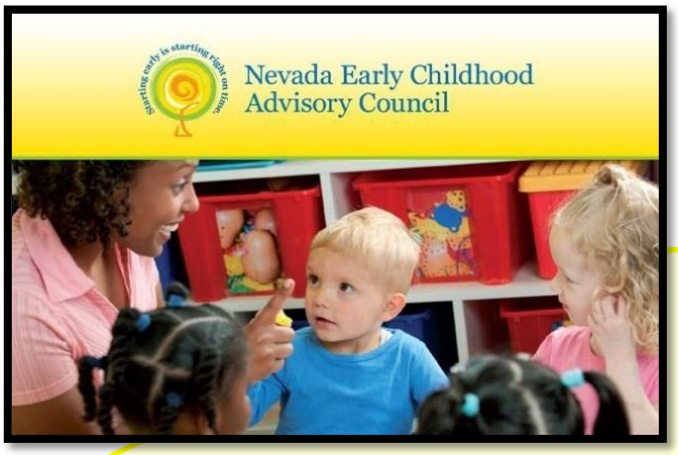

Needs Assessment for Nevada's Early Childhood Data System Project 2012

A project of the

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, managed by the Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office

Nevada's children will be safe, healthy and thriving during the first eight years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential.

-- Vision of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

Acknowledgments

This project was funded with federal stimulus funds (under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act). It was envisioned and made possible by the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (Nevada ECAC), Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office. A special workgroup of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council provided guidance and assistance with many aspects of the project.

More than 800 individuals from each of Nevada's 17 counties helped to make this project successful, through participation in site visits, focus groups, surveys and interviews. The Council gratefully acknowledges this support and participation.

Special thanks are extended to members of the project advisory committee that provided data and technical assistance, to all key stakeholders that made time for interviews, and to all families that participated in focus groups, interviews, and surveys.

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes the results of a needs assessment that was conducted for Nevada in the first half of 2012 related to the Kindergarten Entry and Data System (KEDS) project. KEDS is a statewide effort to build a comprehensive early childhood education and care (ECE) system that supports the ability of all children in Nevada to enter kindergarten ready to learn. The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, (Nevada ECAC) managed by Nevada's Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems (HSC&ECS) Office, in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), is leading this effort, which has identified two major components of system change as priorities for implementation:

a) Adoption of a common kindergarten entry assessment (KEA); and

b) Development of a Coordinated Data System that links Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) to K-12 (and beyond) in order to support early childhood educators to understand and utilize child assessment data to improve programs, curriculum and environments.

The vision for this project, known as KEDS, is defined by the Nevada ECAC as follows:

> *Nevada's statewide data system leads to a shared understanding of school readiness. Everyone who touches children's lives will have a broad awareness of the strengths, needs and status of Nevada's children; and information that improves children's development and learning.*

To carry out this vision, a comprehensive needs assessment was launched in January 2012 with a focus on determining the feasibility at both the state and county level for adopting a statewide approach. To ensure that every one of Nevada's 17 counties were represented in the needs assessment process, an extensive effort was made to obtain local stakeholder input regarding county-level needs, assets, and buy-in related to participating in the implementation of a Statewide Early Childhood Data System and KEA.

The needs assessment process included focus groups and site visits in all 17 counties and school districts to understand current practices, resource needs, specific barriers, and level of willingness to participate in this statewide systems change initiative. This needs assessment will allow Nevada to determine the most sensible approach for improving each county's ability to ensure that its children enter kindergarten ready to learn, socialize, and thrive.

There is an increasing acknowledgement in Nevada, as in the rest of the nation, that a quality early childhood education and care is essential for longer-term student success. High-quality early education programs have been found to be cost-effective and beneficial, resulting in positive long-term educational outcomes and subsequent adult outcomes. This linkage has created a sense of urgency related to measuring young children's educational progress and readiness to enter school during their Pre-K years in order to:

- Provide information on teacher and program effectiveness;

- Identify students who would benefit from intervention and other services; and
- Inform local and state policy and program improvement decisions.

As states are developing early childhood systems, they also are developing data systems that provide information about young children and their families and the public services that are provided to them. Some of this information is for basic monitoring and claims processing purposes, but states increasingly seek to design data systems that can be used to evaluate program strategies, identify gaps in services, and support continuous learning and results-based accountability. Some leading states, including Nevada, are attempting to ensure "data interoperability" across health, family support, and early childhood education and care (ECE) programs serving young children, by linking them with statewide longitudinal databases for students in the K-12 public education system.

Information Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

In order to complete outreach in a timely manner, both formal and informal communication channels were leveraged to systematically contact groups within the state that were identified during the planning process. Individuals and businesses (such as private preschools and child care) have limited access to the information if they are not connected to an existing initiative like the local Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). To help address this issue, surveys were sent to several mailing lists, and two meetings offering Nevada Registry Credits were conducted.

Because Nevada counties represent such a wide range of needs, priorities, resources, and values, it was deemed crucial to the project to ensure that, in addition to reviewing state-level information and data, each one of Nevada's 17 counties and school districts were actively engaged and provided with the opportunity to inform the needs assessment. The needs assessment process included focus groups and site visits in all 17 counties to determine their current data collection efforts, software currently used and the willingness to participate in the effort to collect data statewide. In several of the larger counties, multiple site visits were made to obtain the broadest level of input possible. This input was sought from parents, early childhood educators, local and state program administrators, school teachers and administrators, and other stakeholders to discern the needs regarding early childhood data and the feasibility of designing a coordinated system to collect and manage that data. The objectives of the site visits, interviews, focus groups, and surveys were to:

1. Identify the current status of kindergarten assessment and data systems by county, school district and for the state;
2. Identify the optimal design for Nevada's KEA and issues to resolve in implementing the Assessment statewide; and
3. Identify the optimal design for Nevada's Data System and issues to resolve in implementing the system statewide.

Nevada's plan is to implement a common statewide KEA no later than the 2014-15 school year, which will produce relevant data that can inform Nevada's efforts to improve children's readiness to enter school. Data will be tracked related to the essential domains of school readiness, according to Nevada's definition, including: a) language and literacy development, b) cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), c) approaches toward learning, d) physical well-being and motor development, including adaptive skills, and e) social and emotional development. The warehousing of this information in a coordinated early childhood data system that is linked to NDE's longitudinal data system will enable Nevada to examine data on student growth and development before children reach third grade, when they typically participate in their first statewide standardized tests.

Upon implementation, the common assessment will determine the level of mastery that a child has attained which is aligned with selected Kindergarten Common Core State Standards and will eventually serve as the Standard-Based Report Card. Nevada's plan will ensure that assessments evaluate the multiple domains of readiness, including social-emotional development. This coordinated data system will assist Nevada's local and state policymakers, funders, and program administrators to make data-informed policy and programming decisions that improve quality, performance and outcomes of ECE programs and maximize public and private investment in early childhood. Ensuring that data are accessible and stakeholders have the capacity to use data appropriately will improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve education and social outcomes for Nevada's children.

This needs assessment was conducted to determine and define the information that specific stakeholders—policymakers, school districts, schools, principals, teachers, and parents—need in order to build a system of early childhood education and care that ensures that all children in Nevada have access to quality programs and supports that make certain they enter school ready to learn. The needs assessment conducted for a coordinated early childhood data system goes hand in hand with the needs assessment related to adopting a common KEA for the state, as the data from the assessment process is intended to help guide teaching and learning and to inform program effectiveness.

Ultimately, the state's early childhood data system should have the capacity to fully integrate Pre-K data from both public and private programs into Nevada's existing longitudinal data system in a manner that maintains confidentiality and privacy for students and their families while offering easy and timely access to information (at appropriate levels) for the variety of stakeholders listed above.

As Pre-K programs increasingly become part of Nevada's formal education continuum, the need to align standards, curricula, instruction, and assessments is growing. Creating a coordinated data system that links the ECE and K-12 systems is an essential first step in assessing children's early educational experiences and the impact of early childhood education and care on later school success. In Nevada, most education data systems and development efforts are focused on the student's K-12 experience, with little attention paid

to Pre-K education and care environments and outcomes. It is critical to develop an early childhood data system that can link with Nevada's longitudinal data system in order to facilitate analysis of how the Pre-K experiences that children have (or have not) had are related to educational and social achievement in later years.

Summary of Findings

The needs assessment process focusing on Nevada's existing assets and needs are condensed into overarching findings. The findings below represent analysis of multiple data sources including reports, interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

1. Overall, there is broad support for building a coordinated early childhood data system in Nevada, and agreement that the ECE system should be linked to a common kindergarten assessment in Nevada that is aligned with the state's K-12 system. However, stakeholders in individual counties express a range of concerns and questions related to implementation of such a system, including how it will be funded and how it will be tailored to meet their specific needs.
2. There is a high level of buy-in for Nevada's definition of school readiness, which was drafted by the project planning group and vetted in every county and school district prior to being approved by the Nevada ECAC. This definition of school readiness will drive the selection of key student, program, school and system indicators.
3. There was universal agreement among school districts that the system must fit within their existing framework and add enough value for ECE programs and districts to participate, given that it is likely to require more resources in terms of time and funding.
4. Every county and district expressed an interest in developing communication strategies that are targeted to both parents and the community at large which emphasize the importance and value of early childhood education and care, beginning at birth. ECE stakeholders across the state, including parents, provided input on the critical role that parents play in their child's education, and every district has included parent engagement as a focus of their strategic planning efforts.
5. Most, if not all, counties would like to see the KEDS project implemented in a way that improves and expands collaboration, communication, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities across districts, educators and classrooms.
6. Both Pre-K and K-3 educators and administrators feel strongly that Nevada's Pre-K standards should align to the Common Core State Standards, and noted that the fact that no district currently has a fully aligned assessment system is a significant obstacle.

Summary of Key Challenges and Critical Issues

There are a number of challenges in developing such a system, not the least of which is the fact that a wide variety of funding sources and state agencies provide support for Nevada's ECE programs, making the task of data collection and integration difficult at both the state

and county level. The key challenges, concerns and critical issues that were most commonly expressed by local and state stakeholders are outlined in this section.

Service Capacity and Access to Pre-K Programs: As a rural/frontier state, many families in Nevada face challenges related to transportation and access to child care that have a direct impact on school readiness. Not all districts in Nevada offer state-funded preschool or Head Start programs, and since kindergarten is not mandatory in any of Nevada's 17 districts, a significant number of children in the state do not participate in any ECE programs prior to entering school. The range of Pre-K providers is extremely diverse, including school districts, for-profit, not-for-profit, faith-based, and home-based childcare providers. A review of the county level needs assessment reports reveals stark contrasts from one county to the next related to program capacity, resources, staffing and funding for Pre-K programs. In general however, the demand for ECE programs and supports far outweighs the availability of services, making data collection and tracking even more difficult because it is not adequately resourced.

Geographic Disparity and Transiency: Nevada's geography and population distribution poses unique challenges that can create barriers to education and access to quality ECE programs. These challenges are further exacerbated by difficult economic conditions. Nevada's total population was 2,643,085, according to the 2010 census. The 2010-2011 school year K-12 student population was 437,444, of which 71.8% attend school in Clark County, the fifth largest school district in the nation. Each county in the state has its own school district, which are unique in culture, size and infrastructure. This was underscored by the findings from county site visits and focus groups. For example, Esmeralda County has only 66 students. Conversely, Nye County School District (NCSD) is located in south central Nevada, and is geographically the third largest county in the contiguous United States (18,159 square miles). Nye is larger than the combined total area of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Delaware, with 5,738 students in 26 elementary, middle, and high schools. Located in the opposite corner of the state, Elko County School District (ECSD) is geographically the fourth largest in the contiguous United States with 9,556 students in 32 schools. The county has a total area of 17,203 square miles, with most of it in the Great Basin. Elko is home to Great Basin College, a community college with a service area of 62,000 square miles, two time zones, and six of Nevada's largest rural counties.

