

Governor's Early Childhood Research & Policy Council
Early Childhood Investment Plan Recommendations Summary
FY08 (7/07-6/08) & FY09 (7/08-6/09)

This document is a summary of each of the priorities and additional challenges the Early Childhood Research & Policy Council were asked to consider for recommendations and financing for Connecticut's upcoming biennium. The table below is a quick reference of the items contained in the document, the pages they can be found and the cost associated with them.

Priority/Additional Challenge	FY08 and FY09 Total Cost	Page
<i>Assure fiscal support for high quality preschool for all 3 and 4 year olds in families at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, and increase this income eligibility standard as state resources permit.</i>	\$50,644,992	2
<i>Address state reimbursement inequities for state-funded center-based preschool programs.</i>	\$6,620,295	6
<i>Develop a multi-year early childhood workforce professional development plan to assure compliance with state law and selected national certification programs.</i>	\$4,647,090	7
<i>Provide health, mental health, and education consultation to preschool programs to enhance the skills of directors and teachers for meeting the comprehensive needs of children.</i>	\$610,000	9
<i>Expand eligibility categories in the Birth-to-Three program to include mild developmental delays and environmental risks.</i>	\$9,523,307	10
<i>Ensure HUSKY children receive regular well-child visits and an annual developmental assessment.</i>	No Cost Recommendations	11
<i>Provide all families and caregivers (including non-custodial parents) with information about child development, prenatal through age eight.</i>	\$2,101,767	13
<i>Support the design and implementation of the kindergarten assessment (Statewide implementation due Fall 2009).</i>	\$2,000,000	14
<i>Support local communities in developing birth-to-five councils (e.g., using School Readiness Councils) for planning and monitoring early childhood services.</i>	\$10,496,130	15
<i>Develop a comprehensive strategic plan for serving infants and toddlers.</i>	Developed through existing funds	17
<i>How can the state integrate currently "silo-ed" datasets maintained by a variety of state and local governmental agencies to create a readily accessible data system to support public policy, organizational management and individual case management decisions? What other data not currently captured needs to be maintained in a new integrated data system?</i>	\$6,700,000	17
<i>State structural and management issues in expanding programs and expenditures</i>	\$1,352,600	18
<i>Advise on establishment of a Quality Rating Scale for early care and education center-based programs, including requisite component elements such as a data registry for the early care and education (ECE) workforce.</i>	\$5,968,500	19
<i>Propose the establishment of a functioning network of early childhood researchers.</i>	\$1,762,500	20

Priority	<i>Assure fiscal support for high quality preschool for all 3 and 4 year olds in families at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, and increase this income eligibility standard as state resources permit.</i>
Recommendation	<p>In order to improve and expand the School Readiness Initiative both in terms of the number of children served and the quality of the services offered, the Council recommends that Connecticut develop a coordinated Early Childhood System with the capacity to serve the School Readiness expansion initially. As quickly as feasible, however, this system should incorporate all early care and education (ECE) programs in the State with a focus on enhancing the quality of ECE programs available to all of Connecticut's children.</p> <p>The Early Childhood Research and Policy Council's Investment Plan proposes to meet the objective for preschool expansion through a five-year program of increased investment in operating and capital funding to serve additional children through the state's School Readiness (SR) Initiative beginning FY08 (7/07-6/08) and running through FY12 (7/11-6/12). The Council proposes to phase in this expansion in order to provide time for the marketplace and the early care and education sector to respond to the increased demand created for high quality services.</p> <p>To meet the Cabinet's goal of serving all children in Priority School Districts and all children in the balance of the state living in families with incomes at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, the Council estimates a need for 12,944 additional program slots (7,763 three- and four-year olds in the 19 Priority School districts; 5,181 three- and four year olds in all other communities). The SR program currently serves 8,631 children (7,882 in 19 current or former Priority School Districts and 749 in 39 districts eligible for the Competitive Grants program.¹</p> <p>The Council constructed three expansion scenarios, and recommends its Baseline Scenario, which proposes to meet the Cabinet goal within five years. A more gradual scenario meeting the goal over seven years and an ambitious proposal to meet the goal over three years were also considered. The Baseline Scenario involves increasing slots as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In FY08 and FY09, 32% of the need for new preschool slots will be addressed, representing 4,100 new slots. • In FY10 and FY11, 5,200 additional children will be served (about 72% of children in need of preschool). • In FY12, the last 3,700 children (28%) will be added for a total over the five years of 13,000. <p>The proposed implementation schedule for the new slots was determined by the time needed to increase the supply of preschool slots in accredited programs with adequate facilities and staffing. The recommended Baseline Scenario assumes that -- due to facility development lead time -- in the next biennium the majority of the new slot commitments will be accommodated in existing programs or facilities.</p>

¹ The Competitive Grants program is open to the 50 communities with the lowest wealth rank used in the state's Education Cost Sharing and to communities with a school in which 40% or more of students live in families with incomes at 185% or less of the federal poverty level. Each community in this program receives a base grant of \$107,000.

Implementation Recommendations

Expand School Readiness Program Slots. The School Readiness Initiative currently contracts with 58 municipalities to deliver preschool services through subcontracts with community providers and Local Education Authorities. This process is overseen by local School Readiness Councils. The Research & Policy Council recommends expanding these contracts as the mechanism for securing the majority of new program slots. The state's primary facilities development program relies on these contractual commitments to secure the bond financing to support construction of new facilities by providers (or other non-profit entities creating facilities for use by providers).

Early Childhood Grants. The Council also recommends that a portion of the new slots be offered as Early Education Grants to families earning at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level in order to maximize parent choice and provider participation. These Early Education Grants would be offered directly to eligible families to allow them to enroll their children in an ECE program of their choice as long as the program meets the quality standards equal to those of the School Readiness Initiative. Unlike the grants given to School Readiness programs, the family grant program will allow families to purchase a single slot from a qualified center.

Families in school districts participating in the School Readiness Initiative that meet income eligibility may apply for an Early Education Grant from the state pool of funds established for that purpose if:

- i. The School Readiness Council in their community has documented that School Readiness programs are at full capacity, **or**
- ii. The family seeks to enroll their child in a qualified preschool program in another community– for example, to accommodate a parent's work schedule or location.

