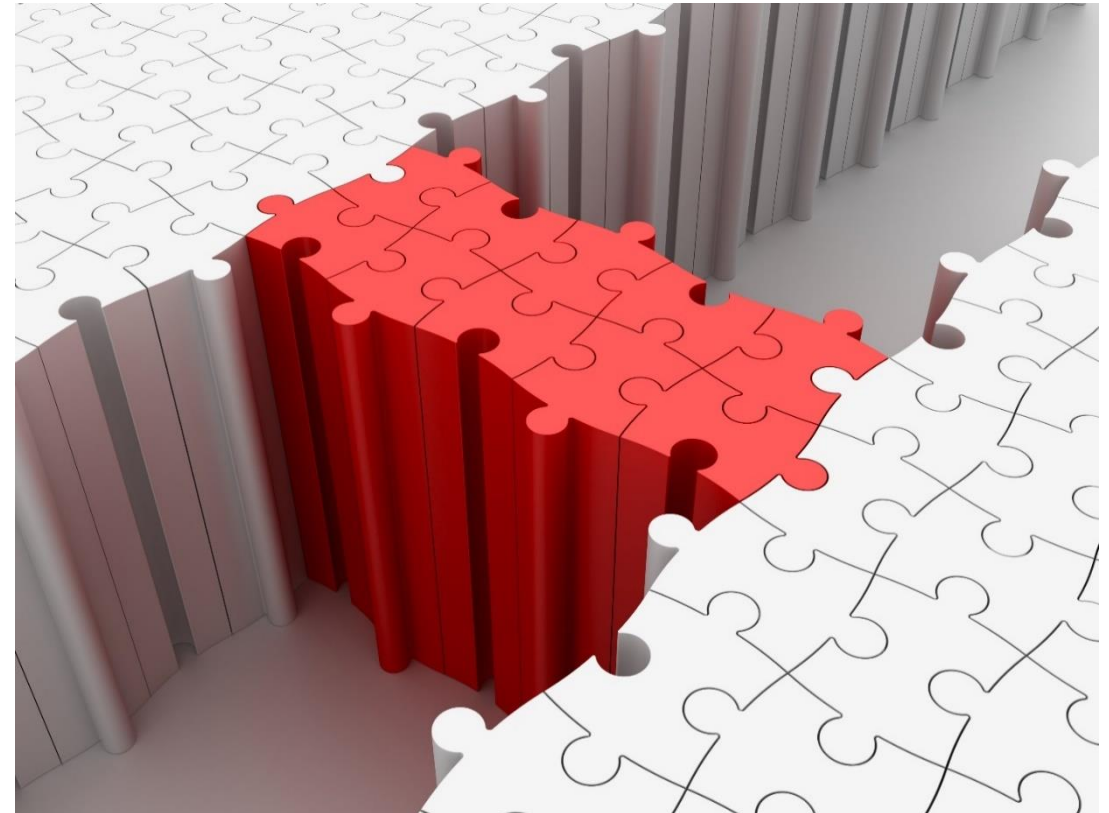


Meetings

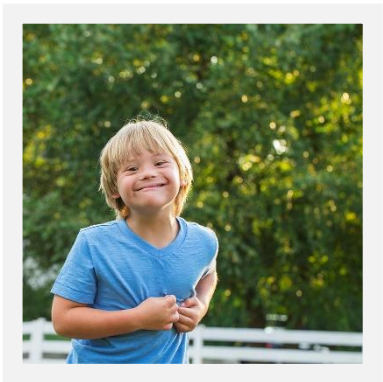
NCSL meetings facilitate information exchange and policy discussions

Defining Commonly Used Terms

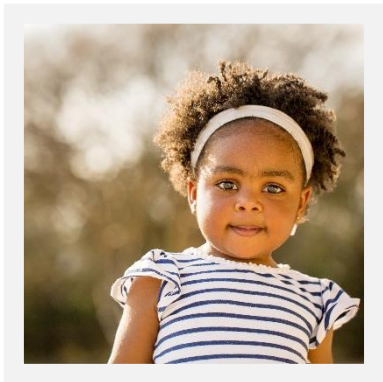
Cabinet
Department
Agency
Office
Division



