



Early Childhood Council
of La Plata County

Annual Evaluation Report

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

All children are healthy, valued and thriving.

*Serving La Plata County
since 1998*



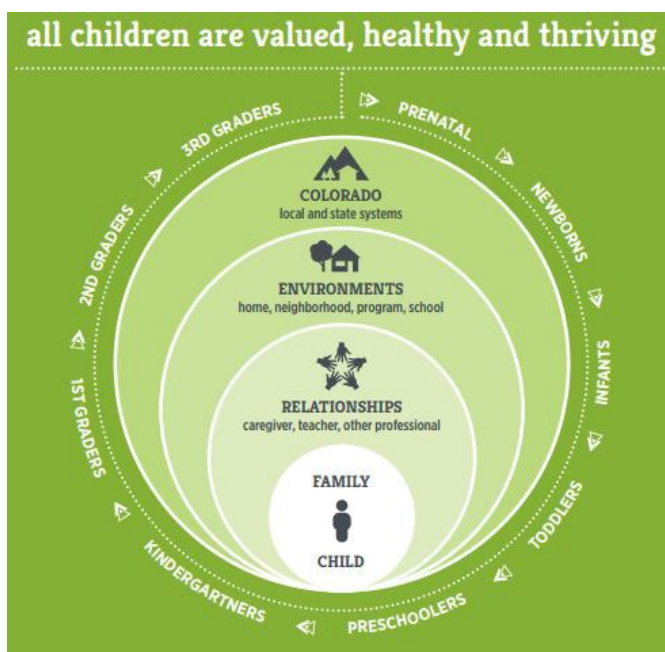
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The Early Childhood System in La Plata County:

The Early Childhood Council of La Plata County (ECCPLC) evolved from the Consolidated Childcare Pilots established by the Colorado General Assembly in 1997. The Durango 4-C Council, Inc. was the fiscal agent for this program as well as Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start, and the Southwest Office of Childcare Resource and Referral. As of July 1, 2012, the ECCLPC is operating as an independent 501(c)(3). The mission of the Early Childhood Council of La Plata County is to support families by increasing the availability, accessibility, and reliability of affordable high quality comprehensive services for all young children (birth-8) and their families. The ECCLPC is a coalition of community members and agencies working within the three domains of the Early Childhood Framework (<http://earlychildhoodframework.org>): learning & development, health & well-being, and family support & education, to create a high-quality comprehensive early childhood system for all young children and their families.

The ECCLPC is governed by a Board of Directors responsible for the overall fiscal and legal functions of the agency. The Council membership consists of 28 dedicated partners from 20 community organizations who agree to the mission, vision, and operating principles; and collaborate to achieve our common goals. Individual members of the Council include representatives from family support, early care and learning, early childhood mental health, public library, early intervention, public health, tribal social services, resource and referral, higher education, and department of human services. Nearly 200 hours of volunteer service per year support this investment in our youngest citizens. The Council service area for Early Childhood Systems Building, Quality Improvement and Provider Services is defined as La Plata County, Colorado. However, through the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation project, the ECCLPC supports early childhood professionals in Archuleta and San Juan Counties. The Early Childhood Council of La Plata Council also holds the Child Care Resource & Referral contract to serve the five counties of Southwest Colorado that comprise Service Delivery Area 2. Additionally, ECCLPC and Montelores Early Childhood Council often partner to join efforts and leveraged resources to support all early childhood professionals and children in the 5 counties of Southwest Colorado.



Mission:

The Early Childhood Council of La Plata County (ECCLPC) is a coalition of community members and agencies working together to create a high quality comprehensive early childhood system to benefit all young children and their families.

Our mission is to support families by increasing the availability, accessibility, and reliability of affordable, high quality services for all young children and families.

Data and Evaluation:

Population Level Indicators: Community wide measures of change in the condition or need that inform decision making across the community. These indicators are often long-term results of the efforts of several different programs, agencies, and initiatives.

Demographic Data¹²:

La Plata County is in the Southwest corner of Colorado. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 1,700 square miles (4,400 km²), and the total population in 2019 was 56,221 people, with an annual population growth of 1.3%. The 2019 child population (under 18 years of age) was 10,961; 2,411 of these children are 5 years old and under. In La Plata County, 69.9% of children under 6 reside in households with both parents in the workforce. La Plata County has more than 21,000 households. Households containing 2 parents and children under the age of 18 account for 4,028 or 20% of all households. Households consisting of single parents with children under 18 years of age account for 1,695 or 8% of all households.

La Plata County also includes land that makes up the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. The Southern Ute Indian Reservation boundaries encompass Tribal trust lands, Indian allotments, homestead fee tracts, tribally-owned or Indian-owned fee land, and lands managed by Bureau of Reclamation and/or the United States Forest Service. This patchwork pattern of land ownership is commonly referred to as a “checkerboard”. The reservation land base includes about 750,000 acres, seven major rivers, and the Navajo State Park. The Southern Ute Tribal enrollment is currently about 1,500, with most of the members living on the reservation. Tribal headquarters are located adjacent to the Town of Ignacio, in La Plata County. Tribal activity generates millions of dollars per year in direct and indirect economic activity. The Tribe is the largest employer in La Plata County with 1,400 people employed in Tribal government and various enterprises.