In all other communities, families that meet income eligibility may apply for an Early Education Grant to purchase spaces in existing programs meeting state quality standards.

The Council recommends that 30% of the slot commitments going to benefiting families residing in Priority School Districts and 50% of the slots going to the balance of participating SR districts be made available directly to families through these Early Education Grants. All of the slot commitments for the estimated 1,761 children at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level in the remaining 111 towns would be made available as Early Education Grants.

Administrative decisions about where to house this program would be dependent upon overall governance of the new Early Childhood System. It is also recommended that School Readiness Councils play a role in recruiting providers to enroll children from families receiving Early Childhood Grants.

New Facility Development. The state will require a substantial number of new facilities to accommodate the 13,000 additional children participating in the School Readiness Initiative. The Baseline Scenario projects the need for about 3,500 spaces

in new facilities with state funding support. The State Department of Education (SDE) has previously estimated a need for 7,700 new spaces.

The Council recommends that the state accelerate production of high quality facilities for School Readiness Programs through: (1) a significant expansion of the Child Care Facilities Loan Fund – Tax Exempt Loan Program as managed by the CT Educational and Health Facilities Authority (CHEFA), and (2) continuing the practice of encouraging school districts to include preschool classrooms in school construction projects with financial incentives. Note: The increased emphasis on preschool and the provision of a 5% reimbursement bonus on preschool classrooms has led to inclusion of these preschool facilities in 24 recent state-supported school construction project.

Four options are suggested for expanding the CHEFA program. The first two options continue the current project-by-project work:

- *Continued expansion of the CHEFA program for preschool providers to build their own facilities.* Investment in continued technical assistance and predevelopment loans and recoverable grants for these providers to expedite the development process.
- *Working with municipalities or school boards to construct and own facilities.* This option is currently authorized under CHEFA's program. The municipality or school board would actively manage the facility and monitor the quality of programs.

The rate of development called for by the Cabinet's goals, however, suggests a need to look at ways to increase the volume and pace of production beyond that likely through the above two options. The Council recommends serious and immediate exploration of methods that involve skilled development entities with the capacity to produce multiple facilities around the state efficiently. The Council has examined several approaches which would involve tasking a specialized entity with development expertise to building facilities of high quality and leasing or "turn-keying" them to providers of preschool services.

- *CHEFA develops and owns the facilities through a subsidiary as authorized in current legislation.* CHEFA would retain a construction manager through a Request for Proposals process and actively manage the facilities once completed, including monitoring program quality.
- *Another non-profit developer constructs and owns the facilities and leases them to providers.* This model has been used successfully by the Corporation for Independent Living to provide expanded group home capacity for the Department of Mental Retardation.

Separating facility ownership from program operation has the added advantage of ensuring that program quality standards can be enforced and that the facilities will be available continuously to qualified providers.

In all cases, the Council recommends implementing a two-step award process for allocating capital resources to ensure that appropriate providers are selected and supported with upfront technical assistance and project planning resources; and to make sure that project costs, which are constantly rising, are fully covered by bond

awards.

Additional Recommendations with Cost Implications

Increased Reimbursement to Address Increased Staffing Requirements. The Research and Accountability Subcommittee of the Council has recommended an increase in the slot reimbursement to 3 and 4 year olds to cover costs of increased teacher education, training and credentials as required by state law and national program certification. *(See priority on workforce on page 7.)*

Hours/Day Proposal. The Council recommends changing the School Readiness schedule options. It recommends eliminating the 2.5 hour/part-day option because it is not long enough to meet the needs of children and families. The 6 hour/day and 10 hour/day options would be retained and a 4 hour/day option would be available to up to 20% of families by special request. These options would be available for either the school year (180 days) or the full year (50 weeks) depending on family needs.

In addition, the committee recommends a “teaching team” staffing model. Each School Readiness classroom is to be staffed with an appropriately qualified “lead” teacher who supervises the assistant teacher(s) who are also appropriately qualified. A “lead” teacher must be scheduled to be with the children for the majority of the 6 hour/day schedule and for a minimum of 6 hours/day for the 10 hour/day schedule. The remaining hours of the 10 hour/day may be staffed by assistant teachers who are closely supervised by the “lead” teacher.

The Council recommends that these changes be instituted as soon as reasonable.

Quality Enhancement. The Council recommends multi-year expanded funding for the Quality Enhancement Grant program to support efforts of providers to achieve higher ratings on the proposed Quality Rating Scale (QRS) and for important local efforts to enhance program quality. *(See QRS proposal on page 19.)*

Cost

Summary of Proposed New Funds for Preschool Slot and Facility Expansion					
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Slot Expansion	\$11,080,374	\$30,514,618	\$51,421,125	\$74,973,002	\$111,132,011
Facility Expansion	\$2,450,000	\$6,600,000	\$10,600,000	\$14,600,000	\$18,600,000
Total	\$13,530,374	\$37,114,618	\$62,021,125	\$89,573,002	\$129,732,011
FY08/FY09	\$50,644,992				

The Council used a Cost Modeling Tool to project the fiscal impact of the proposed expansion. In FY08, the proposed Baseline Scenario requires an additional \$11.1 million to pay for children in 2,045 new preschool slots, which is based on three quarters of a year to allow for phase-in. An additional \$2.45 million to the facilities debt subsidy fund is also suggested. In FY09, the proposed appropriation for School Readiness would increase by another \$19.4 million (annualized) for an additional 2,045 children in slots and an additional \$6.6 million would be added to the facilities debt subsidy fund to ramp up facility construction in later years.