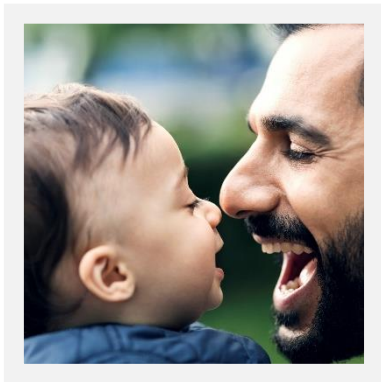
Why Early Childhood Governance



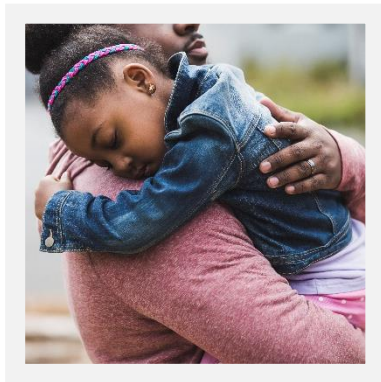
Fragmentation



Sustainability



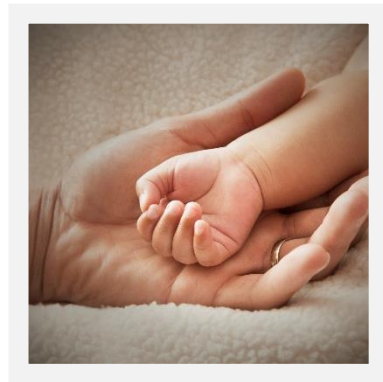
Efficiency



Accountability



Quality

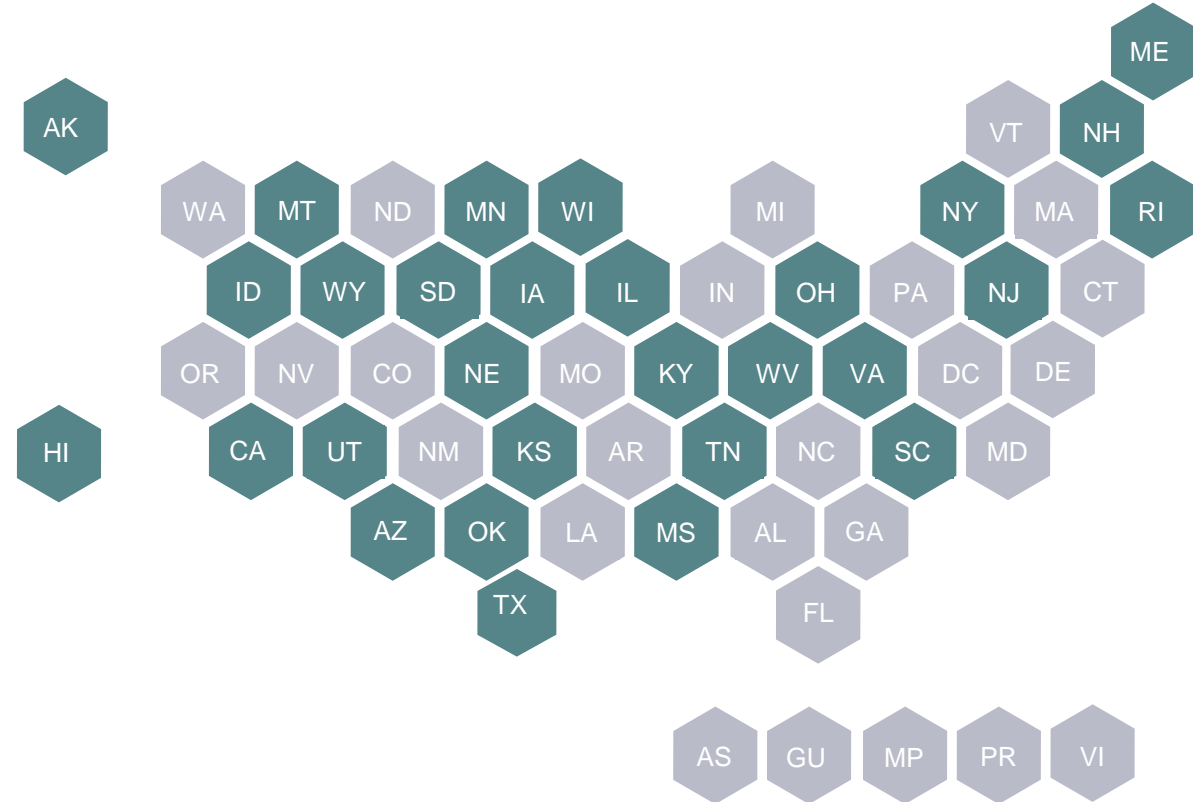