Child Welfare³:

According to the Colorado Children’s Campaign 2018 Kid’s Count, the Child Abuse and Neglect rate in La Plata County in 2018 was 4.5 per 1,000 children. This rate is below the Colorado rate of 9.5 per 1,000 children. The La Plata County Department of Human Services received 1000 reports of child abuse or neglect in 2019, a 3% decrease from the previous year. Of these reports, 68% were closed at screening. The remaining 324 child abuse or neglect reports were assessed, 302 children were assigned to Family Assessment Response and 22 cases of child abuse and neglect were substantiated. Cases involving children 0 to 5 years of age constitute 31% of assessments in La Plata County.

Children receiving CCCAP subsidies⁴

In La Plata County, enrollment in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program is approximately 9 percent of estimated eligible families, according to a recent analysis by the Colorado Center on Law and Policy and Hunger Free Colorado. Between 2014 and 2016, 240 of the 2,683 children eligible for the program were enrolled. During FY 2019, the La Plata County Department of Human Services reported a caseload of 110 CCAP children birth to 13 years of age. As of June 1, 2020, the La Plata County Department of Human Services reported that the waitlist for the Child Care Assistance Program reports has been resolved. According to the La Plata County Department of Human Services, less than 12% of our CCAP care is provided by exempt providers and all these exempt

¹ U.S. Census Bureau

² Colorado Children’s Campaign - Kids Count 2020

³ CDHS Child Welfare Data & Accountability Reports

⁴ La Plata County Department of Human Services

providers are relatives or other kin who are providing care for specific children with whom they have a pre-existing relationship. None of them are providing care as a career and none of them intend to continue providing care after these specific children no longer need care. Approximately 50% of these exempt providers are providing care during non-traditional hours, when our local licensed are not operating.

Over several years, licensed child care providers in La Plata County reported difficulty accepting CCAP enrollment due to the low reimbursement rate of the CCAP subsidy, which was less than 60% of market rate for infants and toddlers. However, following the 2017-2018 Colorado Child Care Market Rate Study, the La Plata County Department of Human Services announced increased CCAP rates for both centers and homes. These rates are determined by the program type, Colorado Shines Level and age group and are comparable to the 75% percentile of the market rate for care in La Plata County.⁵

Child Care Capacity⁶:

La Plata County currently has 32 licensed centers and 10 licensed child care homes serving children birth to 5 years of age. An additional 12 licensed school-age programs serve children over 6 years of age in afterschool and summer camp capacities. The La Plata County Department of Human Services reports an additional 40 exempt providers who have current agreements to provide care for children eligible for CCAP. These 40 individuals do not represent the full capacity of informal care provided in La Plata County, and accounts for only the care providers who have engaged with the department and agreed to undertake the health and safety requirements to be eligible to accept CCAP payments.

Economic Stability^{7 8}

In Colorado, the amount needed to be economically self-sufficient varies considerably by geographic location. Within the Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado, La Plata County is the most expensive place to live, requiring \$55,472 annually for one adult and one preschooler. The 2020 Colorado minimum wage was \$12.00 per hour, which amounts to \$24,960 per year working full time. Using living expenses specific to each community, Region 9 reports that Durango is the most expensive community in the region for a family of four, requiring a minimum full-time wage of \$31.74 per hour to be economically self-sufficient due to the high cost of housing and child care. In 2019, La Plata County had an unemployment rate of 2.5%, lower than the national and state average.

In 2020 in La Plata County, 11.3% of children were reported to live in poverty. Extreme poverty (children living in families with annual incomes at 50% FPL or less) impacts 5.1% of children under 6 years of age, this rate has significantly increased from 2.6% in 2018. 30.5% of children under 5 years of age are enrolled in Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). 4.1% of children were receiving TANF basic cash assistance.

Learning^{9 10}:

In the 2020-2021 school year, all three school districts located within La Plata County had Colorado Preschool Program slots and currently offer full-day Kindergarten.

⁵ 2017-2018 Colorado Child Care Market Rate Study, Office of Early Childhood

⁶ Salesforce

⁷ Region 9 Economic Snapshot 2020

⁸ Anne E. Casey Kids Count Data Center

⁹ Colorado Children's Campaign - Kids Count

¹⁰ 2019-2020 Pupil Membership data, Colorado Department of Education

Demographics of Student Population in La Plata County – Total Student Population 7,633		
Race	Population	% of Total
White	5085	67%
Hispanic or Latino	1589	21%
American Indian	520	7%
Two or More Races	314	4%
Asian	66	Below 1%
Black or African American	50	Below 1%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	9	Below 1%

In 2019, the total PreK-12 student population in La Plata County served by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program was 162.¹¹ This number may not represent the total number of homeless children and youth in the community, as it does not include children under 3 who have not been identified by the public school and as these situations are difficult to identify due to high mobility, fear of stigma, and the lack of shelter care within La Plata County to support reliable data collection.

School District	PK-12 Student English Language Learner	Percentage of PK-12 Student Special Education	PK-12 Student Title 1 Students	PK-12 Homeless Student Population
Bayfield School District 10-JT	2.8%	12.2%	47	9
Durango School District 9-R	3.2%	10.5%	238	115
Ignacio School District 11-JT	6.4%	14.4%	52	38

In fall 2019, 35.1% of children in La Plata County public schools qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. This rate is significantly lower than the state average and has remained consistent over the past 5 years. However, free- and reduced-lunch eligibility varies widely across school districts, schools, and communities. The highest rates of eligibility can be found in Ignacio Elementary (58%) and Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary (54%) of students qualifying. During the COVID-19 pandemic, students were not required to apply for free and reduced lunch, as all meals were available without charge to all students.