Priority	Address state reimbursement inequities for state-funded center-based preschool programs.																																			
Recommendation	<p>The Council proposes that the reimbursement rate for center-based slots funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) be increased to the rate for slots funded under the School Readiness Initiative. At present, DSS provides funding to community agencies to offer full day, center-based preschool to an estimated 2,414 children ages 3 and 4. All participating centers are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The average reimbursement rate for these slots in FY07 is \$6,304 compared to \$8,025 per slot for centers participating in the School Readiness Initiative. Both programs require parents to contribute toward the total cost on a sliding scale. (See the Council's original Policy Brief for more detail).</p> <p>As a condition of receiving the higher reimbursement, programs will agree to comply with all the requirements of the School Readiness Initiative. The Council also encourages the State of Connecticut to examine reimbursement rates for Infant/toddler slots in the DSS Child Development Center program and adjust them as required to avoid reductions in services to this critical population.²</p> <p>(Note: This work has focused on the two main State-funded programs, the School Readiness Initiative within the State Department of Education and the Department of Social Services' Child Development Centers. Head Start was not included in this analysis as 90% of its current funding comes directly to programs from the federal government.)</p>																																			
Cost	<p>The incremental and total appropriation required to serve preschool age children in the DSS Child Development Centers at the same reimbursement level as the School Readiness Initiative is shown in the table below. These figures are based on the same annual increase in reimbursement rates proposed for the School Readiness Initiative in the Baseline Scenario. The total cost for FY08/FY09 would be \$6,620,295. FY08 figures below reflect costs for half the year to allow for phase-in. The increment needed to meet School Readiness reimbursement rates would increase if those rates were increased more rapidly to respond to requirements for increased staff credentials.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">Cost of Rate Equity between DSS Centers and School Readiness Program</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Fiscal Year</th> <th>Full day / Full Year - Current DSS Rate, escalated 3% each year</th> <th>Fiscal Increment to Reach School Readiness Program Rate</th> <th>Total Incremental Appropriation to Achieve Rate Equity</th> <th>Total Appropriation for DSS Child Development Centers (Preschool only) (\$ in millions)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2007-08</td> <td>\$6,493</td> <td>\$1,773</td> <td>\$2,163,495</td> <td>\$20.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2008-09</td> <td>6,688</td> <td>1,826</td> <td>\$4,456,800</td> <td>\$20.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009-10</td> <td>6,889</td> <td>1,881</td> <td>\$4,590,504</td> <td>\$21.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010-11</td> <td>7,095</td> <td>2,112</td> <td>\$5,156,328</td> <td>\$22.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011-12</td> <td>7,308</td> <td>2,452</td> <td>\$5,985,289</td> <td>\$23.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Cost of Rate Equity between DSS Centers and School Readiness Program					Fiscal Year	Full day / Full Year - Current DSS Rate, escalated 3% each year	Fiscal Increment to Reach School Readiness Program Rate	Total Incremental Appropriation to Achieve Rate Equity	Total Appropriation for DSS Child Development Centers (Preschool only) (\$ in millions)	2007-08	\$6,493	\$1,773	\$2,163,495	\$20.2	2008-09	6,688	1,826	\$4,456,800	\$20.8	2009-10	6,889	1,881	\$4,590,504	\$21.4	2010-11	7,095	2,112	\$5,156,328	\$22.5	2011-12	7,308	2,452	\$5,985,289	\$23.8
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² The Department of Social Services has submitted a budget option to the State for FY08/FY09 to increase slot reimbursements for infant/toddler slots.

Priority	<i>Develop a multi-year early childhood workforce professional development plan to assure compliance with state law and selected national certification programs.</i>
Recommendation	<p>The Council recommends the strategies below in support of a multi-year early childhood workforce professional development plan.</p> <p>Support a Workforce Registry. A registry validates and maintains a record of the early care and education (ECE) employees and their credentials. The registry will be mandatory for all employees of program participating in the School Readiness (SR) Initiative and voluntary for other members of the ECE workforce. The registry will allow us to monitor the qualifications of individual workers and to eventually require an individual license or credential for all teaching and administrative staff in ECE programs. The registry should be developed during FY07, piloted in FY08, and fully implemented in FY09.</p> <p>Support an Early Childhood Professional Development Center. In order to develop a workforce that meets the 2010 and 2015 requirements, it will be necessary to both attract new qualified workers and to assist current ECE workers to obtain the qualifications they need. The Council recommends an Early Childhood Professional Development Center be funded to accomplish these tasks. This Center does not necessarily imply a building or structure, but may be virtual and/or collaborative in nature. This center would monitor and coordinate the professional development of the early childhood workforce.</p> <p>Specifically, the center would be responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring ECE workforce supply and demand (with the registry and institutions of higher education). 2. Creating and implementing a workforce plan to ensure that supply keeps up with demand. 3. Recruiting new workers into ECE positions and career paths.³ 4. Providing career counseling for ECE workers and those interested in working in ECE. 5. Assisting students in accessing scholarships, loans and loan reimbursement programs. 6. Managing a bonus program for ECE workers who meet the new 2010 qualifications before July of 2010. <p>Support Scholarships, Loans and Loan Reimbursement Programs. Most current ECE workers will need some sort of financial assistance to take the courses they need to enhance their qualifications. In addition, loan reimbursements and bonuses will be used to attract qualified workers to the field. The Council makes the following recommendations for support:⁴</p>

³ There are two alternate routes into the preschool education field currently in their planning stages to be implemented in FY08. One is for elementary school teachers who wish to gain sufficient content to obtain a teaching endorsement that extends their endorsement to preschool age children, and the other is for those who hold a BA degree in a “related field” that need further training and application skills to obtain a Nursery to Grade 3 teaching certificate.

⁴ The Council recognizes there are other financial supports currently available to students and suggests the recommended supports be considered after these existent options.

- *Scholarship pathway* for early childhood students to allow students to be eligible even if they are taking one course at a time. The Council also supports the establishment of a fund to help with other related expenses such as childcare and books.
- *Loan reimbursement program* to attract recent college graduates to teach in early care and education programs for up to three years.
- *Early Childhood Minority Teacher Incentive Program* to be extended to apply to students who wish to study early childhood education at 4-year institutions of higher education.
- *Child Development Associate (CDA) support fund* to provide sufficient funds to support 185 persons in obtaining the CDA each year.
- *A bonus program* for SR staff who meet the new 2010 qualifications before July of 2010.

