



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

March 20, 2008

Supporting State Early Childhood Advisory Councils Selection Committee
c/o Sarah Dailey
Senior Policy Analyst
NGA Center for Best Practices

Dear Selection Committee Members:

On behalf of the State of Connecticut, I am pleased to submit an application for participation in this important opportunity provided by the National Governors Association. Connecticut has been fortunate in having been selected to participate in and learn from other NGA initiatives, and we look forward to engaging again with the Center for Best Practices on this early childhood proposal.

I am proud that Connecticut enacted our Early Childhood Education Cabinet in 2005. In early 2006, I created a partner organization, the Governor's Early Childhood Research and Policy Council, to assist the Cabinet and to ensure development of a solid early childhood investment plan and high public accountability. Working together, these two bodies have moved Connecticut forward towards a better system for serving our vulnerable young children, and their families. They have also worked well together to increase public accountability for our increasing investments in the early years.

In my conversations with other governors across the country, I have learned that our dual structure is unusual, but of considerable interest to other governors committed, as I was, to including key stakeholders beyond government in the process of building a comprehensive early childhood system.

I submit our application in the hopes of sharing our learning over the past 30 months with other states, but also because this new NGA opportunity will enable us to attain two important goals. First, we will be able to strengthen the cross-agency collaborative work of the Cabinet itself, and second, to complete the design for a comprehensive early care and education system for young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply.

Sincerely,

M. Jodi Rell
Governor

Cc: Dr. Janice M. Gruendel
Co-Chair, Early Childhood Education Cabinet