

CCCS: Conference call with Colorado's _____ – April 16, 2015

- **In developing an Early Childhood program, what were your initial goals? Do you feel those goals are being/have been met? How did you set metrics for determining success?**
 - Increase efficiency and effectiveness; coordinate funding streams, reduce duplication; increase quality and access to programs
 - Look at how to sustain important investment in early childhood
 - Coordinate internal systems and improve access to data
- **What is the structure of your program? Who provides governance and policy oversight? What are the funding streams?**
 - Tried to implement early childhood agency legislatively, but unsuccessful; Governor felt so strongly about putting together program for better alignment, enacted executive order
 - Office of Early Childhood (OEC) housed within DHS
 - Hub and spoke model; Leadership commission advises OEC
 - Leadership commission co-chaired by Lt. Gov and other leaders
 - Singular structure has promoted greater collaboration and stronger, consistent vision; stakeholders now have a single contact
- **Were there any policy bodies that required disbanding? What sort of executive or legislative actions were taken to establish this agency and commit to funding?**
 - Initial creation via executive order
 - Not quite disbanding, but many staff moved to DHS from Dept. of Public Health; Division of Child Care transitioned to Division of Early Care and Learning (QRIS resides here)
- **Which agencies were “at the table” during establishment and how did you ensure sustainability during changes in political leadership?**
 - DHS was frontrunner at table; Executive Director/Secretary had early childhood experience;
 - Sustainability across administration: While originated as Executive Order, codified in statute the following session
 - Sustainability across resources are still works in progress; tough to track and assess how federal dollars are being used
- **What were the costs of organizing this department? What, if any, were the savings?**
 - Unknown costs
 - Efficiencies demonstrated, especially in terms of having staff resources available to families and service providers
- **What services, if any, got left out? What services, if any, pertain to early childhood development that are not housed under OEC (e.g. home visiting, child subsidies, mental health, etc)?**
 - Would have looked at adult and child food/nutrition program (currently in public health); still have a bifurcated childcare inspection system, so facilities get double-inspected

- Most services appear to be housed under OEC, since many of those services were pulled from DPH
- **What sort of support did you have from the affected agencies going into this restructuring? Where was the greatest pushback?**
 - Growing pains with government staff moving from one department to another; in hindsight, would have put leadership team in place to ease transition
 - Support came from executive branch and agency heads
- **(If housed under Department/agency): What were your reasons for housing your agency underneath an existing agency, rather than creating a standalone department?**
 - DHS is a cabinet agency; DOE is administered by elected Board of Ed
 - Executive Director of DHS had early childhood background; made sense to house within DHS
- **What sort of data systems and measurements are in place? How does data tie into your organizational goals?**
 - Current administration particularly data driven – once a month powerpoints regarding status of metrics/goals to exec admin
 - Utilize data for children with signs of abuse/neglect to be automatically submitted for early intervention assessment (caseworkers cannot close file until they have referred child to early intervention program)
 - Data integration and utilization still a work in progress: not much client-level data for families
 - Developing longitudinal data system and data on health issues: insurance, vaccinations, etc.
- **How does your agency facilitate getting the appropriate services to children who need them?**
 - Child subsidy reform made program more parent/user friendly
 - Increased number of childcare licensing inspectors
 - Example offered: closing or investigating child care facilities
 - Old process: AG would send summary notice to child care facility unannounced and would close down facility that day; parents would have to come pick up children and would be left without childcare the next day; due to investigative nature, information often not able to be shared with parents and there was no leader or contact person to field parent's questions
 - Now: one person on the facility closing team is an expert on social and mental health; there is now a team on site at the facility with information on childcare referral as well as who to contact for childcare and mental health resources if needed
- **How does your agency interact with service providers and what resources are in place to facilitate collaboration?**
 - Leads within programs working side by side for common goals in a way that can't be done without greater integration

- On locality level, very robust in some counties, and work-in-progress in others; utilize councils (made up of service providers and stakeholders) as ambassadors to assist councils/serve as resource
- **Looking back, what would you have done differently/what were some lessons learned?**
 - Because of politicized nature of DOE as elected board, would have given less control/access to DOE – good partners, but challenging because they're not a cabinet agency