Collaborative of Higher Education Institutions. The proposed requirements for ECE staff in 2010 and 2015 will require changes in the early childhood programs offered in institutions of higher education in the state. As such, the Council recommends a Collaborative of Higher Education Institutions be developed in order to maximize the potential to offer quality programs at a variety of institutions. This collaborative will perform the following functions:

1. Develop distance learning courses to be offered at remote locations and used to meet the requirements of the new AS, BA and professional development programs.
2. Propose requirements for the Birth-to-Age-Five Teaching Credential.
3. Issue an RFP in order to facilitate the development of alternative routes for experienced teachers to obtain the Birth-to-Age-Five Credential.
4. Train assessors to implement the observational assessment which will serve as the criteria for the initial and full Birth -to-Age-Five Credential.
5. Institute a language and literacy requirement for assistant teachers as well as CDA.

Recommendations not impacting FY08 and FY09 budget

Per/Child Reimbursement for School Readiness Programs. The reimbursement rate to programs in FY 2011 will need to be increased so that programs can pay staff at a level commensurate with their degrees. As of 2004-2005, teachers (required to have CDA, but 72% had AS or higher) had an average salary of \$22,000 and assistant teachers (required to have a high school diploma, but 51% have CDA or higher) had an average salary of \$17,000.

By 2011, it is estimated that staff salaries should be at approximately \$30,000 for AS teachers, \$35,000 for BA level teachers, \$23,000 for CDA assistant teachers and \$26,000 for AS level assistant teachers. The per-child cost would be \$10,526 - \$12,016 at those salary levels. To account for this, an \$11,000 cost per child for full day/full year programs might be a reasonable assumption for the state. With an average parent contribution of \$1,000, this would require a state reimbursement level of \$10,000 per slot for full day/full year programs. There are not cost implications until FY11 depending on how the state chooses to phase in this increase.

	<p>Survey of teachers in DSS State-funded centers. There are currently about 110 DSS State-funded centers, which meet NAEYC accreditation standards. Beyond knowing the NAEYC standards, the current number of workers and their qualifications are not known. The Council recommends the Cabinet commission a survey of the teachers in these State-funded centers in FY07 so that a plan can be made to bring the teachers in these programs up to the current School Readiness criteria as quickly as possible.</p>																																																																		
<p>Cost</p>	<p>The total proposed cost of the workforce development plan for FY08/FY09 is \$4,647,090. Portions of the FY08 budget are reduced to account for phasing in time necessary for components.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Cost of Workforce Professional Development Plan</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>FY08</th> <th>FY09</th> <th>FY10</th> <th>FY11</th> <th>FY12</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Workforce Registry</td> <td>\$95,125</td> <td>\$117,500</td> <td>\$107,035</td> <td>\$109,646</td> <td>\$112,335</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Professional Development Center</td> <td>\$146,328</td> <td>\$224,952</td> <td>\$231,701</td> <td>\$238,652</td> <td>\$245,811</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Scholarships</td> <td>\$381,000</td> <td>\$929,060</td> <td>\$1168581</td> <td>\$1,365,362</td> <td>\$1,465,412</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loan Reimbursement</td> <td>\$57,500</td> <td>\$162,500</td> <td>\$162,500</td> <td>\$300,000</td> <td>\$300,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Incentive Program</td> <td>\$56,250</td> <td>\$139,375</td> <td>\$166,306</td> <td>\$168,295</td> <td>\$170,344</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staff Bonuses</td> <td>\$75,000</td> <td>\$150,000</td> <td>\$150,000</td> <td>\$150,000</td> <td>\$150,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaborative of Higher Education</td> <td>\$537,500</td> <td>\$1,575,000</td> <td>\$1,575,000</td> <td>\$1,575,000</td> <td>\$1,575,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>\$1,348,703</td> <td>\$3,298,387</td> <td>\$3,561,123</td> <td>\$3,906,955</td> <td>\$4,018,903</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY08/FY09</td> <td colspan="5">\$4,647,090</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Cost of Workforce Professional Development Plan							FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	Workforce Registry	\$95,125	\$117,500	\$107,035	\$109,646	\$112,335	Professional Development Center	\$146,328	\$224,952	\$231,701	\$238,652	\$245,811	Scholarships	\$381,000	\$929,060	\$1168581	\$1,365,362	\$1,465,412	Loan Reimbursement	\$57,500	\$162,500	\$162,500	\$300,000	\$300,000	Incentive Program	\$56,250	\$139,375	\$166,306	\$168,295	\$170,344	Staff Bonuses	\$75,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	Collaborative of Higher Education	\$537,500	\$1,575,000	\$1,575,000	\$1,575,000	\$1,575,000	Total	\$1,348,703	\$3,298,387	\$3,561,123	\$3,906,955	\$4,018,903	FY08/FY09	\$4,647,090				
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<p>Priority</p>	<p><i>Provide health, mental health, and education consultation to preschool programs to enhance the skills of directors and teachers for meeting the comprehensive needs of children.</i></p>																																																																		
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>The Connecticut Early Childhood Investment Framework envisions establishing an interdisciplinary consultation network to bring the coordinated support of specialists from several key fields to early learning settings. The Consultation Network would work with centers and programs serving children from birth through age eight.</p> <p>These consultants would help identify issues in the program or in the family that may be impeding children's optimal development, including environmental risks present in the home; conduct interventions of appropriate intensity with the center and with individual families as needed; and connect centers and families with a coordinated continuum of community based services and supports services.</p> <p>The Council recommends investments in the following areas over the next two years to continue development of the Network: staffing, establishment of a database of available consultants, interdisciplinary training events, and research and evaluation on the effectiveness of the Network and network consultants.</p>																																																																		

Cost

The proposed funding for network development for the next biennium totals **\$610,000**, which is detailed below. The cost for FY08 reflects a salary for two-thirds of the year to allow for hiring.

Cost of Consultation to Preschool Programs			
Component	FY08	FY09	FY10
<u>Network Staffing</u> The staff and work group would develop (1) plan for Certification / Registration, (2) Development of Standards, and (3) a funding plan	\$67,000	\$103,000	\$106,000
<u>Training / Continuing Education</u> , building on current work (see above)	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
<u>Database Development and Maintenance</u> Searchable web-based database of all consultants to serve as a planning tool for the Network and a referral tool for Centers and others	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
<u>Research and Evaluation</u> . Contract with evaluator and support for data collection.	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
Total	\$287,000	\$323,000	\$326,000
FY08/FY09	\$610,000		

Priority

Expand eligibility categories in the Birth-to-Three program to include mild developmental delays and environmental risks.