This diversity is reflected in both the assets of each county as well as in their challenges, and stakeholders across the state emphasized that there is no "one size fits all" approach that will work in Nevada.

Student mobility and transiency: Counties indicated a strong interest from multiple counties to be able to access information about students transferring from other Nevada districts into theirs, often noting that a great deal of time and resources is devoted to helping students catch up when they have moved from another district. Giving ECE programs ready access to a more complete longitudinal record of their students' early childhood program experiences, early learning, and development would strengthen their understanding and help them meet their students' needs by crafting learning opportunities

to help them progress. With a more comprehensive data system, teachers in communities with high rates of family mobility could more quickly become prepared to work with students who enter at different points in the year, and reduce the risk of those children falling through the cracks.

Fragmentation and Inconsistency: Sources of early childhood education and care include state and locally funded public school programs (e.g. state-funded Pre-K), federally funded early education programs like Head Start and Even Start, private childcare providers, and more, all with differing funding mechanisms and accountability requirements. As has been noted, Nevada does not have a unified early childhood data collection system, but there are many programs and agencies in the state that currently collect data independently. All kindergarten teachers across Nevada assess student skills upon kindergarten entry, but there is no consistency or consensus about how to assess children's developmental capabilities at kindergarten entry. Assessment information that is collected in classrooms across the state goes into the individual child's school file and is not tracked or uploaded into a data collection system. If a standardized process for conducting assessment was utilized and data was captured on key indicators, the quality of early childhood education and care programs could then be assessed and facilitate data-driven decisions regarding quality improvements.

Inappropriate Use of Data: Many expressed concern that KEAs could be used to keep children from entering (or continuing) in kindergarten. While there was broad agreement that exclusion was inappropriate, and this notion is widely supported by publications on kindergarten assessment, some stakeholders including parents, educators, and administrators noted that KEAs could be helpful for determining whether a child was actually ready for kindergarten, inform placement (including encouraging parents to wait another year, until the child is ready). This issue is one that requires further discussion; clearly the goal is school readiness, and children should not be excluded.

Insufficient Data Availability, Access and Utility: As in most states, Nevada has limited information about very young children and the services they receive. From the time of their birth, when birth record information is collected, to the time children enter school, there are no points at which virtually all young children are seen or information is collected about them. While most young children see a primary health practitioner at least annually, that information remains largely within the practitioner's office.

Furthermore, there has been no agreement to date in Nevada on what information specific stakeholders need, or on developing access to that information. A review of the 17 county reports indicated that some counties regularly utilize data electronically while others manage with a paper-based system that does not allow electronic access to the information. Additionally, the current collection of assessment data in early childhood is limited and haphazard, due to the fact that KEAs are not standardized in Nevada and that assessment requirements vary from program to program. Since data that is compiled is stored in disconnected data systems, the data has limited usefulness and renders longitudinal analyses difficult, costly, and time-consuming.

Although data is plentiful on state Pre-K programs at the school-district level, data is not available on the many Pre-K programs that are funded and operated by community-based organizations in addition to or instead of school districts. As a result, data does not capture the full picture of early childhood education and care. Because the majority of Head Start grantees are community-based organizations rather than school districts, much of the data cannot be compiled and reported, even though it is collected by local Head Start programs.

Insufficient Local Resources and Infrastructure: Requirements for new processes that have additional cost implications for school districts would be difficult for many of them. The majority of Nevada's counties are sparsely populated and do not have the technology infrastructure in place that would allow them to participate in a coordinated ECE data system without additional funding and/or technical support. Many districts face budget shortfalls and expressed an uncertainty that any new investment could be made if those items were not already incorporated into their budgets and planning activities. This is a common issue and concern for stakeholders at all levels, including policy makers, districts, and programs (both private and nonprofit) that serve young children. The county site visits and focus groups highlighted the significant variation in the capacity of larger, better resourced school districts to implement KEDS versus the smaller districts, and several counties suggested that it would be advisable to consider designing a phased-in or pilot approach with a staggered start-up that allows more planning time, training and assistance to those counties that need it.

Varying Accountability Standards: ECE programs are funded by diverse sources with varying accountability standards. For example, federally funded programs that are state-administered include Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care Subsidies, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs. These programs are housed in different federal departments, including the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The result is that school districts may need to provide information in response to different sets of federal, state, and local reporting requirements, leading to inconsistent educational practices and involving resources that might be better used in the provision of education to children rather than meeting different reporting requirements.

Data Interoperability and Confidentiality Concerns**:** Student confidentiality must be carefully maintained and student-specific data made available only on a very strict need-to-know basis. The federal and state legislation, regulations, rules, and procedures that are currently in place to ensure confidentiality are somewhat fragmented and inconsistent, posing a barrier to creating a coordinated ECE data system that can effectively link with the K-12 system.

In general, the separate databases within the state do not share common "identifiers" for children such as a unique student identifier designed to be provided to children at the time of entry into the public school system and maintained throughout public school participation. Without such an identifier determining the degree of participation of children across different services is not possible. Efforts to develop "data interoperability" necessarily

involve linking individual records of young children across different systems in order to gain a broader view of which children participate in which programs, usually with a unique student identifier established well before school entry.

Therefore, data sharing policies must address issues of confidentiality and the rights of young children and their families to provide informed consent for any release of information across systems, including federal statutory requirements under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) for health information and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for educational information.

Student Diversity and Cultural Competency**:** Data is important to policy development and early childhood systems building – for identifying need, for tracking progress in achieving goals, and for assessing the impact of services on young children's and their families' lives. Nevada's early childhood data system needs to be structured to provide important information – for children as a whole but also for children of different racial, ethnic, cultural, and language backgrounds. As the state begins to develop a coordinated ECE data system, an inventory of existing administrative data systems and other program and survey information should be conducted to review the degree to which those systems provide pertinent information about race, ethnicity, culture, and language. The data system should be designed to provide the information needed to address current and professional gaps in readiness, participation, cultural awareness and recognition, workforce diversity, and stakeholder participation.

These challenges point to the need for a coordinated state effort to create an equally coordinated data system for Nevada's ECE programs, which can then be linked to the K-12 and higher education data system to support a true preschool to higher education (P-16) continuum. Without such an integrated data system, it will not be possible for Nevada to systematically evaluate and improve the quality of its ECE programs or to make data-informed policy, programming and resource management decisions.

Summary of Recommendations

These recommendations are intended to serve as a guide for Nevada's policymakers and program administrators to the key issues that must be considered as policies are developed related to building and implementing a coordinated ECE data system in the state. This set of recommendations is informed by key informant interviews, focus group feedback, survey input, and research into state and national knowledge and practice related to early childhood data systems.

1. The shared vision for school readiness for Nevada found in this needs assessment needs to be adopted statewide, as it provides the foundation necessary to design, implement and evaluate the state's early childhood agenda, and addresses early childhood education and care in the context of multiple domains.
2. A cross-agency data governance structure needs to be in place to provide oversight and guidance for design and implementation, and to ensure that the necessary data are

collected, accessible, and used to inform decision-making. One of the core recommendations in the Lincy Institute's Policy Brief on school readiness in Nevada is to establish an Office of Early Learning as a stand-alone agency to serve as a catalyst in prioritizing childhood issues in Nevada, noting that this strategy has shown success in many states including Washington and Oregon.[1]

3. The Pre-K data necessary to align with K–12 Common Core Standards and relevant student-level information needs to be identified. This includes but is not limited to:
    - Unique student identifiers
    - Enrollment, demographic and program participation (e.g., poverty, second language learner and disability status)
    - Assessment information
    - Child status related to all of the school readiness domains
4. Protocols need to be developed to allow sharing of necessary data across agency and county lines regarding students who have participated in ECE programs.
5. Regular data analysis and reporting to key stakeholders and the public needs to be assured in order to achieve system goals related to program improvements and student achievement, and a comprehensive social marketing campaign needs to be launched statewide that promotes the value of quality early childhood education and care programs, and is targeted to increasing community and private sector investment in strategies that promote high quality ECE.
6. Nevada's coordinated ECE data system should include data on the educational experiences of all children from Pre-K onward. Data collection should begin as children enter preschool and continue to be compiled through kindergarten and the early years of elementary school – all in one integrated data system. This electronic "education data warehouse" should include data on the children; early learning programs and program quality; and characteristics of the early childhood workforce, collected from both public programs and private programs funded by public sources.
7. To support coordination and to ensure that Nevada's ECE data system is designed to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders, it would ideally include three electronic "portals" to make the information accessible to diverse stakeholders. This recommendation is consistent with the *"Next Steps for State Longitudinal Data Systems"* report.[2]

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[1] Horsford, S.D. (April 2012). "Ready for School, Ready for Life: The Increasing Significance of Early Childhood Education and School Readiness in Nevada." University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), The Lincy Institute. *The Lincy Institute Policy Brief: Education Series,* No. 1.

[2] Hernandez, D. PreK-3rd: Next Steps for State Longitudinal Data Systems. Pre-K-3rd Policy to Action Brief, No. 8. April 2012. Foundation for Child Development, New York, NY.

a. A Micro-Data Portal to meet research and evaluation needs. This portal would provide electronic access to micro-data (e.g. raw data for a large number of individual students, provided in the aggregate without individual student identifiers), allowing researchers and evaluators to conduct statistical analyses of system, program and student indicators.

b. A System-Indicators Portal to meet the needs of parents, teachers, schools, and policymakers. This portal would provide electronic access to aggregated indicators developed by researchers and evaluators related to the effectiveness of curricula, teachers, and schools and facilitate evaluation and continuous quality improvement for schools and districts.

c. A Student-Indicators Portal to meet the needs of teachers, principals, and parents. This portal would provide electronic access to student-indicators measuring the skills of specific students only for those people with immediate responsibility for the education of the student, allowing them to assess the progress of individual students.

8. Nevada has a number of cross-system partnerships that have successfully leveraged additional support for ECE efforts to coordinate and, where possible, adopt shared priorities and strategies that improve the state's capacity to coordinate data sharing across multiple agencies. These include: Head Start State Collaboration, Child Care Development Quality Improvement Funds, Title I, 21st Century Community Learning Program, and Homeless Education Funds. These partnerships align the goals and outcomes of multiple programs regardless of funding source, which helps to provide additional sustainability and fosters more sophisticated alliances and opens up further opportunities for collaboration. The success of the KEDS initiative will rely upon this kind of leveraging of partnerships that braid a variety of funding sources, including Title I, Title II, IDEA, and others, to achieve the shared objectives of multiple organizations.