Attention

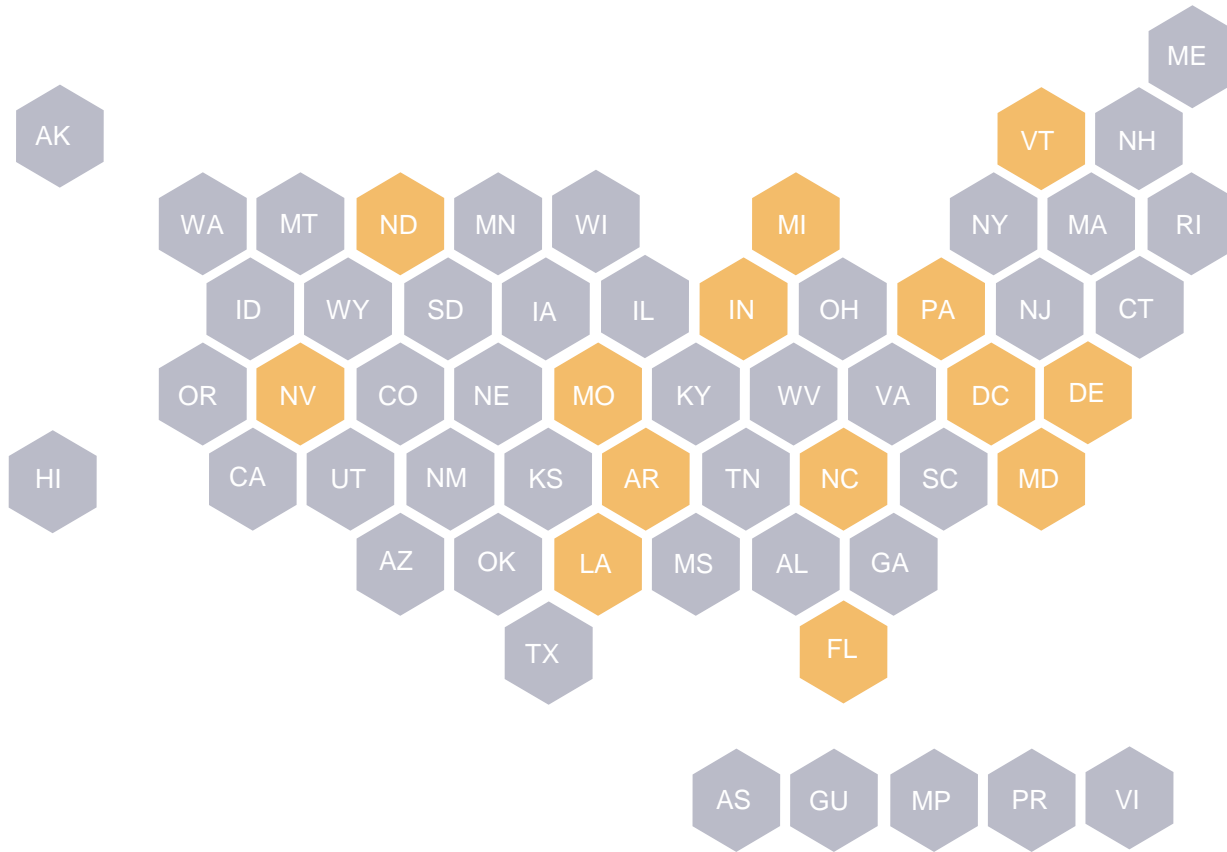
Early Childhood Governance Approaches

Collaborate and Coordinate

- Across different agencies
- Two or more agencies that work together to align rules, processes, and funding requirements.