Recommendation

As discussed in the Council's original Policy Brief, the Early Childhood Education Cabinet supports restoring eligibility to specific categories of children who had been served in previous years *and* expanding eligibility to other children deemed at risk of developmental delays. This recommendation is based on the demonstrated returns in reduced reliance on Special Education and improved school performance resulting from participation in Birth-to-Three.

The Council has reviewed and is forwarding the proposal from the Birth-to-Three Program administration for the following expansions in eligibility and services:

Recommendation #1. Change the definition of developmental delay to more than 1 Standard Deviation (SD) below the mean in two areas (from the present 1.5) or 1.5 SD below the mean in one area (from the present 2.0). (An alternative would be to define delay in terms of percent delay and define eligibility as greater than a 25%).

Recommendation #2. Change diagnosed conditions list to:

- Restore eligibility for preemies under 1000g and less than 27 weeks (estimated 144 more children each year)
- Add children with mild and unilateral hearing loss (estimated about 50 more children each year)
- Add children testing with lead levels of 25 µg/dL or more, with automatic

eligibility at 45 µg/dL (estimated about 50 more children each year)

Recommendation #3. Restore eligibility for children with significant delays in expressive language only with biological factors (estimated about 110 more children each year)

Recommendation #4. Add children in families with four or more environmental risks who are deemed at risk for delay (estimated at 2,300 additional children to be served per year).

These changes would expand the average caseload by about 228 in FY08 and 1,500 in FY09 as new cases are phased in over each year. All these groups would be fully phased in by the third year for an estimated total of about 2,650 children.

Cost

Total new funds recommended for FY08 & FY09 are **\$9,523,307**. The table below shows the estimated costs per child as well as aggregate net costs per year from FY08 through FY12.

Caseload Estimate and Service Cost Associated with Birth-to-Three Eligibility Expansion					
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Total new children	228	1,500	2,652	2,652	2,652
Average \$ per child for annual services	\$ 8,112	\$8,355	\$8,606	\$8,864	\$9,130
Average \$ per child (hearing impaired)	\$9,483	\$9,767	\$10,061	\$10,362	\$10,673
Less Insurance and Parent Contributions (11.95%)	\$969	\$998	\$1,028	\$1,059	\$1,091
Net Annual Cost per Child	\$7,143	\$7,357	\$7,578	\$7,805	\$8,039
Subtotal, additional budgeted services	\$1,628,531	\$11,035,442	\$20,095,981	\$20,698,861	\$21,319,827
Projected Medicaid Reimbursement	\$403,876	\$2,736,790	\$4,983,803	\$5,133,317	\$5,287,317
Annual % Increase in Cost		3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Net Cost to State	\$1,224,655	\$8,298,652	\$15,112,178	\$15,565,543	\$16,032,510
FY08/FY09 Cost	\$9,523,307				

Priority	<i>Ensure HUSKY children receive regular well-child visits and an annual developmental assessment.</i>
Recommendation	The intent of this priority is to ensure that children ages birth through eight enrolled in the HUSKY program receive timely well child visits and associated developmental screening, monitoring, and full assessments as outlined in by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and federal and state EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment) program. It is the intent of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet that young children at risk of health or developmental challenges are examined regularly and that such interventions as needed are provided early in the

	<p>child's life when the cost is lower and the likelihood of treatment and remediation is higher.</p> <p>The Council recommends that the Cabinet support State efforts to implement proposed improvements that will lead to increased number and quality of well-child visits and developmental monitoring in the HUSKY program. The Council has identified the following strategies to advance efforts in this area. These could be pursued through partnerships among the DSS Medicaid administration, Managed Care providers, consumers, and intermediary groups like the Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut (CHDI).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work to ensure continuous eligibility for children in the HUSKY program to facilitate continuous and appropriate care. This would help to avoid costs due to lack of preventive care and care management, and reduce administrative costs associated with re-enrollment. 2. Using techniques like the Educating Practices in their Communities (EPIC) program to ensure that all medical personnel are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully familiar with the AAP periodicity schedule and EPSDT requirements for well-child visits and follow-up care; • Committed to providing developmental screening and monitoring and familiar with the codes used to submit charges for both screenings and more in depth developmental assessments when indicated; and • Familiar with community resources available for families and children requiring other services and maintaining practice systems for connecting children to services 3. Establish in state policy and regulation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required practice for well-child visits. • Required screening and assessment tools for young children . • Annual statewide data analysis and reporting on young child screening, assessments and related follow-up care, including child outcome measures and program provision measures. • Implementation of the Promoting Healthy Development Survey to capture the status and changes in developmental surveillance in the state. 4. Train care and education settings and family resource centers in use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire with results tabulated regularly to measure the developmental status of children in Connecticut. 5. Pursue planned electronic medical record development to facilitate quality assurance, coordination of care, and planning. 6. Pursue planned Medicaid pay-for-performance policies to provide incentives for the MCOs and providers to improve their performance on meeting the needs of children.
Cost	<p>No cost estimates have been prepared as so many efforts are in process by others and have not yielded specific cost figures. Investments in improved data management and physician training are contemplated and will improve child outcomes.</p>

Priority	<i>Provide all families and caregivers (including non-custodial parents) with information about child development, prenatal through age eight.</i>
Recommendation	<p>The intent of this priority is to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and easily available information for all families and caregivers, and • Targeted outreach to those children who are likely to be at risk for poor developmental outcomes, not being ready for school or not achieving adequate academic performance in the early grades. <p>The Council recommends that these activities need to be part of an overall strategic marketing plan to reach all families, which includes at-risk children and hard to reach families. The plan should incorporate strategies that address the ethnic and cultural diversity across Connecticut, and should also include plans for how it will measure its success in reaching these populations. As such, the Council recommends this be addressed by the Statewide Management Issues Working Group of the Cabinet.</p> <p>We further recommend that this work be linked with other top 10 priorities with which it is related: (a) Building local capacity; (b) Early consultation network; (c) HUSKY enrollment and well-child assessments and follow up.</p> <p>The recommendations below describe activities the State should consider in FY08 and FY09 to begin reaching these populations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continued professional development of child health providers and strengthening connections between child health providers and community-based child care and early education sectors. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Further expansion of EPIC (Educating Practices in the Community) to reach all pediatric practices. b. Connecting child health providers and community-based childcare and early education sectors. 2. Additional support for coordinated strategic marketing program through explicit public and private support and partnerships to inform all families with young children and other caregivers (including licensed and unlicensed childcare providers) about the state's free Child Development Infoline, Help Me Grow, and Ages & Stages services. 3. The State Department of Education to develop and distribute materials, on an ongoing basis (minimally annually) about school expectations to families with preschool aged children through third grade information. The Council recommends SDE produce a strategic distribution plan to the Cabinet by March 30, 2007 that should include partnerships with the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Connecticut Education Association and American Federation of Teachers – Connecticut.