Next Steps for the Data System Workgroup

1. In conjunction with the KEA workgroup, the data system workgroup needs to identify and enumerate the specific data elements to include in the integrated data set for tracking and analysis. These data elements must serve as the appropriate indicators to support decision-making about program quality and student progress.
2. The workgroup should develop detailed guidelines regarding the full range of content to be included in ECE data system, and should develop guidelines on the structure and format of the three "portals" with particular attention to the need for all data to be included in a single, integrated dataset. The data must be organized with individual students as the unit of analysis and with all data for that student on the individual

record, including data about the child's classrooms, teachers, schools, and family.[3] To support appropriate data management and access, the workgroup needs to define what information will be included in the micro-data files. Researchers and evaluators must have access to micro-data files, the systems indicator files, and the student indicator files. Files should include data on each child's student assessments, attendance, teachers, and schools, as well as information from other administrative records systems, including demographics, health care providers, and participation in special education, free and reduced price lunch programs, or programs such as child welfare, TANF, and SNAP.[4]

3. The workgroup should explore select state models to develop guidelines regarding the structure and format for system indicators that will ensure easy access to information in a timely fashion. This may involve defining "pre-populated" tables and could also involve the development of a system for creating special user-defined tables.
4. The workgroup should develop guidelines identifying and delineating the specific types of information needed by principals, teachers, and parents, recognizing that parents will require specific types of information only for their own children, while teachers will need access to a broader array of information for each of their students, and principals will need access to information for all students in the school.
5. The workgroup should develop guidelines for safeguarding the confidentiality of the data, and for creating common standards to ensure privacy regulations, rules, and procedures of multiple agencies are addressed and followed. These guidelines should outline the methods and procedures by which various stakeholders can access data in a way that is timely and also ensures the confidentiality of students, teachers, and schools.

Information about young children and their development is needed to identify needs and opportunities throughout the early years; focus attention and inform policy development to address gaps and needs; track enacted policies for achieving their objectives; and assess progress for policies collectively achieving the goal of third grade reading proficiency. Building a coordinated ECE system in Nevada that links to its K-12 longitudinal data system would go a long way toward accomplishing these objectives.

Information from this report is intended to inform planning and implementation of Nevada's ECE data system. Additional information on the background, methods, and supporting documentation is provided in the full report. Appendices offer additional resources and information from the Needs Assessment process. Questions about this report should be sent to Kelly Marschall, Social Entrepreneurs Inc. (SEI), 775.324.4567 or

3 Note: Philadelphia's KIDS Integrated Data System provides an example of a fully functional integrated data system, including data from a wide range of programs and agencies.

[4]Data Quality Campaign, 2011c; The Early Childhood Data Collaborative, 2011.

kmarschall@socialent.com. For progress and status updates, please visit the Nevada ECAC or project website: https://sites.google.com/site/prototypeforkedsnevada/.

I. Introduction

Purpose and Intended Outcomes

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (Nevada ECAC), managed by Nevada's Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems (HSC&ECS) Office[5], in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), is leading efforts to build a comprehensive system of early childhood services across the state, so that all children enter school ready to learn. Nevada's plan is to implement a common statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) no later than the 2014-15 school year, which will produce relevant data that can inform Nevada's efforts related to improving children's readiness to enter school.

Data will be tracked related to the essential domains of school readiness as outlined in Nevada's definition.[6] These include: a) language and early literacy, b) cognition and general knowledge, c) approaches to learning, d) physical development and health, and e) social and emotional development. The warehousing of this information in a coordinated ECE data system that is linked to NDE's longitudinal data system will enable Nevada to look at data on student growth and development before children reach third grade, when they typically participate in their first statewide standardized tests.

This needs assessment was conducted to assist the Nevada ECAC to understand the needs, feasibility, and cost of developing one coordinated data system containing relevant and important data regarding children ages birth to 5 in the state, which is linked to or aligns with the NDE longitudinal data system. The overall goals of this coordinated ECE data system are to:

1. Implement effective data practices that support early childhood education and care stakeholders (parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, policy makers, researchers, and providers) to understand and utilize child assessment data to improve programs, curriculum and environments; and
2. Adopt a common, statewide KEA which is recognized as scientifically valid and reliable, that generates the right data about school readiness that can be utilized at all levels to improve education outcomes for Nevada's children.

Elements of the data collection system need to align with recommendations developed by the Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC)[7]. These are based upon the following *"10*

[5] Through statewide partnerships, the Nevada Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office enhances relationships, builds systems, and promotes comprehensive quality services to meet the needs of young children and their families. The office exists through grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start and the Health Resources Services Administration, Maternal Child Health Bureau.

[6] See Appendix A for complete definition.

[7] www.ecedata.org

Fundamentals of Coordinated State Early Care and Education Data Systems". The 10 Fundamentals allow stakeholders to better understand the relationships among children, program sites and ECE workforce characteristics over time. In addition to collecting data, coordinated data systems have the capabilities to link select information longitudinally and with other key programs. A governance structure manages data collection and use, and states have transparent privacy protections and security practices and policies. These ECE fundamentals serve as the backbone of a state's data system, but are based on the state's unique interests and political realities, so state stakeholders may choose to include additional information and capabilities. The 10 Fundamentals are as follows:

1) A single, unduplicated unique state child identifier linked to the NDE longitudinal data tracking system;
2) Child level demographic and program participation data including age, ethnicity, socio-economic status and participation in services such as early intervention for children with special needs;
3) Child-level data on development from multiple sources including valid and reliable appropriate child assessment instruments, child observations and parent questions;
4) Ability to link child-level data to K-12 and other key data systems to allow policymakers to track progress of children over time and understand relationships between programs that influence child development;
5) Unique program site identifier with the ability to link with children and ECE data (may include unique identifier for classrooms within sites as well);
6) Program site data on structure, quality and work environment including ECE workforce information (examples of structural data include location; ages of children served; length and duration of the program(s) offered at the site; funding sources; and the availability of special services such as parent participation, mental health consultation or health services. Examples of program quality data include national accreditation information, child-adult classroom ratios, curricula and staff-child interaction measures. Examples of work environment characteristics include the availability of professional development opportunities for staff, wages and benefits, and turnover);
7) Unique ECE workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children;
8) Individual ECE workforce demographics, including education, and professional development information (i.e., what The Nevada Registry already tracks);
9) State governance body to manage data collection and use (i.e., Nevada ECAC or identified future governance entity for data management); and
10) Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies.

The Nevada ECAC sees the goals of creating a coordinated early learning data system and developing a statewide kindergarten assessment tool as integral, and acknowledges the

importance of gaining an earlier understanding of how children progress on a learning trajectory in order to improve the early learning environments that prepare them for school entry. Upon implementation, the common assessment will determine the level of mastery that a child has attained which is aligned with selected Kindergarten Common Core State Standards and will eventually serve as the Standard-Based Report Card.

Nevada's plan will ensure that assessments evaluate the multiple domains of readiness, including social-emotional development, but are not the sole determining factor for kindergarten entry. This coordinated data system will assist Nevada's local and state policymakers, funders, and program administrators to make data-informed policy and programming decisions that improve quality, performance and outcomes of ECE programs and maximize public and private investment in early childhood. Ensuring that data are accessible and stakeholders have the capacity to use data appropriately will improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve education and social outcomes for Nevada's children.

Target Audience

Nevada's vision for an integrated state and local approach to building a coordinated early learning data system relies on partnerships and coordination with local school districts, early learning councils and ECE programs. Many organizations, workgroups, family advocates and professionals have provided input into this needs assessment, including licensing entities, school districts, colleges and universities, councils, and local programs, in an effort to positively impact the quality of life, care, and education for all young children in Nevada. These same entities, as well as civic leaders, funders, and policy makers are considered key stakeholders in Nevada's early childhood education and care system and comprise the target audience for this report.

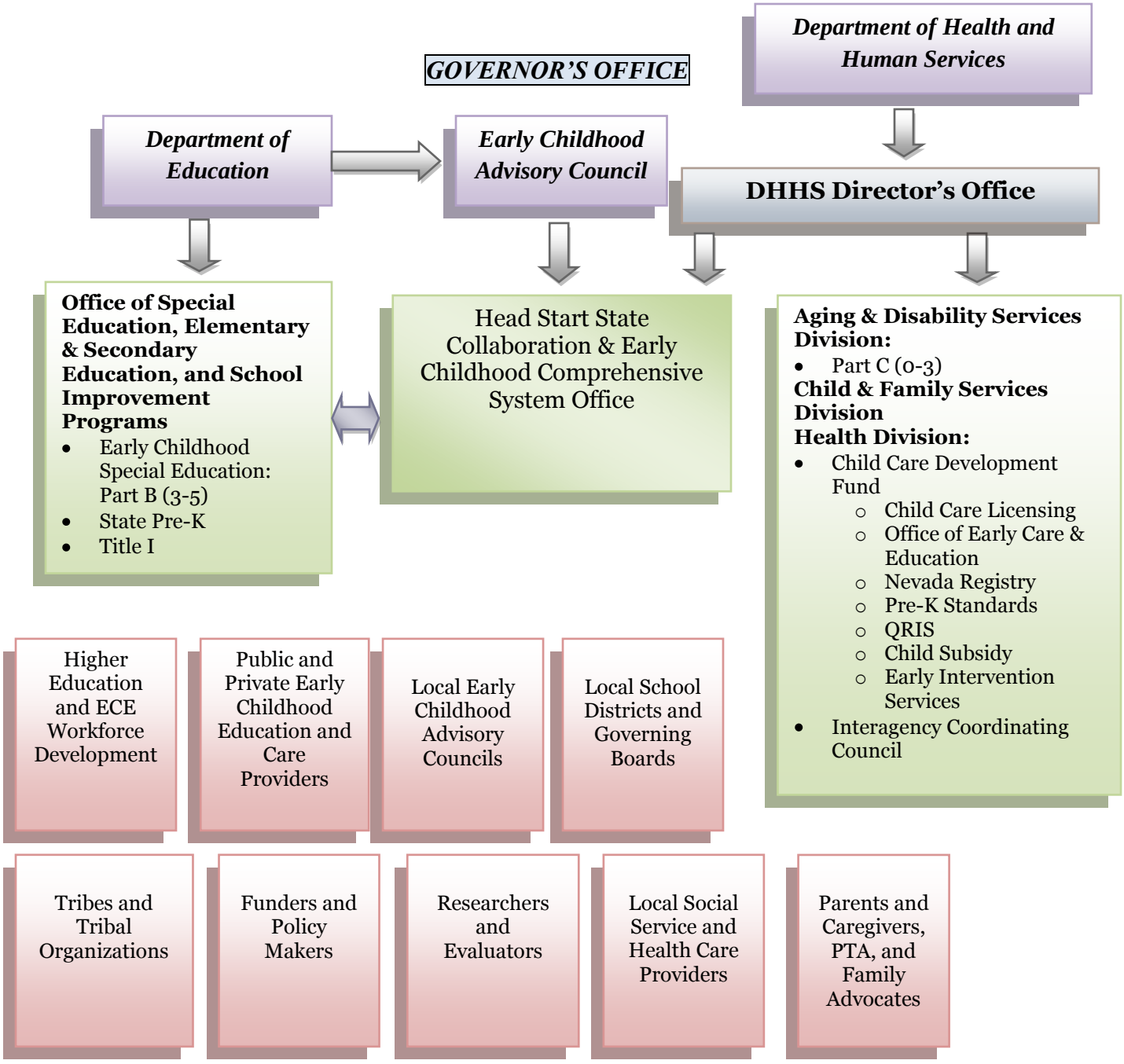
This needs assessment is designed to provide critical information and recommendations to the Nevada ECAC as well as primary stakeholders in Nevada's ECE, for the purpose of facilitating the development of a coordinated ECE data system that is linked with Nevada's longitudinal data system for K-12. "Primary stakeholders" as defined here include the wide array of entities that have a key role in aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the state to ensure that children have access to quality programs, services and supports

Profile of Survey Respondents

- The large majority of survey respondents were from Clark and Washoe Counties:
  - 40.8% of provider/stakeholders were from Clark and 30.8% were from Washoe;
  - 57.9% of parents were from Clark and 24.4% were from Washoe.
- More than a tenth (11.4%) of parents took the survey in Spanish.
- More than half of all of provider/stakeholders indicated their field as early childhood education.
- The organization type from which the provider/ stakeholders came was nearly split into thirds:
  - Public = 36.8%
  - Non-profit = 34.7%
  - Private sector = 27.9%
- Nearly all (90.3%) of parents indicated having children the age 5 or younger; 36.1% indicated having children between the ages of 6-10, and 21.0% indicated having children between the ages of 11-18 (Appendix A, Table 1).

during their early years so that they enter school ready to learn.