Early Childhood Governance Approaches



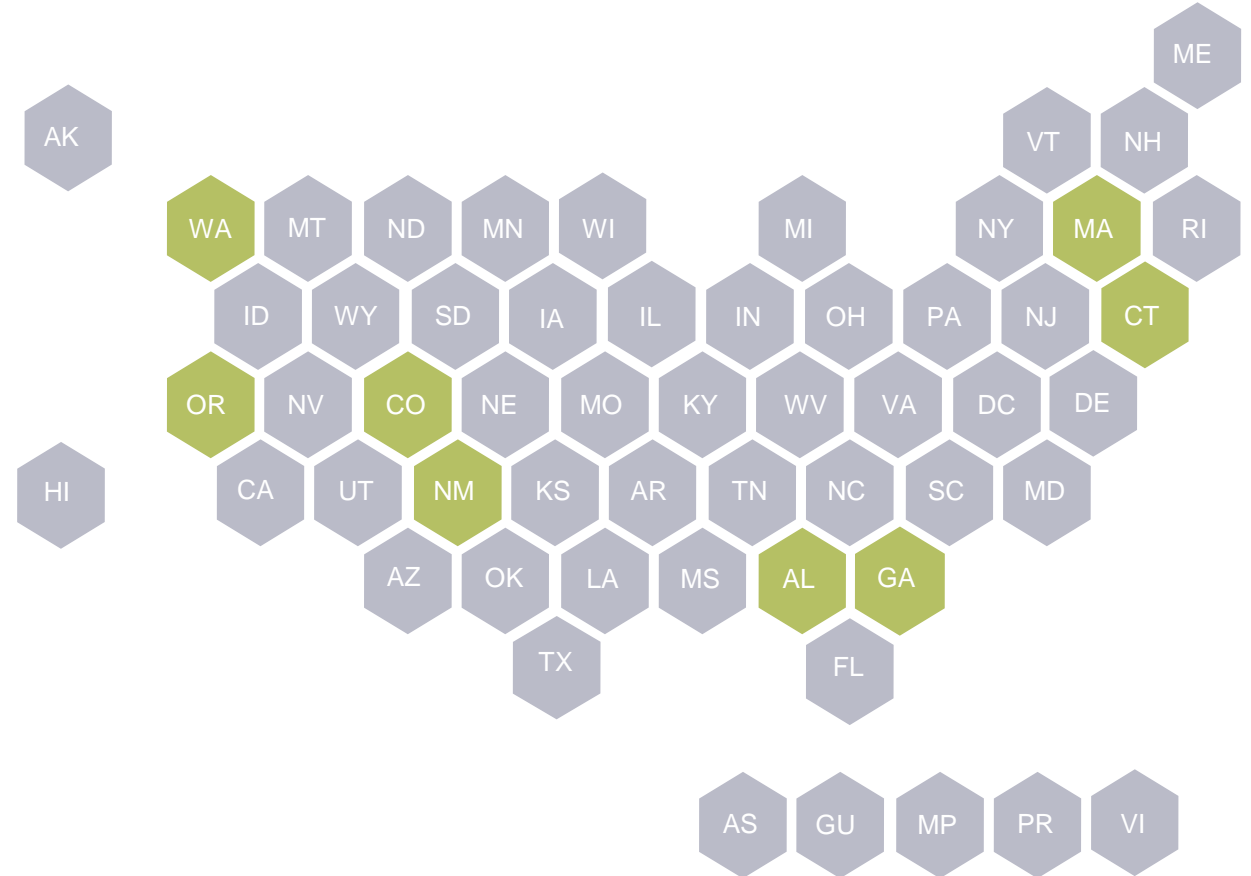
Consolidate

Existing programs
and divisions into
one state agency.

Early Childhood Governance Approaches

Create

A dedicated early childhood agency.



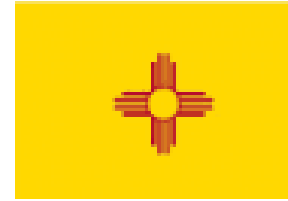
A Closer Look at Two States

Create



Georgia

- Department of Early Care and Learning: Bright from the Start
- Established through S 456
 - 2004 – signed into law
 - Merged Office of School Readiness and units from Dept. of Human Resources, Dept. of Education and Georgia Child Care Council
- Vision: Every child in Georgia will have equal access to high-quality early care and education.