Cost The total additional costs for providing information to at-risk families are \$2,101,767. Costs in FY08 associated with hiring new positions have been reduced to account for two-thirds of the year to allow for time to hire staff.

Cost for Information to Caregivers		
	FY08	FY09
Professional Development	\$105,800	\$156,200
Outreach	\$661,992	\$952,775
Development and distribution of school expectations materials	\$125,000	\$100,000
Total	\$892,792	\$1,208,975
FY08/FY09	\$2,101,767	

Priority	<i>Support the design and implementation of the kindergarten assessment (Statewide implementation due Fall 2009).</i>
Recommendation	<p>The design and implementation of a kindergarten assessment is one part of a larger assessment and accountability system for preschool and kindergarten. This larger system has three purposes: improving teaching and learning, evaluating and improving programs and establishing accountability for the early childhood initiative (including Results Based Accountability).</p> <p>The kindergarten assessment proposed here is intended to improve teaching and learning in kindergarten and to insure alignment between preschool and kindergarten. Other components of the assessment and accountability system are proposed to meet the other two purposes. These components are included in the proposal for the Early Childhood Policy and Research Institute (see page 20).</p> <p>The kindergarten assessment is a classroom-based assessment that is matched to the child standards for kindergarten and done for the purposes of informing teachers about instructional practices. There is currently a tool available for preschool teachers but not for kindergarten teachers. It is important that the standards for preschool and kindergarten closely aligned in the development of the kindergarten assessment.</p> <p>The Council proposes that a kindergarten assessment framework be developed that is aligned with the Preschool Assessment Framework. It is also proposed that State Department of Education continue to provide professional development to teachers on the use of the Preschool Assessment Framework.</p> <p>(The other assessment and accountability tasks are listed under the Early Childhood Research and Policy Institute discussed on page 20.)</p>
Cost	It is recommended the state invest \$1,000,000 per fiscal year for a total of \$2,000,000 for FY08/FY09. This figure is based on the budget request placed by State Department of Education for the upcoming biennium. The figure only includes professional development costs and did not include development expenses.

Priority	<i>Support local communities in developing birth-to-five councils (e.g., using School Readiness Councils) for planning and monitoring early childhood services.</i>
Recommendation	<p>The Early Childhood Education Cabinet has identified a need for local councils to perform a broader role of planning and monitoring early childhood services in order to meet the Cabinet's goals for children to be "ready by five and fine by nine." The direction suggested to the Research and Policy Council is to build on a substantial base of local work by expanding the mandate of the local and regional School Readiness Councils to address the needs of children from <i>birth through age eight</i> which will necessitate a strong connection to the local K-12 education system.</p> <p>The Council recommends that by FY11, all communities that are legislatively mandated to have a School Readiness Council will ensure that all children from birth through age eight are ready by five and succeed by nine by developing and implementing community-wide strategic plans and a local early childhood governance structure. Incentives will encourage communities to form multi-town early childhood councils incorporating other towns with needs among and beyond the 58 districts currently participating in the School Readiness Initiative.</p> <p>Local Early Childhood Councils will fulfill the roles of the existing School Readiness Councils specified in legislation and expand their scope to address the needs of all children from birth through age eight. Local Councils will have the capacity and authority for policy and program planning; system development; leadership; public accountability; and resource allocation. The Research & Policy Council also makes specific recommendations for infrastructure requirements to include leadership, membership, staff support, access to technical assistance, and access to flexible, non-categorical funding.</p> <p>The Council recommends the following State roles and responsibilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a "roll-out" process that is responsive to the needs and local conditions of all communities who participate in the School Readiness Initiative as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In year 1, offer competitive grants to 25 communities to support the development of strategic plans and/or the roll-out of existing plans. Up to 10 of the applications that are deemed "ready" based on pre-defined criteria receive implementation (purchase of service) funding. Up to 15 applications receive planning grants to develop their strategic plan. b. In year 2, the planning grant cohort from previous year receives implementation funding and 15 additional communities are offered competitive planning/implementation grants. c. In year 3, the balance of communities, are brought "on-line" and the year 2 planning grants receive implementation funding. <p>Throughout the process, incentives will be provided to reward multi-town approaches that may encompass non-School Readiness grant communities who also have a population of children in need based on pre-defined criteria and local commitment of resources.</p> <p>Technical assistance in early childhood planning and programs and smaller grants will also be made available to any group of smaller towns that come together to plan for meeting the needs of their families and children ages birth through age eight. The application process will be managed by the Governor's Early Childhood Investment Cabinet, or other entity as the Cabinet, Governor or Legislature may designate.</p>

2. Support flexible implementation of local/multi-town plans as follows:
 - a. The Cabinet or other designated state structure shall receive the local/multi-town plans and after careful consideration shall align state resources with those plans to the extent feasible and make policy recommendations to assist in implementation of the plan.
 - b. The Cabinet shall report to the Joint Standing Committee of the General Assembly with cognizance of matters relating to human services, education, and appropriations and to the Select Committee of the General Assembly with matters relating to Children on progress achieved by the local/multi-town early childhood councils in reaching outcomes for children and families established by the cabinet.
 - c. The Cabinet members who are Department heads shall enter into Memoranda of Understanding and develop interagency protocols deemed necessary to implement and support the local/multi-town plans.