The following graphic depicts the primary ECE stakeholders that comprise the target audience for this project and needs assessment:



Major Policy Questions

The Early Childhood Data Collaborative engaged in a wide range of outreach and consultation efforts to determine the most critical policy questions confronting state policymakers as they allocate resources and provide oversight for ECE programs. These questions and related ECE Fundamentals form the foundation for coordinated state early childhood data systems[8]:

1. Are children, birth to 5, on track to succeed when they enter school and beyond?
2. Which children have access to high-quality early childhood education and care programs?
3. Is the quality of programs improving?
4. What are the characteristics of effective programs?
5. How prepared is the early childhood education and care workforce to provide effective education and care for all children?
6. What policies and investments lead to a skilled and stable early childhood education and care workforce?

On a national scale there is growing momentum and increased federal support for states to focus more intentionally on data systems development for early childhood, with an interest in using data for continuous improvement in programs, improved access to quality early childhood education and care, and an overall increase in school readiness for young children. There is great potential for recognizable benefits to be achieved for multiple stakeholders, making this the ideal time for Nevada to build a coordinated state ECE data system. Coordination and effective use of data systems that link Nevada's ECE and K-12 education into a seamless continuum will help policymakers improve:

MODEL SYSTEM: Pennsylvania's Early Learning Network—Starts with Informing Policy

Pennsylvania's Early Learning Network was designed with the goal of supporting state early childhood programs by enabling better evaluation of and support for program decisions at all levels and supporting various constituencies' information needs including State legislators want evidence that early childhood services are a valid public investment. Administrators want information to help support continuous program improvements. Community engagement groups use data to illustrate local issues of access, quality and results. The business community is interested in early childhood programs as a sound state investment, and researchers are interested in answering a wide range of questions that can be addressed only through longitudinal data systems.

Key policy questions that shaped the development of Pennsylvania's early childhood data system included:

- How is the development of Pennsylvania's children progressing?
- How are the state's early childhood programs improving?
- Where in the state are the most at-risk children, and do those children have access to high-quality programs?
- Are state investments in early childhood generating the intended results for children, providers and programs?
- Is the state providing information to all—parents, teachers, administrators, professional development organizations, higher education and state agencies—to support improved quality of services?

[8] Building and Using Coordinated State Early Care and Education Data Systems: A Framework for State Policymakers. The Early Childhood Data Collaborative, August 2010. http://ecedata.org/files/DQC%20ECDC%20WhitePaper-Nov8.pdf

Program quality. State and local program managers will receive timely, accurate and ongoing feedback on the performance of programs in relation to their quality standards — and will be able to identify and adapt strategies and practices from the highest-performing providers to improve all programs across the state.

ECE workforce quality. Higher education institutions, state legislators and other leaders will have information on the supply and demand for ECE staff members; a comprehensive picture of professional development opportunities and investments; and an understanding of how well these supports are working to attract, retain and develop an ECE workforce that can help parents prepare every young child for success in school and in life.

Access to high-quality programs. Policymakers and advocates will have a detailed picture of the distribution of the quality of services across neighborhoods, communities and regions of their state and accessible data systems that answer questions such as those about the availability of high-quality programs for infants and toddlers or young English language learners.

Child outcomes. ECE educators will draw on rich cumulative information on children's strengths and progress in all areas of their development and use this information to plan and adjust curricula, learning experiences and family engagement efforts.[9]

The checklist below can serve as a guide for Nevada's policymakers and program administrators to the key issues that must be considered as policies are developed related to building and implementing a coordinated ECE data system in the state. This checklist is informed by key informant interviews, focus group feedback, survey input, and research into state and national knowledge and practice related to early childhood data systems.

- ☑ The shared vision for school readiness for Nevada needs to be adopted statewide, as it provides the foundation necessary to design, implement and evaluate the state's early childhood agenda, and addresses early childhood education and care in the context of multiple domains.
- ☑ A cross-agency data governance structure needs to be in place to provide oversight and guidance for design and implementation, and to ensure that the necessary data are collected, accessible, and used to inform decision-making. One of the core recommendations in the Lincy Institute's Policy Brief on school readiness in Nevada is to establish an Office of Early Learning as a stand-alone agency to serve as a

[9] Building and Using Coordinated State Early Care and Education Data Systems: A Framework for State Policymakers. The Early Childhood Data Collaborative, August 2010. http://ecedata.org/files/DQC%20ECDC%20WhitePaper-Nov8.pdf

catalyst in prioritizing childhood issues in Nevada, noting that this strategy has shown success in many states including Washington and Oregon.[10]

- ☑ The necessary Pre-K data needs to be identified that aligns with K–12 Common Core Standards and relevant student-level information. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Unique student identifiers
  - Enrollment, demographic and program participation (e.g., poverty, second language learner and disability status)
  - Assessment information
  - Child status related to all of the school readiness domains
- ☑ Protocols need to be developed to allow sharing of necessary data across agency and county lines regarding students who have participated in ECE programs.
- ☑ Regular data analysis and reporting to key stakeholders and the public needs to be assured in order to achieve system goals related to program improvements and student achievement.
- ☑ A comprehensive social marketing campaign needs to be launched statewide that promotes the value of quality early childhood education and care programs, and is targeted to increasing community and private sector investment in strategies that promote high quality ECE.

*The **BUILD** Initiative helps states create comprehensive early childhood systems – coordinated, effective policies that address children's health, mental health and nutrition, early care and education, family support, and early intervention. BUILD's vision is at the center of an emerging and vibrant state-based policy movement in the early childhood development field. Visit www.buildinitiative.org.*

In addition to the considerations enumerated above, The Diversity and Equity Working Group of the Build Initiative has stressed the need to examine all early childhood policies and practices through a multi-cultural lens, with particular attention to identifying and then closing five potential gaps:[11]

• A readiness gap at the time of kindergarten entry (with some common etiology related to income, achievement, health, safety, justice system, and wealth gaps);

• A participation gap in formal services (particularly health services and preschool and other formal care arrangements);

• A cultural awareness and recognition gap (particularly for providers serving children with different cultural and language backgrounds than their own);

• A workforce diversity gap (particularly among credentialed providers and within professional institutions training and accrediting the workforce); and

[10] Horsford, S.D. (April 2012). "Ready for School, Ready for Life: The Increasing Significance of Early Childhood Education and School Readiness in Nevada." University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), The Lincy Institute. *The Lincy Institute Policy Brief: Education Series,* No. 1.

[11] Bruner, C. and Emarita, B. Building Public Early Childhood Data Systems for a Multi-Ethnic Society: Issues & Opportunities (A BUILD Brief on Diversity and Equity), September 2009 draft.

• A stakeholder planning and decision-making gap (particularly in developing public policies and recognizing the expertise of those with other backgrounds and experiences).

Strategic Framework, Benchmarks and Timeline

The Statewide Early Childhood Data System and the Kindergarten Entry Assessment objectives are integrated, and focus at both the state and local level to gather and incorporate the input, experiences and expertise of stakeholders, parents, and early childhood education and care professionals throughout Nevada. The parallel planning process for both components occurred in phases, resulting in this needs assessment report as well as a needs assessment related to kindergarten entry assessment. Each county also received a county specific report of its needs assessment. The next part of the planning project will involve all 17 counties as well as the statewide stakeholders in designing an implementation approach that will identify goals, strategies and a realistic timeline for implementation. The proposed timing for planning extends into the beginning of 2013, as it is expected that some communities may be better positioned to implement their plans than others. A framework of the approach is outlined below.

Needs Assessment

State Level Organization and Preparation

This project was launched in January 2012. The key benchmarks in the initial stage included: defining roles, responsibilities and communication protocols with the Nevada ECAC; conducting a project planning session with key stakeholders in conjunction with the 2012 Nevada School Readiness Summit; researching data and relevant state and national briefs, and analyzing other state models to glean information about best practices and lessons learned, and conduct key informant interviews and focus groups with state-level entities identified as critical to the success of the project. This stage culminated in the development of a Nevada-specific definition for school readiness that was then vetted by key stakeholders and the Nevada ECAC during subsequent stages of the project.

County / District Assessment

This stage involved conducting site visits and focus groups in each of Nevada's 17 counties and school districts to gather input from school administrators, local information technology (IT) experts, educators, public and private ECE program staff, health and human service providers, ECE policy experts and parents about existing resources, needs, opportunities and challenges related to adopting and participating in a coordinated ECE data system and statewide kindergarten entry assessment. Both ECE providers and parents of young children were surveyed for their opinions and concerns as well, and monthly webinars were conducted as an additional means of engaging stakeholders in the needs assessment process.

Needs Assessment Report Development

The final stage resulted in the draft needs assessment reports for both project components, which were provided to the Nevada ECAC for review in August 2012 and finalized in September 2012 after soliciting feedback during a public comment period.

Implementation Planning

Establish A Preliminary State Implementation Plan

Once the needs assessment and feasibility study are adopted for KEDS, planning teams will be convened comprised of content experts to focus on implementation. The implementation plan will incorporate input from stakeholders in each of Nevada's 17 counties and school districts to ensure statewide buy-in.

The findings of the needs assessment will be synthesized into draft goals and next steps for both Early Childhood Data System and KEA components, incorporating recommendations from the reports. Planning teams will provide feedback on goals and identify strategies to achieve the goals for each system. Additional planning team tasks will include: identifying benchmarks, timeframes, resource needs, roles and responsibilities for implementation of both components. Once the plans are defined, additional local engagement activities will be conducted to assure that the state plan aligns with and supports county and school district implementation needs.

Develop County Implementation Templates

Results will be incorporated into an implementation template for the individual county plans. After distributing the implementation plans, webinars with the individual counties will be hosted to provide assistance and direction in completing the implementation plans, based on their readiness and unique needs. These plans will be finalized and used to track implementation in 2013. A master statewide implementation plan will be informed by the county plans so that training and technical assistance to implement tools and systems can be delivered efficiently and effectively. The final plan will include how the system will ensure compliance with local, state and federal privacy laws. The end deliverable is a final statewide plan that includes concrete and actionable steps towards successful implementation of: 1) a coordinated ECE Data System and 2) a statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment, both of which are linked to the NDE longitudinal data system.

Summary of Key Challenges and Critical Issues

There are a number of key challenges and critical issues that must be considered and addressed in implementing a coordinated early childhood data system, which are outlined in this section.