School District	PK-12 Student Population	Colorado Preschool Program Slots	Head Start/ Early Head Start Slots	Reduced Lunch Rate	Free Lunch Rate
Bayfield School District 10-JT	1,314	47	0	11%	22%
Durango School District 9-R	6,931	238	135	6%	26%
Ignacio School District 11-JT	659	52	0	10%	48%

Health Data^{12 13 14}:

The most significant health impact experienced by the child population and early childhood sector during this fiscal year has been the COVID-19 pandemic. San Juan Basin Public Health Department reports that as of June 30, 2020, La Plata County has reported 110 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 1 death attributed to the virus.

¹¹ Durango 9R School District, Student Services Officer

¹² Colorado Department of Human Services “Community Performance Center”

¹³ Health Care Coverage and Access for Children in Low-Income Families: Stakeholder Perspectives from Colorado

¹⁴ San Juan Basin Public Health Department

According to the Colorado Children's Campaign - Kids Count, La Plata County experienced 445 live births in 2018. In 2018, the rate of child death for children ages 1-14 years of age was 46.3 per 100,000; 2.5 times the state rate. The rate of child injury death for children ages 1-14 years of age was 34.7 per 100,000; 3.8 times the state rate. The rate of uninsured children in La Plata county was reported at 7.6% for 2018. This rate reached a peak in 2013 at 19.9% of children in the county were reported to be uninsured. Despite a decrease in the uninsured rate, La Plata County is three times higher than the state rate of 4.4%. In 2018, 9.8% of children (ages 0-18) were enrolled in CHP+ and 38.8% were enrolled in Medicaid. Decrease of 2% from the previous year. 5.7% of La Plata County children who are eligible for Medicaid or CHP+ are not enrolled. This is below the state rate of 6.6%.

Local health insurance enrollment partners identified many barriers to enrollment, as documented in Health Care Coverage and Access for Children in Low-Income Families: Stakeholder Perspectives from Colorado: Many Colorado families have mixed immigration status and include children who are citizens and are eligible for coverage. Respondents said that undocumented parents are often afraid that enrolling their eligible children in coverage could lead to deportation. When immigrant families do enroll eligible children in health coverage, they often need additional assistance, including interpretation services and materials written in languages other than English. Respondents also stated that some families living in poverty are difficult to enroll in health coverage. These families may be facing homelessness, domestic violence, job loss, and other challenging circumstances that make enrolling in health coverage a secondary concern. In the Southwest region of the state, some respondents identified a continued lack of awareness about available health coverage in some communities; low-income families either do not know that they are eligible or assume that coverage will be unaffordable. Also, in the Southwest region, some respondents indicated that there is a stigma associated with Medicaid and CHP+ enrollment, particularly among ranching and farming families; they may choose not to enroll because they do not want to receive public assistance.

Program Performance Measures: Early Childhood Council of La Plata County tracks measurements defined in the organization strategic plan.

CCR&R referrals made to centralized call center for SD-2¹⁵:

ECCLPC is the recipient of the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) contract for the 5-county region of Southwest Colorado known as SD-2. CCR&R Scope of Work includes partnership with the centralized call center housed at Mile High United Way to ensure accurate licensed program data and local resources are available to the referral specialists when assisting families; including additional needs for enhanced or special needs referrals and community support when a provider closes. During FY2020, the central call center processed 13 referral calls from SD-2 and 18 calls logged as Other Contact. This reflects a 70% decrease from FY2018 in referral calls to the centralized call center from the Southwest Colorado region. The majority of request (58%) came from parents needing care due to new or changing employment. Care for children birth to 6 years of age made up 92% of the referral call, with the highest rate of request (83%) for children age birth to 2 years of age. During this fiscal year, the CCR&R coordinator has provided 19 enhanced referrals. Most enhanced referrals were provided as part of the Colorado Emergency Child Care Collaborative during the COVID-19 pandemic. Enhanced referrals were also provided in partnership with local agencies serving McKinney-Vento populations including the La Plata Family Center, Women's Resource Center and Safehouse Shelter.

Since March 17, 2020, the Council has followed state and local guidance and has been closed to in-person operations. While we are closed to in-person operations, we continue to virtually support child care providers of SD-2 through regular outreach, activities, and resources. These resources have included guidance to enhance and implement program Disaster Preparedness Plans and COVID-19 relief and recovery. This includes support to apply for financial assistance, guidance for communication with families regarding closures, public health ordinance and plans to resume operations. The council has conducted weekly Director's Forum meetings through

¹⁵ State-wide Centralized Call Center – Mile High United Way

virtual platforms to assess program needs, monitor child care capacity and provide current guidance from the Office of Early Childhood and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The Council supported the 4 licensed providers that continued to operate during the Stay at Home Order to care for children of essential workers and those families qualifying for Colorado Emergency Child Care assistant from mid-March to mid-May. This support has included the receipt and distribution of personal protective equipment (masks and gloves), cleaning products and paper products. As programs have resumed operation under the Safer at Home order, the Council has distributed these supply kits to 34 licensed child care centers and homes across SD-2.

Licensed Child Care Providers^{16 17}:

Under the Child Care Resource and Referral Scope of Work, the ECCLPC collects data on the supply and demand of child care services in Service Delivery Area 2 (SD-2). This information is provided in a quarterly analysis and shared with the Office of Early Childhood and local stakeholders to inform the provider recruitment and retention efforts included in the ECCLPC CCR&R and Systems Building Scope of Work. The child care analysis for FY 2020 4th quarter indicates that capacity by county, licensing type and age.