New Mexico

- Early Childhood Education and Care Department
- Established through S 22
 - 2019 - signed into law
 - July 2020 - Department launch
- Vision: All New Mexico families and young children are thriving

A Closer Look at Two States

Consolidate



Florida

- Division of Early Learning
 - Location: Florida Department of Education
- Most recently updated legislatively in 2021 H 419
 - Eliminate the Office of Early Learning
 - Establish the Council for Early Grades Success



Missouri

- Office of Childhood
 - Location: Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
- Established in 2021 through Executive Order 21-02
- Rigorous transition plan leading up to Aug. 28, 2021

Hawaii

Collaborate & Coordinate

A third approach to early
childhood governance

Related bills of note

2012: S 2545

2017: H 489



2021 legislative examples



Create: CO [H 1304](#) (enacted) Established the Department of Early Childhood.

Create: MN [S 2170](#) | [H 1024](#) (failed) Creates a Department of Early Childhood.

Consolidate: ND [H 1416](#) & [H 1466](#) (enacted) Merged offices and programs related to birth through five years old. New state investment targeting high-quality early experiences.

Create: TX [H 51](#) (failed) Establishes an Office of Early Childhood with a director appointed by a committee designated by the governor.

2022 legislative examples

Consolidate: NH [S 326](#) (Failed) Establishes the office of early childhood.

Create: NJ [S 2475](#) | [A 4178](#) (Pending) Establishes a Department of Early Childhood.

Create: RI [S 2678](#) (Pending) Establishes the office of early childhood development and learning.

Create: SC [S 1115](#): (Failed) Establishes the Department of South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness



A Department of Child and Family Services: Lessons from a Non-Enacted Example

ME S 414 (2021)

Would establish a department of Child and Family Services to include child welfare, child care, early learning and more

Outcome: Ought not to Pass → Need more time to see if ongoing efforts to improve outcomes and implement prevention strategies resolve problems.

Consideration Highlights

Benefits

- Improvements to child safety
- Addresses existing silos in communication and coordination
- Holistic approach to child and family services

Challenges

- Determining what would be included
- Many logistical challenges, transition would be lengthy
- Requires associated legislation on transition process



Policy Considerations



Clear Priorities



Weighing Pros & Cons



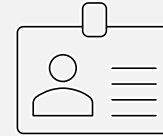
Roles



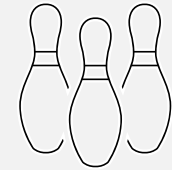
Communication



Policy Considerations



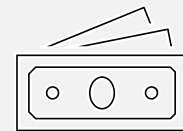
Personnel



Configuration



Creating Success



Cost-benefit

What Can You Do?

-
- Access NCSL resources
 - Connect with policymakers
 - Set up meetings
 - Listen to families
 - Deepen your understanding



NCSL Resources

- Early Childhood: What's Governance Got to Do With It? | Apr. 2022
- Early Childhood Legislative Database
 - Governance related legislation can be found under the “Early Childhood Governance” topic.
- Child Welfare Enacted Legislation Database
 - Governance related legislation can be found under the “Oversight/Administration/Interagency Collaboration” topic.
- Early Childhood Policy Overview
 - Includes 101 level overview of common early childhood policy topics such as Early Childhood Systems, which provides information on *Governance* and *Data*.

External Resources

- Alignment Between Early Childhood and Child Welfare Systems Benefits Children and Families | June 2022
- Strong and Sustainable Children's Cabinets – A Discussion Guide for State Leaders | Apr. 2022
- Early Childhood Governance: A toolkit of curated resources to assist state leaders | June 2021
- 2020 State Policy Survey: Child & Youth Policy Coordinating Bodies in the United States | June 2021
- Early Childhood Governance: Getting There from Here | June 2020
- 50-State Comparison: Early Care and Education Governance | Nov. 2020

NCSL National Convenings

Online and In-person



Aug. 14-16, 2023



Discussion Questions & Answers

Reach out anytime!



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