1. **Service Capacity and Access to Pre-K Programs**

As a rural/frontier state, many families in Nevada face challenges related to transportation and access to child care that have a direct impact on school readiness. Not all districts in Nevada offer state-funded preschool or Head Start programs, and since kindergarten is not mandatory in any of Nevada's 17 districts, a significant number of children in the state do not participate in any ECE programs prior to entering school. The range of Pre-K providers is extremely diverse, including school districts, for-profit, not-for profit, faith-based, and home-based childcare providers. Moreover, children are often moved between programs, and frequently participate in multiple programs or a single program funded by multiple sources. High rates of mobility and transiency of families with young children are even more pronounced during a difficult economy, when these families move within and across state lines in pursuit of employment, making data collection and tracking even more difficult.

2. Geographic Disparity and Transiency

Nevada's geography and population distribution poses unique challenges that can create barriers to education and access to quality ECE programs. These challenges are further exacerbated by difficult economic conditions. Nevada's total population was 2,643,085, according to the 2010 census. The 2010-2011 school year K-12 student population was 437,444, of which 71.8% attend school in Clark County, the fifth largest school district in the nation. Each county in the state has its own school district, which are unique in culture, size and challenges. This was underscored by the findings from county site visits and focus groups. For example, Esmeralda County has only 66 students. Conversely, Nye County School District is located in south central Nevada, in the third geographically largest county in the contiguous United States (18,159 square miles). Nye is larger than the combined total area of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Delaware, with 5,738 students in 26 elementary, middle, and high schools. Located in the opposite corner of the state, Elko County School District (ECSD) is geographically the fourth largest in the contiguous United States with 9,556 students in 32 schools. The county has a total area of 17,203 square miles, with most of it in the Great Basin. Elko is home to Great Basin College, a community college with a service area of 62,000 square miles, two time zones, and six of Nevada's largest rural counties.

This diversity is reflected in both the assets of each county as well as in their challenges, and stakeholders across the state emphasized that there is no "one size fits all" approach that will work in Nevada.

3. Inappropriate Use of Data

Many expressed concern that kindergarten entry assessments could be used to keep children from entering (or continuing) in kindergarten. While there was broad agreement that exclusion was inappropriate, and this notion is widely supported by publications on kindergarten assessment, some stakeholders including parents, educators, and administrators noted that kindergarten entry assessment could be helpful for determining whether a child was actually ready for kindergarten, inform placement (including encouraging parents to wait another year, until the child is ready). This issue is one that

requires further discussion; clearly the goal is school readiness, and children should not be excluded.

4. Student mobility and transiency

County reports indicated a strong interest from multiple counties to be able to access information about students transferring from other Nevada districts into theirs, often noting that a great deal of time and resources is devoted to helping students catch up when they have moved from another district. Giving ECE programs ready access to a more complete longitudinal record of their students' early childhood program experiences, early learning, and development would strengthen their understanding and help them meet their students' needs by crafting learning opportunities to help them progress. With a more comprehensive data system, teachers in communities with high rates of family mobility could more quickly become prepared to work with students who enter at different points in the year, and reduce the risk of those children falling through the cracks.

5. Fragmentation and Inconsistency

Sources of early childhood education and care include state and locally funded public school programs (e.g. State-funded Pre-K), federally funded programs like Head Start and Even Start, private childcare providers, and more, all with differing funding mechanisms and accountability requirements. As has been noted, Nevada does not have a unified early childhood data collection system, but there are many programs and agencies in the state that currently collect data independently. All kindergarten teachers across Nevada assess student skills upon kindergarten entry, but there is no consistency or consensus about how to assess children's developmental capabilities at kindergarten entry. Assessment information that is collected in classrooms across the state goes into the individual child's school file and is not tracked or uploaded into a data collection system. If a standardized process for conducting assessment was utilized and data was captured on key indicators, the quality of early childhood programs could then be assessed and facilitate data-driven decisions regarding quality improvements.

6. Insufficient Data Availability, Access and Utility

"State leaders and education stakeholders are perpetually searching for evidence-based strategies to improve educational opportunities and outcomes in the short and long-term future.

Although state budget shortfalls and an era of high-stakes accountability standards in education have forced educators and policymakers to do more with less, research has proven that high quality early childhood education is an investment worth making.

In Nevada, the development of a statewide governance structure that guides and fosters interagency collaboration; engages a broad range of stakeholders; and aligns federal, state, local, and private resources is a critical next step."

Dr. Sonya Horsford, in "Ready for School, Ready for Life: The Increasing Significance of Early Childhood Education and School Readiness in Nevada." UNLV), *The Lincy Institute Policy Brief: Education Series,* No. 1.

As in most states, Nevada has limited information about very young children and the services they receive. From the time of their birth, when birth record information is collected, to the time children enter school, there are no points at which virtually all young children are seen or information is collected about them. While most young children see a primary health practitioner at least annually, that information largely remains within the practitioner's office.

Furthermore, there has been no agreement to date in Nevada on what information specific stakeholders need, or on developing access to that information. A review of the 17 county reports indicated that some counties regularly utilize data electronically while others manage with a paper based system that does not allow electronic access to the information. Additionally, the current collection of assessment data in early childhood education and care is limited and haphazard, due to the fact that kindergarten entry assessment is not standardized in Nevada and that assessment requirements vary from program to program. Since data that is compiled is stored in disconnected data systems, the data has limited usefulness and renders longitudinal analyses difficult, costly, and time-consuming.

Although data are plentiful on state Pre-K programs at the school-district level, data are not available on the many Pre-K programs that are funded and operated by community-based organizations in addition to or instead of school districts. As a result, data do not capture the full picture of early childhood education and care. Because the majority of Head Start grantees are community-based organizations rather than school districts, much of the data cannot be compiled and reported, even though it is collected by local Head Start programs.

7. Insufficient Local Resources and Infrastructure

Requirements for new processes that require districts to spend would be difficult for many of them. The majority of Nevada's counties are sparsely populated and do not have the technology infrastructure in place that would allow them to participate in a coordinated ECE data system without additional funding and/or technical support. Many districts face budget shortfalls and expressed an uncertainty that any new investment could be made that were not already incorporated into their budgets and planning activities. This is a common issue and concern for stakeholders at all levels, including policy makers, districts, and programs both private and nonprofit that serve young children. The county site visits and focus groups highlighted the significant variation in the capacity of larger, better resourced school districts to implement KEDS versus the smaller districts, and several counties suggested that it would be advisable to consider designing a phased-in or pilot approach with a staggered start-up that allows more planning time, training and assistance to those counties that need it.

8. Varying Accountability Standards

ECE programs are funded by diverse sources with varying accountability standards. For example, federally funded programs that are state or locally-administered include Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care Subsidies, IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) programs. These programs are

housed in different federal departments, including the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The result is that school districts may need to provide information in response to different sets of federal, state, and local reporting requirements, leading to inconsistent educational practices and involving resources that might be better used in the provision of education to children rather than meeting different reporting requirements.

9. Data Interoperability and Confidentiality Concerns

Student confidentiality must be carefully maintained and student-specific data made available only on a very strict need-to-know basis. The federal and state legislation, regulations, rules, and procedures that are currently in place to ensure confidentiality are somewhat fragmented and inconsistent, posing a barrier to creating a coordinated ECE data system that can effectively link with the K-12 system.

In general, the separate data bases within the state do not share common "identifiers" for children such as a unique student identifier designed to be provided to children at the time of entry into the public school system and maintained throughout public school participation. Without such an identifier determining the degree of participation of children across different services is not possible. Efforts to develop "data interoperability" necessarily involve linking individual records of young children across different systems in order to gain a broader view of which children participate in which programs, usually with a unique student identifier established well before school entry.

Therefore, data sharing policies must address issues of confidentiality and the rights of young children and their families to provide informed consent for any release of information across systems, including federal statutory requirements under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) for health information and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for educational information.

10. Student Diversity and Cultural Competency

Data is important to policy development and early childhood systems building – for identifying need, for tracking progress in achieving goals, and for assessing the impact of services on young children's and their families' lives. Nevada's early childhood data system needs to be structured to provide important information – for children as a whole but also for

*The **BUILD Initiative's** Equity and Diversity Work Group, which includes representatives from most of these groups and organizations, has outlined the importance of building early learning systems that address five critical gaps faced by children of color in early childhood:*

(1) the readiness gap;

(2) the participation gap;

(3) the cultural competence gap;

(4) the workforce diversity gap; and

(5) the shared planning and decision-making gap.

This framework has been employed in examining existing statewide data systems and making recommendations on how states can help insure that issues of gender, race, language, and social class are incorporated into data collection, analyses, and use.

Bruner, C. and Emarita, B. Building Public Early Childhood Data Systems for a Multi-Ethnic Society: Issues & Opportunities (A BUILD Brief on Diversity and Equity), September 2009 draft.

children of different racial, ethnic, cultural, and language backgrounds. As the state begins to develop a coordinated ECE data system, an inventory of existing administrative data systems and other program and survey information should be conducted to review the degree to which those systems provide pertinent information about race, ethnicity, culture, and language. The data system should be designed to provide the information needed to address current and professional gaps in readiness, participation, cultural awareness and recognition, workforce diversity, and stakeholder participation.

These challenges point to the need for a coordinated state effort to create a coordinated data system for Nevada's ECE programs, which can then be linked to the K-12 and higher education data system to support a true P-16 continuum. Without such an integrated data system, it will not be possible for Nevada to systematically evaluate and improve the quality of its ECE programs or to make data-informed policy, programming and resource management decisions.

II. School Readiness in Nevada

An important goal for this project was to solicit feedback from stakeholders at the local level in order to support adoption of a Nevada-specific definition of school readiness. A working definition was developed and shaped at a statewide School Readiness Summit held in February 2012, and subsequently reviewed by hundreds of ECE stakeholders, including parents and providers, who were asked to provide input on the working definition as well as to validate the need for a common statewide kindergarten entry assessment and coordinated early childhood data system.

Stakeholders indicated broad support for the working Nevada definition of school readiness, which was formally adopted in June 2012 by the Nevada ECAC. There is consensus, based upon a wealth of research, that a child's readiness for school should be measured and addressed across five distinct but connected domains:[12]

Physical Development and Health--This domain covers such factors as health status, growth, and disabilities; physical abilities, such as gross and fine motor skills; and conditions before, at, and after birth.

Social and Emotional Development--This domain combines two interrelated components affecting children's behavioral health and learning. Social development refers to children's ability to interact with others and their capacity for self-regulation. Emotional development includes children's perceptions of themselves, their abilities to understand the feelings of other people, and their ability to interpret and express their own feelings.

Approaches to Learning--This domain refers to children's inclination to use skills and knowledge. Key components include enthusiasm, curiosity, and persistence on tasks.

Language and Early Literacy Development--This domain includes communication and emergent literacy. Communication includes listening, speaking, and vocabulary.

[12] Based on findings from the National School Readiness Indicators Initiative: A 17-State Partnership and reviewed and revised at the Nevada School Readiness Summit, 2012.

Emergent literacy includes print awareness, story sense, early writing, and the connection of letters to sounds.

Cognition and General Knowledge--This domain refers to thinking and problem-solving as well as knowledge about particular objects and the way the world works. Mathematical knowledge, abstract thought, and imagination are included.