Reviewing trends in licensed child care capacity, the ECCLPC has recorded a steady decline in Licensed Family homes in La Plata, Archuleta and Montezuma Counties within the 5-county region. The highest capacity in Family Child Care licenses was in 2nd quarter of FY2016 when 30 licensed child care homes operated in SD-2. Over the past year, the number of licensed child care homes has decreased from 22 to 18; a decrease of 18%. Over the past 4 years, the region has experienced a 40% decrease in licensed child care homes. During the same period, the region has seen a net capacity decrease of licensed child care slots of 5%.

County	Licensed Centers	Licensed Family Homes	School age programs	Total licensed programs
Archuleta	4	4	1	9
Dolores	2	0	0	2
La Plata	28	8	8	44
Montezuma	10	6	1	17
San Juan	1	0	0	1
Total	45	18	10	73

County	0-12 months	12-23 months	24-60 months	Total licensed slots (0-5)	0-5 years population	% of 0-5 years population served
Archuleta	4	39	207	250	638	39%
Dolores	4	4	30	38	84	45%
La Plata	60	133	1,008	1,201	2,579	46.5%
Montezuma	27	49	539	615	1,534	40%
San Juan	5	7	18	30	31	97%
Total	100	232	1,802	2,134	4,866	44%

Under the Child Care Resource and Referral contract, the ECCLPC also works closely with our regional Child Care Licensing Specialist to promote Colorado Shines QRIS engagement of Level 1 programs to achieve Level 2. The Colorado Shines QRIS engagement among licensed providers at a Level 2 or higher is currently 46% across SD-2 as listed below.

¹⁶ Salesforce

¹⁷ Sugar CRM

County	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Archuleta	0	0	2	0
Dolores	0	0	1	0
La Plata	5	3	7	0
Montezuma	4	1	4	1
San Juan	1	0	0	0
Total Engagement	10	4	14	1
Percentage of Engagement across SD2	16%	6%	22%	3%

Since the introduction of Colorado Shines, the ECCLPC has conducted outreach and engagement with all licensed child care providers in La Plata County. The Statement of Work for the Council’s Colorado Shines Quality Improvement Grant guides the quality improvement work of the Council to increase provider engagement in the Quality Rating and Improvement System to 60% of all licensed providers. Engagement is defined as achieving a Level 2 or higher. This work also strives to increase the percentage of communities with access to child care slots for CCAP recipients in at least one high quality provider and increase the percentage of children receiving CCAP subsidies who are served in high quality programs. High quality programs are defined as Level 3-5.

Within La Plata County, there are only 3 communities that currently have licensed child care providers – Bayfield, Durango, and Ignacio. Of these communities, Bayfield and Durango currently have at least one high-quality child care provider with a current CCAP fiscal agreement. Bayfield Early Education Program recently received a high-quality rating in the Colorado Shines system. In January 2019, a new licensed center opened in Ignacio to provide 46 child care slots for children 2- 5 years of age. This program accepts CCAP and CPP eligible enrollment and earned a Colorado Shines Level 2 this fiscal year.

Despite efforts to promote Colorado Shines through social media, director forums, face-to-face outreach and technical assistance, the engagement level across all licensed providers in La Plata County has remained flat at 42%. This engagement reflects 54% of licensed centers and 22% of licensed child care homes. A significant percentage of licensed programs in La Plata county are preschool classrooms operated by the Durango 9R School District. The Director of Early Childhood of Durango School District has agreed to work with the Early Childhood Council to pursue an Alternative Pathway for Colorado Shines Level 3-5. This process has been interrupted by the closure of public-school sites during the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the application for Alternative Pathway will be submitted to the Office of Early Childhood by Spring 2021.

Despite overall flattened provider engagement, the council has successfully engaged programs with CCAP fiscal agreements and higher mean CCAP enrollment to achieve a Level 2-5. 100% of Level 2 programs in La Plata County have current CCAP fiscal agreements and served 35% of children receiving CCAP subsidies in FY18. 100% of high-quality programs (Level 3-5) in La Plata County have current CCAP fiscal agreements and served 35% of children receiving CCAP subsidies in FY19. The 4th quarter quality improvement analysis indicates La Plata County provider engagement by licensing type and quality level.

Licensing Type	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Licensed Centers	13	5	3	7	0
Centers with CCAP fiscal agreement	6	5	3	7	0
Licensed Child Care Homes	7	1	0	0	0
Child Care Homes with CCAP fiscal agreement	4	2	0	0	0

Child Find & Early Intervention Services^{18 19}:

Since 2013, the ECCLPC has participated in a regional Model Community Framework working group to develop a screening and referral protocol to be used by all 5 counties of Southwest Colorado. The community partnership includes Community Connections, Durango 9R School District Child Find, San Juan BOCES, Montelores Early Childhood Council, Early Childhood Council of La Plata County and Tri-County Head Start. This open working group has invited membership from Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma and San Juan Counties. The working group has developed a regional toolkit and technical assistance manual to coordinate the developmental monitoring, screening and referral process across multiple counties and agencies. The toolkit and manual have been provided along with technical assistance and ASQ/ ASQSE screening training to child care centers, early childhood professionals and pediatric practices. Through data sharing agreements, the working group has continued to monitor trends, needs and gaps in the process and revise the technical assistance and outreach as needed.

Several years of disabilities data has been collected through the Tri-County Head Start Annual Needs Assessment. San Juan Board of Cooperative Educational Services and Durango 9R Child Find provided data on preschool aged children identified with a disability by county. Both organizations provide disabilities screening and services to the school districts in the service area. Community Connections, Inc provided data on children with disabilities from birth to age 3. All data sources showed growth in the number of children under age 5 with a disability, from 184 in 2012 to 230 in 2017 which represents a 25% growth over 5 years.

