

MISSION: Partner with early educators, childcare programs, and community leaders to implement and strengthen a well-funded, equitable system of high-quality, accessible, affordable early childhood services for families in Eagle, Garfield, Lake and Pitkin Counties.

VISION: All children are supported to thrive and develop to their greatest potential as healthy, resilient, successful members of our community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SYSTEMS BUILDING

Strive to achieve a seamless system of early childhood services representing collaboration among private and public stakeholders for effective delivery of services across all EC Framework domains.

ADVOCACY & POLICY

Actively advocate at the local, regional and state levels for legislation and policy that forwards the importance of Early Childhood.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Develop funding to support evidence and research-based programming and supports for Council activities.

PROGRAM SUPPORTS

Improve overall program quality, workforce recruitment & retention, and childcare capacity ensuring school readiness.

The Early Childhood Colorado Framework is used as a guiding document that helps us identify needs, gaps, new outcomes and activities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: SYSTEMS BUILDING

With knowledge of available supports and programs for providers & families across the 4-county region, identify strengths, gaps, opportunities and potential partnerships

Develop and maintain adequate Council staff to carry out Council rules and mandates as well as the Council work defined by the state, membership and partners.

Maintain an adequate number of credentialed coaches throughout the region.

Advocate for equitable access to high quality care, needed supports and services for all children and families by participating in committee work at the local, regional and state levels. (SRQIP)

Actively recruit new providers to expand overall capacity (SRQIP)

As Childcare Resource & Referral for our 4-county region, collaborate with partners and stakeholders to help support families find childcare and other resources.

Expand partnerships and recruit new stakeholders to the Council to participate in Council meetings and initiatives (SRQIP)

As Childcare Resource & Referral for our 4-county region, collaborate with partners and stakeholders to help support families find childcare and other resources.

Be good stewards of grant funds to assure funding is used for intended purposes meets grant goals and ensures funding is effectively used to improve quality.

Act as a resource hub to connect programs and families to resources, supports and services.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: ADVOCACY & POLICY

Advocate at the local, regional and state levels for legislation and policy that forwards the importance of Early Childhood

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Actively seek out grant opportunities that will forward the work of the Council, support ongoing initiatives and build infrastructure.

Utilize Colorado Shines funding to prioritize and support providers who are working towards higher quality ratings (SRQIP)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PROGRAM SUPPORTS

Increase overall credential levels of professionals in the field measured by the Colorado Shines PDIS system (SRQIP)

Develop scalable strategies to support and retain a well-qualified and appropriately compensate early educator workforce (SRQIP)

Increase number of high-quality providers using a menu of evidence-based coaching and consultation services and research-based supports (SRQIP)

Partner with DHS, CDEC, CDE and other partners as appropriate to leverage and expand efforts (SRQIP)

SCHOOL READINESS PLAN:

Early childhood education lays the foundation for a child's future success, shaping cognitive, social, and emotional development. However, many programs within our service area face challenges that limit their ability to provide high-quality learning experiences. A shortage of early childhood educators, insufficient resources, and limited program capacity restrict access to critical early learning opportunities for young children, particularly those from underserved communities.

To bridge this gap, we must prioritize improving program quality through evidence-based teaching strategies, professional development for educators, and enriched learning environments. At the same time, expanding program capacity is essential to meet the growing demand for accessible, high-quality early education. By investing in both quality enhancement and capacity growth, we can ensure all children in our community receive the strong start they need to thrive in school and beyond.

In collaboration with community partners, we have developed targeted strategies to recruit licensed early childhood education (ECE) programs to participate in the Colorado Shines rating system. These efforts focus on outreach, support, and incentives to encourage participation and enhance program quality.

Key strategies include:

- **Community Engagement & Outreach:** Partnering with local organizations to raise awareness about the benefits of Colorado Shines and provide tailored guidance for programs navigating the rating system.
- **Professional Development & Technical Assistance:** Offering training, coaching, and hands-on support to help ECE providers improve their quality and achieve higher ratings.
- **Incentives & Resources:** Providing financial support, grants, and access to high-quality materials to make participation more accessible and rewarding.
- **Promote family involvement:** Support providers in their home language to develop and enhance robust two-way communication with families to strengthen relationship and deepen family involvement.

Through these collaborative efforts, we are strengthening early childhood education across our community, ensuring that more programs are recognized for their commitment to quality and that families can make informed choices about their children's early learning experiences.