As the graphic on the previous page indicates, Nevada's definition of school readiness incorporates these five domains into the following equation: **READY FAMILIES + READY EDUCATORS + READY SCHOOLS + READY COMMUNITIES + READY SYSTEMS = CHILDREN ARE READY FOR SCHOOL.** Each factor necessary for the outcome that "Children are Ready for School" is further defined below:

"Ready Families" have adults who understand they are the most important people in the child's life, understand age appropriate development, and support the child's school readiness. Adults recognize their role as the child's first and most important teacher, providing steady and supportive relationships, ensuring safe and consistent environments, promoting good health, and fostering curiosity, excitement about learning.

"Ready Educators" are skilled teachers, who understand age appropriate development, possess the skills to develop appropriate curriculum based on children's development, recognize, reinforce, and extend children's strengths and who are sensitive to cultural values and individual differences, including children with special needs.

"Ready Schools" accept all children and provide a seamless transition to a high-quality developmentally appropriate learning environment by engaging families and the whole community. A ready school welcomes all children and their families with opportunities to enhance and build confidence in their skills, knowledge, and abilities. Children in ready schools are led by skilled teachers as defined above.

"Ready Communities" play a crucial part in supporting families in their role as primary stewards of children's readiness. Ready communities, including businesses, faith-based organizations, early childhood education and care service providers, community groups and local governments, work together to support children's school and long term success by providing families affordable access to information, services, high-quality child care, and early learning opportunities.

"Ready Systems" describes the availability, quality, and affordability of proven programs that influence child development and school readiness. It also includes the degree to which public and private agencies promote policies and practices including data collection that enhance access to needed supports, information and tools that help all other components (family, educators, schools and children)be ready for children to be ready for school.[13]

[13] Bruner, C. and Coperman, A. (2003, March). Measuring children's school readiness: options for developing state baselines and benchmarks. A paper prepared for the State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network, pp. 1-2.

Children's readiness for school is made up of multiple components and shaped by numerous factors. Improving school readiness, therefore, must address children's development of skills and behaviors as well as the environments in which they spend their time. Early childhood education and care leaders at the state and national level agree that efforts to improve school readiness must address three interrelated components: a) children's readiness for school; b) schools' readiness for children; and c) the capacity of families and communities to provide developmental opportunities for young children.

Ultimately the goal is that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children. School readiness is an ongoing process from the moment of birth, to prekindergarten, and through the transition into elementary school and beyond. It is the foundation defined by the intersection of two critical components: 1) Children's condition to learn based on the five identified domains of learning, and 2) The school's capacity to meet the needs of all children to prepare them for future school success and the 21st century.

This includes, but is not limited to providing access to high quality services for all children including aligned standards and curriculum, supportive relationships, engaging environment, smooth transitions and strong family and community connections.[14]

Nevada ECE stakeholders liked that the school readiness definition addresses the role of parents and the community, noting that parents need a great deal of support and education in order to understand what they can do, beginning at birth, to support their child's readiness to enter school. There was also broad support for the focus on multiple developmental domains, rather than a more singular focus on academic readiness. Stakeholders in focus groups and site visits reported that children enter kindergarten with huge variance in terms of readiness, based on their Pre-K experiences. Parents often don't know what to do to ensure that their children are ready for school, and many providers have been in the business so long that they feel it is common sense to understand what school readiness looks like, even though it is not always as clear to parents. They also point to generational differences in thinking related to what is needed to prepare children for school, particularly with respect to the increasing number of grandparents that are serving as primary caregivers. Stakeholders note that there are a growing number of social issues (e.g. access to health care, cultural and language barriers, behavioral health, food insecurity, etc) that impact both children, families and communities and prevent school readiness, and it is unrealistic to expect families to practice developmental exercises when they are facing crisis situations at home.

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14 Nevada working definition from bill draft request

III. Methodology

To understand Nevada's existing assets and needs related to implementing a coordinated, statewide ECE data system, a comprehensive process utilizing multiple methods (key informant interviews, site visits, focus groups, surveys, presentations and webinars) was followed to assure that broad stakeholder input was incorporated at both the state and local level, representing every county and school district in the state. The needs assessment also included research on best practices and a review of other states' implementation of ECE data systems in order to take advantage of lessons learned.

Planning and Decision-Making Principles

Good planning requires a methodical process that clearly defines the steps that lead to optimal solutions. The project planning committee determined that the process for this effort should reflect the following principles:

- *Comprehensive* – all significant options and impacts are considered.
- *Efficient* – the process should not waste time or money.
- *Inclusive* – people affected by the plan have opportunities to be involved.
- *Informative* – results are understood by stakeholders (people affected by a decision).
- *Integrated* – individual, short-term decisions should support strategic, long-term goals.
- *Logical* – each step leads to the next.
- *Transparent* – everybody involved understands how the process operates.

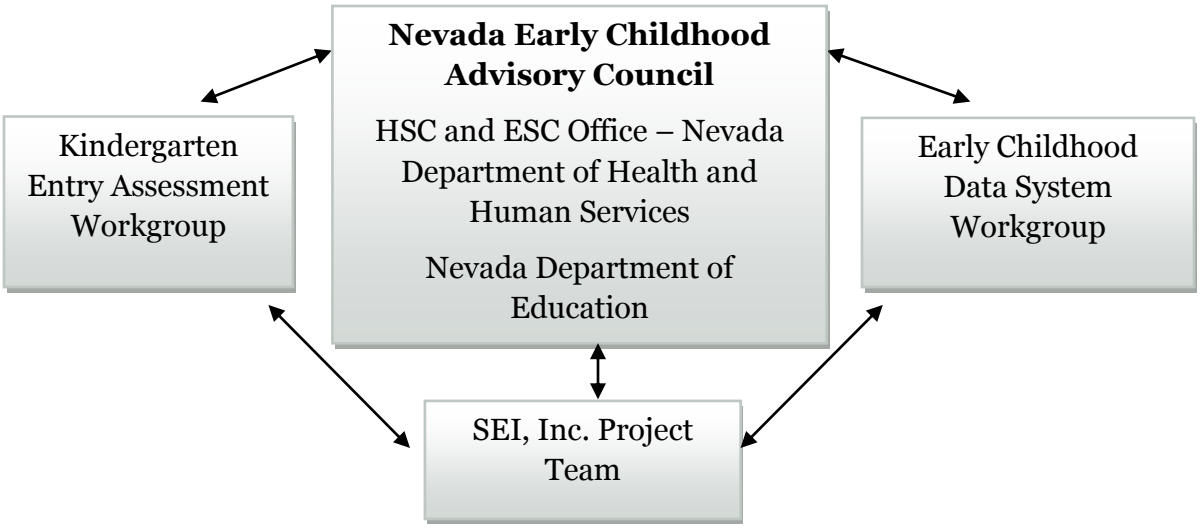
In addition to good planning, good decision-making is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skillful execution and represents the wise choice of many alternatives. This planning committee identified the following principles for decision-making related to this project:

- *Assign priorities* - All the things that need to be decided on are not equal in importance.
- *Data-based* – The most current information should be used to establish priorities and make informed decisions.
- *Paint a scenario of desired outcome* – Defining a vision specifically is necessary to understand whether and when the desired outcomes have been achieved.
- *Critical Analysis* - Explore the ramifications for all who will be affected. Understand the impact of decisions on all stakeholders.
- *Define the means for resolving conflict* – Consensus-based decision making is often complicated and sometimes involves some conflicts or dissatisfaction. In the absence of consensus, the ideal is to pick one solution where the benefits of the outcome outweigh the possible risks.

Project Structure and Leadership

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) provided overall guidance for this needs assessment and strategic planning effort, and saw the goals of creating a coordinated early learning data system and developing a statewide kindergarten assessment process as integral. Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. (SEI), a Reno-based consulting firm, was engaged by the Nevada ECAC to develop a plan that positions the State to implement a common statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment no later than the 2014-15 school year, to evaluate readiness in a manner that covers multiple dimensions of a child's abilities as delineated in Nevada's definition of School Readiness.[15]

The Nevada Departments of Education and Health and Human Services are providing primary leadership and support for this needs assessment, which is being managed by the Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office. The Nevada ECAC is providing guidance and oversight for both the needs assessment and implementation planning processes. The Nevada ECAC serves at the Governor's pleasure, having been established by Executive Order in 2009 and renewed again in 2011 expressly for this purpose. The Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office serves as the liaison between local Early Childhood Advisory Councils and other critical entities that are stakeholders in this process, including the Nevada Head Start Association. This Office is working closely with NDE and within the DHHS Director's Office to guide the implementation planning of the KEDS project, which operates in accordance with the project management and communication structure depicted below.



In providing project oversight, the HSC&ECS Office responsibilities included: active participation in planning meetings; providing information and access to data needed to prepare and conduct the needs assessment project; serving as the liaison to facilitate

[15] See Appendix A

communication between SEI and ECE stakeholders; reviewing final project deliverables; and facilitating final approval of reports and other deliverables with the Nevada ECAC.

Information Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

In order to complete outreach in a timely manner, both formal and informal communication channels were leveraged to systematically contact groups within the state identified during the planning process. Individuals and businesses (such as private preschools and child care) have limited access to the information if they are not connected to an existing initiative like the local ECAC. To help address this issue, surveys were sent through several list serves, and two meetings offering Nevada Registry Credits were conducted.

Because Nevada counties represent such a wide range of needs, priorities, resources, and values, it was deemed crucial to the project to ensure that, in addition to reviewing state-level information and data, each one of Nevada's 17 counties and school districts were actively engaged and provided with the opportunity to inform the needs assessment. The needs assessment process included focus groups and site visits in all 17 counties to determine their current data collection efforts, software currently used and the willingness to participate in the effort to collect data statewide. In several of the larger counties, multiple site visits were made to obtain the broadest level of input possible. This input was sought from parents, early childhood educators, local and state program administrators, school teachers and administrators, and other stakeholders to discern the needs regarding early childhood data and the feasibility of designing a coordinated system to collect and manage that data. The objectives of the site visits, interviews, focus groups, and surveys were to:

1. Identify the current status of kindergarten assessment and data systems by county, school district and for the state;
2. Identify the optimal design for Nevada's Kindergarten Entry Assessment and issues to resolve in implementing the Assessment statewide; and
3. Identify the optimal design for Nevada's Data System and issues to resolve in implementing the system statewide.

The following table summarizes the categories of ECE stakeholders that have been identified as "key" to project success, and how they are expected to benefit from the eventual implementation of a coordinated ECE data system linked with NDE's longitudinal system.

Stakeholder Need and Use of Data

Stakeholder Type	Use of Assessment Data at Kindergarten Entry
Parents and Caregivers	• Provides information and feedback about their child's optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, and what they can do beginning at birth to support child development and school readiness

Stakeholder Type	Use of Assessment Data at Kindergarten Entry
Teachers	• Serves as a communication and engagement tool for teachers to use with parents to educate and motivate them about their child's optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development • Helps teachers understand individual student needs and abilities, plan activities, and design appropriate curriculum • Provides feedback on effectiveness
School and Program Administrators	• Provides aggregate school readiness information for each classroom, for groups of children by demographic characteristics, and for the school overall to determine patterns, identify areas of high need, guide curriculum development, and improve educational programs • Guides decision-making to support progress on accountability measures
Service Providers for young children ages 0 to 5 years and their families	• Assess how well early childhood education and care services perform in raising the developmental level of young children prior to entry into school • Determine patterns, identify areas of high need, and improve services for young children and families • Help various sectors in health, welfare, social services, and education understand the role they play in helping children be ready for school – fosters joint accountability from diverse service sectors
Policy Makers, Funders and Researchers	• Assess the extent to which the KEDS initiative is contributing to raising the developmental level of young children prior to entry into school • Inform strategic planning, funding initiatives, training and technical assistance activities, and quality improvement efforts at the county, district and state levels • Create stronger data and programmatic linkages between programs for children in the early years and the K-12 educational system
Workforce Development and Higher Education	• Provides data in multiple domains to guide curriculum development and focus training activities • Provides information about what works to improve school readiness for children, so that teacher training content can be tailored accordingly

Outreach and stakeholder/county engagement activities focused on introducing the project, gathering information about existing assets and resources, and soliciting input from stakeholders on the working definition of school readiness, a common kindergarten entry assessment and early childhood data system. Communication through outreach was initiated with:

- Every county and school district in Nevada, with a minimum of one meeting held in each county across the state.