New Preschool Students Receiving Initial Services by District and Year								
County	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
Archuleta County	5	9	8	6	4	10	3	5
La Plata County	59	38	42	56	62	66	42	46
Montezuma County	23	21	23	22	37	23	24	22
Children w/ IEP ages 3-5	87	68	73	84	103	99	69	74
Tri County Service Area	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Children w/ IFSP ages 0-3	97	118	100	105	109	131	133	128
Totals and derived estimates	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total children age 0-5 with a disability	184	186	173	189	212	230	229	231

Early Childhood Mental Health Program (ECMH)²⁰:

ECCLPC currently employs two part-time Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants to provide services to child care center, head start programs and child care homes in Archuleta, La Plata and San Juan Counties. The consultant positions are funded by a contract with the Office of Early Childhood and a Rural Expansion Grant from the Buell Foundation. During FY2020, the consultants contracted 30 hours per week each and spent 60% of their consultation time in early childhood care and education settings. The two ECMH consultants have supported more than 1800 hours of consultation for 78 classrooms in 31 licensed early care centers, home child care providers, Head Start and Early Head Start programs. This represents 60% of all licensed providers in the 3-county region.

Since March 17, 2020 the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants have followed state and local guidance and have discontinued in-person observations and visits. Through the pandemic, the ECHM consultants have operated a "Warmline" provide telephonic support to families, young children, teachers and directors. The non-

¹⁸ Community Connections, Inc. Early Intervention Program

¹⁹ Tri-County Head Start Annual Needs Assessment 2019

²⁰ Salesforce

emergency phone line is open to the public and answered 6 days a week for 10 hours per day. Through this number, the ECMH consultants provide mental health referrals, self-care guidance and resources to support young children during the trauma and stress of the present health crisis. Additionally, the ECMH consultants have offered a series of virtual social emotional workshops to teachers and directors. These workshops have been attended by 15 to 45 participants and cover relevant topics around Trauma-informed Care, Stress Management, Reopening Child Care and Engaging with Children While Maintaining Social Distance & Wearing a Mask.

Prior to interruption of in-person consultation due to COVID-19, ECMH consultants performed the Child Assessment for classrooms serving children 2-5 years of age. To measure the impact of ECMH consultations, the Pre-Assessment reflects baseline total scores for Transitions, Directions, Social Emotional Learning, Staff Affect, Staff Cooperation, Staff-Child Interaction, Individualized/ Developmental Pedagogy & Child Behavior for each class. Ideally, the Post-Assessment scores reflect an increase across all blocks. This data has been useful for the ECMH consultants to evaluate behavior changes among teachers and caregivers following initial consultation. The Post-PreK Child scores often document progress in the area that the consultant has focused strategies or education. It has allowed the consultant to adjust the area of focus for consultation as the teacher and caregivers demonstrate skills in areas that were previously a concern. Upon reviewing the Pre- and Post-Assessment results, the consultant has been able to support the program directors to focus professional development and mentorship on certain areas to improve the classroom's overall ability to nurture social emotional development. Across the classrooms assessed during this grant cycle, one trend stood out --for the consultant. Staff-Child Interaction is often the strongest Pre-assessment score in each classroom and negative change in scores was observed in only 1 out of 5 of the classrooms. It is also important to note that often the Pre- and Post-PreK Child assessments are conducted in a classroom that experiences frequent teacher turn-over and this impacts the effectiveness of the consultation.

Consultation services included director or teacher consultation and program-wide education. The key activities provided include support of teacher self-care activities, teacher cooperation and reflection, recognizing trauma and providing informed care, supporting interventions for challenging behaviors and transitions, supporting social emotional development of young children, parent education and engagement around social emotional needs of young children. The consultant also focuses on establishing the process for referral to the ECMH consultant, establishing expectations of the consultant in the program, and providing feedback and education around secondary trauma, self-care, reflective practices and supporting social emotional competency of early childhood educators. The program-wide education has focused on reflective practice to increase care-giver awareness of the effect their own social emotional health has on their students and co-teachers. The purpose of this reflection is to help teachers identify triggers and self-care strategies to reduce burnout and invest in stress management. The consultant frequently helps teachers and directors to identify community resources for mental health support for professionals working with young children.

Consultants also provided child specific consultation and offered support and education to family and parents of each child referred. The ECMH consultants performed DECAs as part of child specific consultations. To measure the impact of ECMH consultations the DECA is performed for all children whose parent's consent and engage in the assessment process. Additionally, ECMH consultation services were provided to 10 community partners including Pediatric Partners of the Southwest, San Juan Basin Health Family Health Care Coordination and SafeCare. These consultations included education and support for children experiencing homelessness, infants and toddlers born with pre-natal exposure and strategies to increase partnership between childcare providers and home visitation/ family support caseworkers.

Progress toward Strategic Plan: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

To realize our vision “All children are healthy, valued and thriving” the Early Childhood Council of La Plata County has identified six goals and developed a strategic plan with work plans to address each item.

Quality: La Plata County has quality early childhood care & education for all young children.