3. Establish or designate and fund a statewide technical assistance entity or process to provide supportive planning and implementation assistance to Local Councils serving both communities participating in the School Readiness Initiative and all other communities in their effort to achieve desired child outcomes This quasi public entity (e.g., CT Development Authority) or non-profit entity that is funded through a public/private partnership and is charged to:
 - a. Develop common planning approach and assist in the collection of standardized data.
 - b. Provide on-site technical assistance and support in the areas of collaborative management, strategic planning/needs assessment, leadership development, cultural competence, and parent engagement.
 - c. Serve as intermediary between the state management structure and the Local Councils to address systemic issues and adjust service approaches as identified by Local Councils.
 - d. Leverage partnerships between and among service system components (e.g. Help Me Grow, Birth to Three, KidCare Systems of Care, and Accreditation Facilitation Project).

Cost

Total costs for supporting local birth through age eight councils for FY08/FY09 are **\$10,496,130**. Costs in FY08 in state level technical assistance has been reduced to reflect costs for two-thirds year to account for hiring time.

Cost of Local Birth through Age Eight Councils					
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Grants to School Readiness Communities					
Council Support	\$1,500,000	\$1,620,000	\$2,030,000	\$2,100,000	\$2,100,000
Planning Support	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$900,000	\$100,000	-
Implementation Funds	\$1,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$8,750,000	\$13,250,000	\$13,750,000
Grants to Other Communities	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
State Level Technical Assistance	\$154,770	\$421,360	\$481,001	\$490,931	\$501,159
Total	\$3,504,770	\$6,991,360	\$12,461,001	\$16,240,931	\$16,651,159
FY08/FY09	\$10,496,130				

Priority	<i>Develop a comprehensive strategic plan for serving infants and toddlers.</i>
Recommendation	The development of the strategic plan began this Fall by the Department of Social Services with funds from the Cabinet. A plan is anticipated to the Cabinet by July 2007.
Cost	Costs for plan development were resourced through existing Cabinet funds.

Additional Challenge	<i>How can the state integrate currently “silo-ed” datasets maintained by a variety of state and local governmental agencies to create a readily accessible data system to support public policy, organizational management and individual case management decisions? What other data not currently captured needs to be maintained in a new integrated data system?</i>
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Recommendation	<p>A recent inquiry has uncovered there are no less than eleven separate data management infrastructure initiatives currently underway in the State of Connecticut. As such, it is important the State work toward the integration, where appropriate, of these initiatives to improve its overall data management infrastructure. Toward this end, the Council makes the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop interoperability standards between and amongst public and private healthcare and educational entities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support the efforts of e-Health Connecticut to become a statewide healthcare information exchange (HIE) capable of making available critical health information from multiple sources and presenting that information to authorized parties in a usable format to support sound decision-making about health and health care by providers, consumers, public health officials, researchers, policy makers and other relevant parties; b. Support the development of a parallel organization to become a statewide public/private education information network c. Coordinate and enable the adoption of a secure, statewide, interoperable health and education information exchange with the following goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To foster interoperability and open-systems architecture; ii. To seek in good faith to integrate existing information systems; iii. To provide expert personnel to support activities in the spirit of collaboration; iv. To support policies to protect intellectual property; v. To encourage a competitive environment for the development of the information, and telecommunications industries in Connecticut; and vi. In all of the foregoing, to proceed in a secure manner so as to provide appropriate protections for the confidentiality of data and other information. 2. Operationalize data collection and linkage to facilitate research and analysis. Create technical capability to link databases that currently exist and
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to identify gaps in needed data across public and private data sources on both an ad hoc and ongoing basis. Create or consolidate databases where necessary to capture cluster data and to integrate, link, fill gaps, and build data to have appropriate public and private childhood development and elementary education datasets. Focus on access to and quality of services, child outcomes (e.g., health, development, educational success), facilities availability and quality, and workforce availability and quality linked to the Cabinet's three goals. The Council recommends:

- a. The State provide support to expand its capacity for public and private networks, expand data warehousing capacity, and to provide for a sort of service bureau to connect and provide access as needed to specific datasets. There should be a two-tiered approach that incorporates identifying necessary data, through Results Based Accountability, that can be joined for specific use for planning, programming, and accountability. The approach should also include processes that seek to connect state agency databases through a federated, or distributed, database architecture in a secure networked environment, such as the work being undertaken by the Connecticut Health Information Network (CHIN).
- b. It should be a priority of this effort to link early childhood data from other state agencies to the State Department of Education's Public School Information System (PSIS).

3. **Improve the availability, quality and analysis of data for the purposes of intervention and accountability.** See recommendation of the Early Childhood Research and Policy Institute on page 20.

Cost

Cost of Data Interoperability		
	FY08	FY09
Development of parallel eHealthCT structure for education	\$500,000	\$1,000,000
Indicator locating and linking	\$1,020,000	\$950,000
Establishing federated database architecture	\$630,000	\$600,000
SDE (expansion of PSIS to SR and DSS-funded programs)	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Total	\$3,150,000	\$3,550,000
FY08/FY09	\$6,700,000	

Additional Challenge

Recommendation

State structural and management issues in expanding programs and expenditures

The Council conducted a scan of seven different state management structure possibilities, that included: (see Appendix A for scan)

- Expanded Early Childhood Cabinet
- Early Childhood Office within Governor's Office
- New entity within OPM
- New Department of Early Childhood