- Contacts within state, tribal and local entities that support, monitor, or fund ECE programs.
- Organizations and coalitions involved with education of young children as advised by the Nevada ECAC and other stakeholders, and
- Individual teachers, parents/caregivers, and ECE professionals through conferences and existing meetings.

In addition to these contacts, the email list of people interested in the project has grown to more than 200 stakeholders and continues to expand. Two public forums to collect additional input from early childhood education and care providers were held in late June in Reno and Las Vegas. An inventory of key informant interviews, focus groups, site visits and presentations can be found in Appendix C.

County and School District Participation

As noted above, each county and district participated in the needs assessment via key informant interviews, focus groups and surveys. These methods are each described in more detail in the following table, and a list of participating stakeholders is provided in Appendix B. After concluding the outreach, research and county meetings as part of the needs assessment process, reports were developed specific to each county which incorporated all county-relevant findings and presented a feasibility analysis and implementation recommendations. After the needs assessment is finalized to include county and public feedback and a draft implementation plan has been developed, counties will receive individualized technical assistance and support as needed to proceed with implementation, based on their readiness and unique needs. The statewide implementation plan will be informed by the county plans so that training and technical assistance to implement tools and systems can be delivered efficiently and effectively.

Key Informant Interviews

At the outset of the project, a list of key informants was developed to include those at both the state and local level with expertise, background and information deemed critical to successful implementation of the KEDS project. The development of this list was informed by the Nevada ECAC, webinar participants, and key stakeholders. A matrix of questions was then established and vetted by stakeholders to ensure that the right information was solicited. This matrix is depicted in Appendix B.

Focus Groups

As noted earlier, focus groups were held in all 17 counties and school districts to determine their current practices, resource needs, specific barriers, and level of interest in participating in this level of systems change so that an earlier understanding can be achieved related to how Nevada's children are progressing in order to improve the early learning environments that prepare them for school entry. The SEI project team developed a set of open-ended questions and a flexible script to interview a broad range of individuals who have a key role in providing and/or administering ECE services and supports in their

given jurisdiction. Focus groups lasted between 60-90 minutes each. Similar to the process for determining the information needed from key informants, a matrix of questions was established and vetted by stakeholders to ensure that the right information was solicited. This matrix is depicted in Appendix B.

Surveys

Two surveys were developed and broadly disseminated electronically and in hard copy in English and Spanish to gather information from: a) ECE providers and b) parents and caregivers, regarding the extent to which school readiness assessments are administered, the types of assessment instruments that are used, and the policies in place regarding the development, administration and use of school readiness assessments. More than 201 surveys targeting teachers, providers and administrators were submitted. Nearly 537 surveys have been completed by parents. Survey responses are summarized in Appendix A.

Reports and Resources

Many state and district reports, journal articles, and other published sources were utilized in developing this report. A list of resources cited is in Section 8.

IV. National and State Initiatives

There are numerous initiatives underway at both the state and national level that can be leveraged to efficiently implement a coordinated ECE data system in Nevada. A strong foundation has already been established that can be built upon to successfully meet the goals of this initiative. This section summarizes initiatives and planning efforts underway that focus on ECE and have implications for this project.

Data Quality Campaign: Early Childhood Data Quality Campaign[16]

Founded in 2005, the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) is a national, collaborative effort of over fifty organizations to support state policy makers in improving the availability and use of high quality education data to improve student achievement. Its overall focus is upon helping states develop P-20 statewide longitudinal data systems through providing technical assistance and peer-to-peer learning opportunities. The DQC has developed a set of "Ten Fundamental Elements" in developing such longitudinal data systems, with an emphasis upon how such systems can be used by policymakers, data managers, district administrators, teachers and principals, and postsecondary leaders. DQC recently developed a similar "Ten Fundamental Elements" for the early childhood component of a P-20 (early learning through postsecondary education) system that outlined the key factors needed to successfully align state ECE systems and data with early elementary data systems. These are as follows:

1) Unique statewide child identifier - A single, unduplicated number that remains with a child throughout participation in ECE services. The identifier remains consistent even if the child moves or enrolls in different services within a state. State policies need to ensure the unique identifiers are secure and protected.
2) Child-level demographic and program participation information - Information such as age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and program participation, including early intervention services for children with special needs.
3) Child-level data on development - Developmental data collected from multiple sources (e.g., child observations, parent questionnaires) and the assessment of multiple skills, including social-emotional, physical, cognitive and linguistic development, and approaches to learning. Data collection methods must be appropriate, valid and reliable, using scientifically sound instruments.
4) Ability to link child-level data with K–12 and other key data systems - Linkages that allow policymakers to track the progress of children over time, as well as better

[16] www.ecedata.org

understand relationships among ECE programs and other programs that influence child development.

5) Unique program site identifier with the ability to link with children and the ECE workforce - A single, unduplicated number assigned to a school, center or home-based ECE provider. States also may assign unique classroom identifiers to identify individual classrooms within a site.

6) Program site data on the structure, quality and work environment - Types of individual program site data and structural data such as location; length and duration of the program(s) offered; and funding sources. Program quality data such as national accreditation information, child-adult classroom ratios, curriculum and staff-child interaction measures. Work environment data such as the availability of professional development opportunities for staff, wages and benefits, etc.

7) Unique ECE workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children - A single, unduplicated number assigned to individual members of the ECE workforce, including teachers, assistant teachers, aides, master teachers, educational coordinators and directors, and other individuals who care for and educate young children.

8) Individual ECE workforce demographics, including education, and professional development information - Demographic data such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, educational attainment, experience in the field, retention and compensation. Professional development and training program data, such as the focus of the program content and delivery, funding sources, financial aid, and monetary rewards for educational attainment.

9) State governance body to manage data collection and use - Body that establishes the vision, goals and strategic plan for building, linking and using data and sets policies to guide the collection of, access to and use of the data. This includes setting policies to ensure common data definitions, standards and data audits to ensure validity of data.

10) Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies - Transparent, publicly available policies and statements that articulate how states ensure the security of the data and the privacy and confidentiality of personally identifiable information. These policies and statements should address important issues including who has access to what data, especially identifiable data; how the information is used and linked; the justification for the collection of specific data elements; and how long states retain the information.

The Early Childhood Data Collaborative's (ECDC) inaugural state analysis reveals that states collect a significant amount of data on individual children, ECE program sites, and individual members of the ECE workforce. However, the data are largely distinct to a specific funding stream, incomplete, and therefore unable to help policymakers answer basic policy questions about their state's ECE systems, support continuous improvement

and determine whether their investments put children on track to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. By ensuring that data are accessible and stakeholders have the capacity to use data appropriately, coordinated state ECE data systems will promote data-driven decision making to improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve child outcomes.

NEVADA'S PROFILE

ECDC's State Analysis of Early Care and Education measures the progress of 48 states, the District of Columbia, and Virgin Islands toward implementing the 10 Fundamentals of Coordinated State Early Care and Education Data Systems.[17] In 2010, the ECDC piloted its state analysis to provide baseline information. In future years, the ECDC will determine if states meet specific criteria to receive "credit" for implementing each of the 10 ECE Fundamentals. Of the four domains of services and supports that are fundamental to early child growth and development—health, early intervention programs, family supports and services—this framework focuses on the ECE domain and the following programs:

a) Subsidized and Licensed Child Care (birth to age 13)
b) Early Childhood Special Education (ages 3 to 5) and Early Intervention Programs (birth to age 3)
c) State Pre-K (ages 3 to 5)
d) State-Funded Early Head Start (birth to age 3) and Head Start (ages 3 to 5)

For this inaugural state analysis, the ECDC only analyzed state-funded Head Start/Early Head Start because it is unclear the extent to which states can collect data about federally-funded Head Start/Early Head Start programs as local programs receive funding directly from the federal government with little to no state involvement. The information is self-reported by states on their ability to collect and use coordinated state ECE data, and the following is a summary of Nevada's profile according to the 2010 pilot reporting cycle.

Unique statewide child identifier

Nevada assigns unique identifier to individual children	Subsidized Child Care	✓
	Early Intervention	✓
	Early Childhood Special Education	✓
	State Pre-K	✓
	State-Funded Head Start	✗
	State can connect child-level data across ECE programs	Some

[17] http://www.ecedata.org/state-ece-analysis/

Child-level demographic and program participation information

		Demographics	Program Participation	Family characteristics
Types of information Nevada collects about individual children in the state's ECE programs	Subsidized Child Care	✔	✔	✔
	Early Intervention	✔	✔	✘
	Early Childhood Special Education	✔	✔	✘
	State Pre-K	✔	✔	✔
	State-Funded Head Start	✘	✘	✘

Child-level data on development

Nevada Collects Child-Level Development Data	Subsidized Child Care	✘
	Early Intervention	✔
	Early Childhood Special Education	✔
	State Pre-K	✔
	State-Funded Head Start	✘

Ability to link child-level data with K-12 and other key data systems

		K-12	Social Services	Health
Nevada is able to connect individual child-level data from any early childhood data system to the same child data in other agencies' and programs databases that are outside the ECE databases.	Subsidized Child Care	✘	✔	✔
	Early Intervention	✘	✘	✔
	Early Childhood Special Education	✔	✘	✔
	State Pre-K	✔	✘	✘
	State-Funded Head Start	✘	✘	✘

Unique program identifier with the ability to link with children and the ECE workforce

Nevada Assigns Unique Identifier to Individual Program Sites	Subsidized Child Care	✘
	Licensed Child Care	✘
	Early Intervention	✔
	Early Childhood Special Education	✔
	State Pre-K	✔
	State-Funded Head Start	✘
	State can connect child-level data across ECE programs	✘
Nevada Can Link Program Site-level data with Child-level Data	Subsidized Child Care	✘
	Early Intervention	✔
	Early Childhood Special Education	✔
	State Pre-K	✔
	State-Funded Head Start	✘

Program site data on the structure, quality and work environment

		Structural Standards	Workplace Environment	Quality Measures
Nevada collects type of information about individual children in the state's ECE programs	Subsidized Child Care	✗	✗	✗
	Licensed Child Care	✗	✗	✗
	Early Intervention	✗	✗	✗
	Early Childhood Special Education	✗	✗	✗
	State Pre-K	✓	✓	✓
	State-Funded Head Start	✗	✗	✗

Unique ECE workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children

Nevada Assigns Unique Identifier to Individual ECE Workforce Members	Subsidized Child Care	✗
	Licensed Child Care	Some
	Early Intervention	✓
	Special Education	✗
	State Pre-K	✗
	Head Start	✗
	State Connects Workforce Data Across ECE Programs	✗