Strategies	Data Tools	Measurement	Outcomes
A. Resource Development for funding assessment, incentives, staff and coaches	<p>Consistent annual budget reflects funding for activities focused on Quality Improvement</p> <p>Narrative of funding strategies utilized informed by best practices</p>	<p># funding applications submitted</p> <p># awards funded</p> <p># award dollars distributed</p>	<p>4 funding applications submitted to support early learning</p> <p>2 awards funded</p> <p>\$27,350 in Quality Improvement funding distributed to eligible licensed providers</p>
B. Administer quality improvement funding to licensed programs completing requirements with the Colorado Shines QRIS system and increase engagement at Level 2 or higher to 60% of licensed providers	<p>Utilize ecConnect, Sugar CRM & Salesforce to track the indicator data.</p> <p>Submit data, along with the results of trend analysis and a narrative of public engagement and awareness strategies utilized to inform best practices</p>	<p># providers trained on Colorado Shines</p> <p># MOUs with programs</p> <p># high quality ratings in licensed programs</p> <p># professionals with EC credentials</p> <p># coaching hours utilized</p>	<p>2 Level 1 providers trained in Colorado Shines</p> <p>9 MOUs with programs</p> <p>1 new Level 3-5 rating in licensed program</p> <p>3 Level 3-5 programs retained quality rating</p> <p>55 hours of coaching utilized</p>
C. Promote parent, public and provider engagement in supporting families in finding quality child care	<p>Utilize Google analytics and MailChimp to track hits on postings, links and electronic newsletter</p>	<p># recipients of electronic newsletter</p> <p># parents provided with consumer education materials</p> <p># requests for child care referral and link for online child care website</p> <p># hits on ECCLPC website links: www.roadmapforparents.org</p>	<p>420 recipients of the electronic newsletter distributed 6 times per year</p> <p>245 parents provided with consumer education materials</p> <p>4014 hits on the ECC of La Plata website: ecclaplata.org</p> <p>997 hits on the parent resource website: roadmapforparents.org</p>
D. Increase public awareness of the Early Learning Developmental Guidelines and the EC Framework	<p>Narrative of public engagement and awareness strategies utilized informed by best practices</p>	<p># materials distributed to providers and public</p>	<p>5 ELDG books distributed to providers and parents</p> <p>ELD link on website</p> <p>6 times per year - ELDG in electronic newsletter</p> <p>4 times per year - ELDG Facebook posts</p>

Infant & Toddler Care: The Early Childhood Council has dedicated resources & supports to sustain the business of Infant Toddler Care and sufficient capacity to meet demand.

Strategies	Data Tools	Measurement	Outcomes
A. Increase the number of children receiving child care subsidy being served in high quality programs through distribution of mini grants for increasing capacity and quality	Utilize ecConnect & Sugar CRM to track award and approval of quality improvement assets and program participation rates Utilize Salesforce to track the child care licensing capacity for children birth to 36 months in La Plata County	# MOUs with programs # IT slots created each year # high quality ratings in licensed programs # coaching hours utilized	1 new Level 3-5 rating in licensed program serving toddlers 3 Level 3-5 programs serving toddlers retained quality rating 3 CLASS assessments performed in program serving toddlers
B. Offer 48 hr. Expanding Quality in Infant/ Toddler Care Training & Coaching	Utilize ecConnect, Sugar CRM & Salesforce to track registration, sub-support and scholarships Utilize sign-in forms, evaluations and agendas to track participation	# EC professionals participate in training # coaching hours utilized changes in pre/post evaluation data	2 professionals participated in EQIT 8 hours of EQIT coaching were provided
C. Participate in Directors meetings to determine issues, trends and needs	Utilize sign-in forms, evaluations and agendas to track participation	# directors participate # agendas include speaker to address infant & toddler care needs	14 directors participated in meetings. Directors representing 50% of licensed programs in La Plata County 12 directors' meetings held in person and virtually 2 agendas included topics and speakers related to infant & toddler care needs
D. Support partnerships & generate resources to increase the capacity and quality of infant toddler care	Utilize Salesforce to track the child care licensing capacity for children birth to 36 months in La Plata County Data sharing with LPDHS to track high quality CCAP slots	# IT slots created each year # IT CCAP slots # high quality ratings in licensed programs	199 IT slots maintained in licensed programs 144 (75%) of IT slots accept CCAP 6 Level 3-5 programs serving IT slots

Professional & Workforce Development: The Early Childhood Council is dedicated to providing professionals access to a variety of professional and workforce development opportunities.

Strategies	Data Tools	Measurement	Outcomes
A. Support partnerships and generate resources to subsidize, offer and support community-based trainings to increase quality in classrooms & programs and build leadership.	Utilize ecConnect, Sugar CRM & Salesforce to track registration, sub-support and scholarships Utilize sign-in forms, evaluations and agendas to track participation	# EC professionals participate in training # coaching hours utilized changes in pre/post evaluation data # PD scholarships provided	77 EC professionals participate in training 8 EQIT coaching hours utilized 1 PD scholarship provided
B. Promote early childhood as a profession by developing leadership opportunities and a diverse selection of ongoing community training programs.	Utilize Google analytics and MailChimp to track electronic hits on postings, links and electronic newsletter	# hits on website trainings posts or links: www.ecclaplata.org # recipients of electronic newsletter	4014 hits on the ECC of La Plata website: ecclaplata.org 90 EC professionals receive electronic newsletter distributed 6 times per year
C. Build community capacity of early childhood workforce through education about compensation and retention.	Narrative of public engagement, awareness and recruitment strategies utilized informed by best practices Utilize sign-in forms, evaluations and agendas to track participation	# credentialed coaches contracted # credentialed & approved trainers contracted # convening of workforce committee # partners on workforce committee # organizational partners identified	3 credentialed coaches on contract 5 approved trainers on contract 3 convenings of workforce committee 7 community members on committee 56 partner agencies identified