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quasi-public authority • Non-profit • Endowed trust fund <p>The Council refrains from recommending a particular management structure out of respect for the prerogatives of the Governor. That said, the Council offers the following comment for consideration. There is a tension between the kind of structures that are strongest in authority and those strongest in attracting private investment, and it is the Council's view that authority matters most. It is paramount that there is an entity at the state level with strong authority to work across state agencies and budgets. Without an integrative structure, it will be difficult to carry out the rapidly expanding investment that this report envisions. To the extent private investment is desirable, there could be a tandem structure as a paired Office for Early Childhood in the Governor's Office and an associated non-profit public/private partnership to enlist private investment, with officials from the legislative and executive branches as appointing authorities to a governing board. (This is offered as an example, not a recommendation.)</p> <p>We recommend that the Governor immediately consult with legislative leaders in the further design and development of the entity. While the Governor may address many issues through her own executive authority, the Council finds that the future stability of the investment requires that the new structure be embedded in law. The Council stands ready to support further design work for the Governor and General Assembly.</p>
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Cost	<p>The Council recommends an investment of \$1,352,600 for FY08/FY09. This includes \$437,510 for FY08 and \$915,090 for FY09. FY08 costs reflect expenses for two-thirds of the year to allow for phase-in.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">FY08</th> <th style="text-align: center;">FY09</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Staffing (Executive, Project Manager, Data Manager, Administrative Assistant)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$270,010</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$415,090</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Special Projects</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$250,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public/Private Partnership</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$167,500</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$250,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$437,510</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$915,090</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY08/FY09</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">\$1,352,600</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		FY08	FY09	Staffing (Executive, Project Manager, Data Manager, Administrative Assistant)	\$270,010	\$415,090	Special Projects	-	\$250,000	Public/Private Partnership	\$167,500	\$250,000	Total	\$437,510	\$915,090	FY08/FY09	\$1,352,600	
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Additional Challenge	<i>Advise on establishment of a Quality Rating Scale for early care and education center-based programs, including requisite component elements such as a data registry for the ECE workforce.</i>
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Recommendation	A Quality Rating Scale (QRS) assesses the quality of early care and education (ECE) programs and this information can be used to award grants and scholarships, to monitor quality improvements, to guide quality enhancement efforts and to provide parents with information when making decisions for their children. Currently, the State Department of Education (SDE) and the local councils are responsible for ensuring that programs meet the School Readiness standards for quality.
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The Council recommends that the quality monitoring of School Readiness programs and State-funded centers become the responsibility of a Quality Rating Scale (QRS). In order to participate in the School Readiness Initiative, early childhood education programs must be rated by the QRS and achieve a specific quality rating (e.g., 4 stars). The School Readiness Initiative will use the QRS to validate the quality of programs required to make them eligible for SR grants from local councils or to serve families with access to Early Education Grant. After the QRS is fully implemented, other ECE programs in the State may participate in the QRS on a voluntary basis so that it will serve as a quality indicator for parents. (Following from other Council recommendations, this assumes that all early childhood education programs receiving state funding will become School Readiness programs.)

The Council further recommends the creation of a central early childhood education Program Improvement Project that is tied to the QRS but has a regional system of support for programs to work on quality enhancement projects. Programs would be required to develop program improvement plans based on their quality rating evaluation and the Project would provide technical and financial support for these activities. The Project should work collaboratively with or be associated with accreditation support and interdisciplinary consultation initiatives and the proposed Early Childhood Policy and Research Institute.

The Council recommends that initial planning of the QRS begins in the second half of FY07 by the Cabinet, so that it can be piloted in FY08 and implemented in FY09. As the QRS is being developed there will be a need to establish the quality of the State-funded programs and new programs that want to become eligible for the School Readiness Initiative. It is proposed that the group that is developing the QRS also manage the interim process to certify programs for eligibility for SR grants from local councils or to serve families with access to Early Education Grant and DSS State-funded Child Development Centers that wish to be eligible for the School Readiness reimbursement rate. The criteria for validation will be:

- NAEYC (or other) accreditation and
- Teachers meeting current SR qualifications (CDA with 12 credits)

Cost

	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
QRS Development	\$201,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000
Quality Enhancement					
Grants to Communities	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Grants to Programs	\$750,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,625,000	\$1,875,000	\$1,875,000
Consultation services	\$167,500	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Total	\$2,618,500	\$3,350,000	\$3,725,000	\$3,975,000	\$3,975,000
FY08/FY09	\$5,968,500				

Additional Challenge

Propose the establishment of a functioning network of early childhood researchers.

Recommendation

The Council recommends the creation of an **Early Childhood Policy and Research Institute**. The Connecticut Early Childhood Investment Initiative assumes an evidence-based decision making model that will require ongoing research. Some of

this research will be to provide accountability data and other research will inform policy decisions as the initiative moves forward. We propose the creation of an Early Childhood Policy and Research Institute that will make decisions about what policy-related research is needed, will be able to perform some on-going research (data analysis and reporting), and will contract for special research projects as needed. This Institute will have access to data from multiple sources and build the capacity to link these data. The state should fund and request proposals for an Early Childhood Policy and Research Institute to begin in FY08.

Activities performed by the **Early Childhood Policy and Research Institute**:

- i. Implementing Results Based Accountability for SR and other aspects of the early childhood initiative – all 3 of the Cabinet’s goals. (Some of this may be done by the Institute or may be contracted by the Institute).
 - (1) Conduct or prepare RFPs for all aspects of an Assessment and Accountability System and oversee this work. (*see Appendix B*)
 - (a) SR Accountability Project (work with QRS)
 - (b) Implementation of Early Development Instrument (EDI) as a kindergarten benchmark for accountability
 - (c) Longitudinal study of children from preschool entry through early elementary grades to track annual progress in relation to their participation in School Readiness programs
 - (2) For other aspects of the early childhood initiative
 - (a) Identify the indicators to be reported on annually.
 - (b) Ensure the availability and quality of available data for the population indicators and program performance measures.
 - (c) Analyze the data and prepare annual reports for the General Assembly that track changes in the population indicators.

- ii. Policy-relevant research - As the School Readiness Initiative is expanded to serve more children, we will need various types of data for planning and policy purposes.
 - (1) State and Local Planning Data: The evolution of early childhood systems will require state and local planning and decision-making. The Institute would need to take leadership in ensuring that the data systems are in place to provide the needed information, in monitoring the analysis of the data, in making data available to state and local communities. The Institute will participate in the development of early childhood data standards and efforts to build linking and integrating capacity for state databases. The Institute would work with the proposed technical assistance entity to put this data to use in local planning processes undertaken by Local School Readiness Councils.
 - (2) Policy Research: The Institute will identify policy questions and fund special projects to address these questions.
 - (a) Return on Investment Study
 - (b) Research on family and child needs and preferences

Cost

The cost for establishing the Institute and conducting the articulated projects is estimated at **\$1,762,500** for FY08/FY09. Costs in FY08 reflect two-thirds year costs to allow for phase-in.

	FY08	FY09
Institute management and staffing	\$201,000	\$309,000
Research Projects	\$502,500	\$750,000
Total	\$703,500	\$1,059,000
FY08/FY09	\$1,762,500	