Social and Emotional Development: The Early Childhood Council works to ensure that children, families, and early childhood professionals have access to services, supports & training around mental health and social emotional development of young children:

Strategies	Data Tools	Measurement	Outcomes
A. Secure resources to provide social emotional health and development training.	Consistent annual budget reflects funding for activities focused on health and well being Narrative of funding strategies utilized informed by best practices	# funding applications submitted # awards funded	1 funding application submitted to support SE and mental health services 1 award funded
B. Resource Development to support Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist.	Utilize Salesforce to track consultation contacts and Pre-K Climate Assessment results	# consultation services to early learning programs # consultation services to Head Start programs	78 EC center classrooms received consultation 11 Head Start classrooms received consultation

	<p>Utilize ecConnect, Sugar CRM & Salesforce to track registration, sub-support and scholarships</p> <p>Utilize sign-in forms, evaluations and agendas to track participation</p>	<p># consultation services to home child care providers</p> <p># consultation services to parents & families</p> <p># consultation services to peers, primary care & home visitation programs</p> <p># EC professionals participate in training</p> <p># SE trainings offered per year</p>	<p>3 home child care providers received consultation</p> <p>26 parents/ families received consultation</p> <p>10 consultation services to peers, primary care & home visitation programs</p> <p>142 EC professionals participated in SE training</p> <p>7 SE trainings provided virtually</p>
<p>C. Social Emotional Committee meets to implement goals and to assess needs and outcomes.</p>	<p>Utilize meeting sign-in forms, meeting evaluations and agendas to track partner participation</p> <p>Utilize Google analytics to track electronic hits on postings and links</p>	<p># convening of SE Committee</p> <p># partners on SE Committee</p> <p># hits on website links: www.ecclaplata.org and www.roadmapforparents.org</p>	<p>2 SE Committee Meetings convened</p> <p>5 partners on SE Committee</p> <p>4014 hits on the ECC of La Plata website: ecclaplata.org</p> <p>997 hits on the parent resource website: roadmapforparents.org</p>

Strengthening the Early Childhood System: The Early Childhood Council works to ensure the early childhood system has strong leadership, visibility, cross domain collaboration and community awareness:

Strategies	Data Tools	Measurement	Outcomes
A. Strengthen partnerships to develop & coordinate forums dedicated to exploring issues related to early childhood (i.e. child abuse, prenatal, child poverty, policy, governance and systems integration across domains).	Utilize meeting sign-in forms, meeting evaluations and agendas to track partner participation Utilize multiple communication formats (social media, website & Mail Chimp, email) about various forums, trainings & meetings.	Increased knowledge of community needs Improved collaborative relationships Increased diversity of partnerships Increased knowledge by Council members of programs in community that serve young children Building internal capacity of Council Increased family partnerships	100% of ECC meeting agendas include partner updates to share community needs, identify gaps and increase knowledge of available community resources and services. 312 Facebook followers - average reach of 84 people per post 62% of licensed providers in La Plata County participated in Early Care and Learning Resource Study through CDPHE
B. Strengthen leadership and facilitation skills that encourage honest, respectful debate while maintaining boundaries appropriate to resources.	Utilize meeting sign-in forms, meeting evaluations and agendas to track partner participation	Strong collaborative leadership. Members/staff present an activity with each Council meeting. Staff and Council meetings include work plan and EC Framework updates.	100% of ECC meeting agendas presentations by council members, staff or community guests Membership reviews and approves changes to ECC Strategic Plan 100% of ECC meeting agendas and minutes distributed to membership and available for public review
C. Expand partnerships and strengthen collaboration in La Plata, Archuleta, Montezuma, Dolores and San Juan counties.	Utilize multiple communication formats (social media, website & Mail Chimp, email) about various forums, trainings & meetings. Utilize meeting sign-in forms, meeting evaluations and agendas to track partner participation	Regular participation in: Directors' meetings SJBD NFP Model Community Framework IAK Core Team Early Intervention ECCLA Increased information & partnerships	18 Director meetings attended 3 NFP/ CAB meetings 2 Model Community Framework groups 2 IAK Core Team meetings 4 EI Advisory meetings 2 SJ Basin Health Care Coordination meetings 1 CHAC meeting
D. Strengthen connections with OEC & CDE to leverage funding,	Input data as required.	SUGAR data reports to measure systems building, QI and PD	100% completion of OEC quarterly reports

implement new data systems and complete required data reports.			100% completion of OEC invoice reports for COQI 100% completion of CCR&R provider updates in Salesforce
E. Promote transitions of children.	Utilize Salesforce to track consultation contacts by ECMH Consultant and licensed provider or local education agency	# LOAs with local education agencies # preschool and Kindergarten transition meetings	2 LOAs with local school districts to support transitions 4 preschool and Kindergarten enrollment meetings
F. Young children have access to health & mental health care through improved systems building efforts across domains.	Utilize Google analytics to track electronic hits on postings and links	# hits on website links: www.roadmapforparents.org	924 hits on the parent resource website: roadmapforparents.org



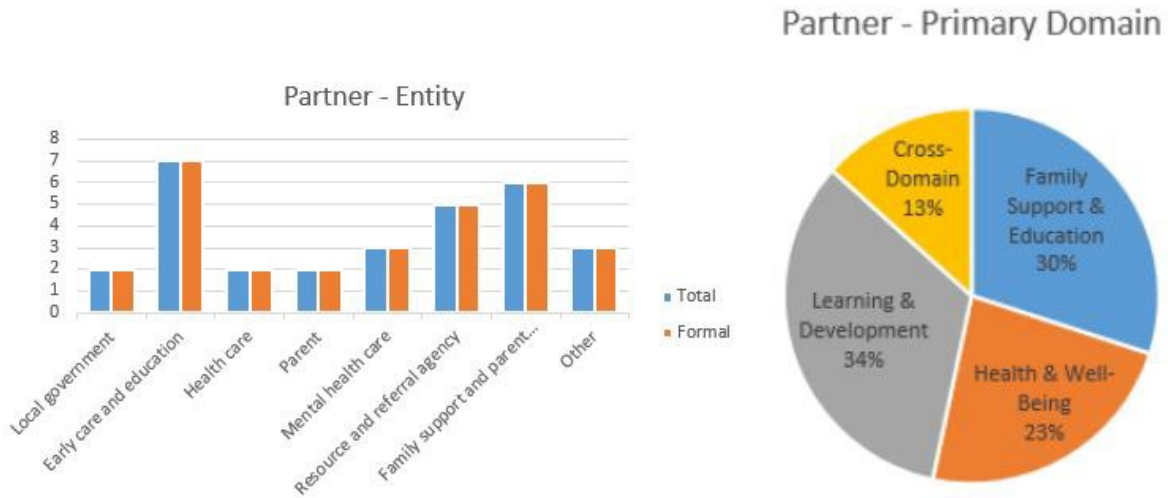
The ECCLPC utilizes social media, print advertising, electronic newsletter distribution, community meetings and events to promote the work of the Council, to inform the public of the importance of Early Childhood services and alignment local work with state initiative. Awareness topics and maximum audience impact has been tracked across multiple strategic goals to support provider recruitment and retention, disseminate Early Learning Developmental Guidelines promote quality of care and consumer education. The category Other includes information about local resources, partners and services available to support families and providers in the Council area.

Governance and Leadership: The Early Childhood Council has a formal governance structure that is sustainable, independent, collaborative, maturing, visionary, and supports the identity of the ECCLPC:

Strategies	Data Tools	Measurement	Outcomes
A. Maintain 501(c)3 nonprofit status for ECCLPC.	Utilize meeting sign-in forms, meeting evaluations and agendas to track partner participation	# annual BOD meeting Record of agendas and minutes	5 annual BOD meetings 100% of agendas and minutes recorded
B. Strengthen & increase participation of ECCLPC general membership & ECC committees and workgroups.	Utilize meeting sign-in forms, meeting evaluations and agendas to track partner participation	# member MOUs # general membership & committee meetings # general membership monthly communication and newsletter Record of agendas and minutes	27 membership MOUs 10 general membership meetings 13 general membership monthly communication and newsletter 100% of agendas and minutes recorded
C. Board of Directors & Council membership memorandum of understanding, application and bylaws align with new rules governing Early Childhood Councils	Annual Membership and MOU renew forms	BOD and Council membership requirements and expectations are up to date and understood.	34 membership and BOD MOUs Membership packets updated annually

From July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 the ECCLPC held 5 Board of Director meetings. The Board is comprised of 6 to 9 members as outlined by the organization bylaws. The membership consists of cross domain representation including parents, local government, early care & education, and local business professionals.

Board Member	Employer/Affiliation	Term End
Carol Blatnick, President	Vice President, Bayfield School Board	April 2024
Martha Johnson	Director, Department of Human Services	October 2023
Elizabeth vonTauffkirchen	Director of Media Services, Pine River Library	April 2024
Gayle Webster, Vice President	Broker, Caldwell Heritage Realty	April 2024
Vivienne Yeagy	Owner, Nifty Nanny, LLC	April 2024
Tara Kiene, Secretary/ Treasurer	CEO, Community Connections, Inc.	October 2023



From July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 the ECCLPC held 10 Council meetings. The total volunteer attendance by our 28 members from the mandatory membership categories representing 20 partner agencies equaled 210 hours during this fiscal year.

Working together to build a better future for Colorado's children by creating a high quality comprehensive early childhood system that coordinates funding, services, and partnerships.

Our Community Partners

- Ballantine Family Foundation
- Bayfield Early Education Programs
- Buell Professional Training Project
- Community Connections, Inc.
- Cooking Matters
- Court Appointed Special Advocates of the Southwest
- Durango Adult Education Center
- Durango Public Library
- Durango School District 9R
- Expanding Quality in Infant & Toddler Care
- Fort Lewis College
- La Plata Family Centers Coalition
- La Plata County Department of Human Services
- Mercy Employee Child Care
- Nifty Nanny, LLC
- Pine River Library
- San Juan Basin Health Department
- San Juan Board of Cooperative Educational Services
- Seeds of Learning Early Care and Education Center
- Southwest District of CAEYC
- Tri-County Head Start /Early Head Start
- United Way of Southwest Colorado
- Private Therapists, Parents & Community Members

State Partners

- Buell Foundation
- Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children
- Colorado Children’s Campaign, It’s About Kids Network
- Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood, Divisions of Early Care & Learning and Community & Family Support
- Colorado Department of Education, Office of Early Learning & School Readiness
- Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
- Early Childhood Colorado Partnership
- Early Childhood Councils Leadership Alliance
- Early Childhood Leadership Commission
- Early Milestones Colorado
- Healthy Child Care Colorado
- Invest in Kids
- Rose Community Foundation