		Can link individual ECE workforce and child-level data	Can link program site and ECE workforce-level data
Nevada Can Link Individual ECE Workforce-level data with Child-level and Program Site-level Data	Subsidized Child Care	✗	✗
	Licensed Child Care	✗	✗
	Early Intervention	✓	✓
	Special Education	✓	✗
	State Pre-K	✓	✗
	Head Start	✗	✗

Individual ECE workforce demographics, including education, and professional development information

		Employment	Education professional development	Demographics
Nevada collects information about individual members of the workforce employed in the state's ECE programs receiving public funds.	Subsidized Child Care	✗	✗	✗
	Licensed Child Care	✓	✓	✓
	Early Intervention	✗	✗	✗
	Early Childhood Special Education	✗	✓	✗
	State Pre-K	✗	✓	✗
	State-Funded Head Start	✗	✗	✗
	State has data systems which include information about the professional development opportunities available to the ECE workforce			Some

State governance body to manage data collection and use

Has Single Governance Body that Manages ECE Data Collection and Use	✔

Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies

State Has Privacy Policies to Ensure the Privacy and Security of ECE Data		✔
Methods to Communicate Privacy Policies to the Public	On website	✘
	Traditional mailings	✘
	Email updates	✘
	Other	✔

In April, 2011, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval partnered with the Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force, Legislative Leadership, and Catamount Fund to sponsor a planning session for the Data Quality Campaign to work with Nevada policymakers and interested stakeholders to formulate a comprehensive plan for effective Nevada educational system data use. The planning session explored the current data system and its capacity, possibilities for Nevada's future, examples from leading states on how to best link and share data across agencies, information on state models and data governance structures, data privacy and security, and tools and resources for Nevada education reform efforts. The initiative leaders will use information and recommendations that flow from that meeting to ensure data is reliable, valid, and appropriate to inform progress, modification, and evaluation of the initiative.

Common Education Data Standards (CEDS)

The Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) project is a national collaborative effort to develop voluntary, common data standards for a key set of education data elements to streamline the exchange and comparison of data across institutions and sectors.[18] While education institutions across the P-20 spectrum use many different data standards to meet information needs, there are certain data that are needed at every point of the continuum to allow information to be understood, compared, and exchanged in an accurate, timely, and consistent manner. To facilitate this, a shared vocabulary for education data is needed, which requires a common education data standard.

The Education Science Reform Act of 2002 gave the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) the authority to determine voluntary standards and guidelines to assist state educational agencies in developing statewide longitudinal data systems. To this end, NCES is working with key stakeholders to develop standards for a core set of data elements to ensure that states create P-20 data systems that meet the goals of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Standard data definitions will help ensure that data shared

[18] https://ceds.ed.gov/whatIsCEDS.aspx

across institutions are consistent and comparable. This, in turn, will make it easier for states to learn how students fare as they move across institutions, state lines, and school levels.

The CEDS "standards" are comprised of several pieces of information that provide context for and describe data items within CEDS: Domain, Entity, Element, Option Set, Related Connections, and Alternative names and other notes. The CEDS model is both intuitive and interactive, and can be accessed in several ways:

- By element: Via the Elements page, users can access a searchable glossary of the CEDS "vocabulary," including names, definitions, option sets, technical specifications, and more.
- By relationship: Through the CEDS Data Model, users can explore the relationships that exist among entities and elements—viewable both through a Domain Entity Schema and a Normalized Data Schema.
- By comparison: In addition to these two ways of viewing the standards, supplemental tools enable users to take the next step and put CEDS into practice. The CEDS Alignment Tool allows a user to load his or her organization's data dictionary and compare it, in detail, to CEDS and the data dictionaries of other users' organizations. This facilitates alignment with CEDS and across systems, paving the way for easier sharing and comparison of data.

CEDS is *NOT*:

Required: Adoption of CEDS is voluntary.

All or nothing: Not all CEDS elements have to be utilized to realize benefits.

A data collection system: CEDS collects no data.

An implementation plan: There is no single implementation that will work for every user. Physical implementation decisions will be made by practitioners and solution providers in the field based on their specific objectives.

Solely an education undertaking: NCES is developing these standards with a group of stakeholders and publishes drafts for several public review cycles.

A federal unit record system: CEDS is not a student record system.

CEDS provides a ready-made platform for the planning workgroup to leverage as it designs the implementation plan and engages in the selection of indicators to support data collection related to a common kindergarten entry assessment and the domains that are part of Nevada's definition of school readiness. A template (see Appendix D) that is based on CEDS data dictionary and indicators has been designed to facilitate the planning workgroup's efforts.

Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge

The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant competition was first announced by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as a systems change funding opportunity in 2011, focused on improving early learning and development programs for young children by supporting states' efforts

to: (1) increase the number and percentage of low-income and disadvantaged children in each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who are enrolled in high-quality early learning programs; (2) design and implement an integrated system of high-quality early learning programs and services; and (3) ensure that any use of assessments conforms with the recommendations of the National Research Council's reports on early childhood.

In October 2011, Nevada joined the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge to apply for federal funding to build an integrated system of early learning and development for Nevada's infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Governor Sandoval appointed the Nevada ECAC, managed by the Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office, to provide leadership in developing a proposal. Through the competition, Nevada created plans to increase access to high-quality programs for children from low-income families, providing more children from birth to age 5 with the strong foundation they need for success in school and beyond.

The final application was the result of significant input from dozens of stakeholders throughout the state, and it put forth a comprehensive reform agenda and plan which would be jointly managed by DHHS and NDE, if funded. The vision guiding this plan is Nevada's children will be safe, healthy, and thriving during the first eight years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential. This important work aligns statewide and local resources and priorities around the best interests of Nevada's children, to ultimately ensure that our youth are ready to compete in the global economy of the 21st century.

In mid-December, the United States Department of Education (DoE) awarded $500 million in grants to the nine states that won the competition, out of a total of 37 applicants. Unfortunately, Nevada was not among the winners. The White House considers Race to the Top to be one of its most successful domestic policy achievements because virtually all states – including Nevada - have devoted time and money toward education reforms, even if they haven't won any of the competitions. This needs assessment related to determining the feasibility of implementing a common kindergarten entry assessment and coordinated ECE data system is a direct outgrowth of Nevada's application, which stressed these initiatives:

- Adopting a common school readiness assessment tool for children entering kindergarten that is linked with the State's longitudinal data system for education;
- Developing an early childhood data system used to drive program quality and improve school readiness;
- Improving and streamlining state oversight of early childhood education and care;
- Implementing a statewide tiered quality rating and improvement system for programs tied to child outcomes;
- Improving access to high quality programs for young children with high needs; and
- Developing a high quality early childhood education and care workforce.

Nevada gleaned a number of advantages and "lessons learned" as a result if the state's considerable investment in the RTT-ELC application process. Many of the agencies and stakeholders involved in putting together Nevada's application have remained committed to its pursuit and continue to be involved in supporting and shaping the KEDS initiative. They recognize that the reform articulated in Nevada's application will result in a more unified approach to supporting young children and their families — one that helps ensure that children enter kindergarten with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful. Key questions in the RTT-ELC application that informed the needs assessment and planning process and should be used to guide Nevada's development of a coordinated ECE system include the following:

1) Has the state begun implementing a unified early childhood data system that works across funding streams to link information about uniquely identified children, personnel, and providers – including all of the Essential Data Elements?
2) If so, what elements does it have in place?
3) What resources has the state committed to the development of a unified data system, or key elements of such a system (including longitudinal data system funds, state advisory council funds, and state general funds)?
4) Has the state identified policies and practices that will be needed to support effective use of data once linkages have been built?
5) How does or will the system support the professional development and other needs of Early Childhood Educators?
6) How is the state ensuring or planning to ensure data security and compliance with privacy requirements?

Longitudinal Data Study

In 2007, NDE received its first federal State Longitudinal Data System grant to build and enhance its current System of Accountability Information in Nevada (SAIN) system. With this grant, NDE developed a number of applications in an attempt to collect all required State and federally mandated data sets, and formed the necessary infrastructure from which to augment and enhance the system to include early childhood data. Major outcomes of the grant included:

1) Functionality of the custom search (ad hoc querying) feature to increase access to aggregate assessment data was expanded.
2) Data Submission Application (DSA) was enhanced to increase ease and expand capabilities in data collection from local education agencies (LEAs) and schools.
3) Developed EDEN (Education Data Exchange Network) gathering, storing, formatting, and reporting system (EDEN-RS).
4) Added multiple data elements to comply with the EDEN initiative.

5) Developed a Teacher Unique identification system and integration of teacher licensure data.
6) Developed integration of fiscal data.
7) Improved the data validation process.
8) Developed a data warehouse reporting portal, which included ad hoc reporting, data mining, and analysis (intelligent business solution).
9) Integrated user/role based security model.
10) Updated Esmeralda and Lander County School Districts' student information systems.
11) Improved the current test system.
12) Developed an Electronic Records Transfer (ERT) system.
13) Studied best practices in other states for reporting/analysis interfaces and ERT.

While the initial statewide longitudinal data systems grant ended in February 2012, Nevada is one of 24 states that has recently been awarded a new $4 million grant from the US Department of Education (DoE) Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to develop a system to measure individual student achievement over time. The three-year grant will create and assign a Unique State Personal Identifier so that students, teachers and those in the workforce can be followed from preschool through grade 12, into post-secondary education and on into the workforce. The grant will also be used to fund an in-depth technical needs assessment at the state Department of Education, the Nevada System of Higher Education and the state Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation to determine solutions for implementing the enhanced statewide longitudinal data system. The assessment is expected to be completed by June 2013. This grant will move Nevada closer to a fully integrated system that follows learners from childhood to adulthood, and allows for better use of data to support the accountability measures that have been enacted in the state.

Nevada P-16 Council

The 2007 Legislature established the P-16 Council through Senate Bill (SB) 239, with the primary mission of ensuring cooperation and articulation between preschool through grade 12, higher education, business, parents, and the community. The council was formed to bring together the education, business, and political communities to make policy recommendations that will ensure coordination between these systems, with the overarching goal of better preparing all Nevada high school graduates either to begin credit-bearing work in college or to take their place in well-paying positions in Nevada's workforce.

An executive order was issued by Governor Sandoval in late 2011 directing the P-16 Council to review existing data systems in the state and make recommendations for the design and implementation of a statewide longitudinal data system with the capacity to track student

and educator data from early childhood through post-secondary education, following the example of other states as part of an overarching effort to reform education and improve student performance in Nevada. The grant described above is an important element of the effort. The P-16 Council finalized its recommendations in an August 2012 report to Governor Sandoval, proposing that $4 million in state funds be appropriated by the governor and the 2013 Legislature to conduct a feasibility study to help accomplish the task and ensure that the statewide longitudinal data system project moves forward in the next two-year budget.[19] The Council noted in its recommendations report that state funding will be needed to accomplish the solutions identified in the assessment.

In addition, funding will be needed to incorporate early childhood data into the statewide longitudinal data system, since it is not a component of the recently awarded grant. As a result, the council made the funding recommendation to support the next steps of the statewide longitudinal data system project and sustain it beyond the grant funding. The council made no recommendations on data polices, such as which data elements will be shared, what process will be utilized for information sharing, or how privacy will be protected, indicating that such decisions will be made once the needs assessment is completed. In addition to funding, the P-16 Council recommends that a cross-agency governance structure be established, with contributing agencies responsible for ownership of their data and its integration into a data matching hub.

Striving Readers

Nevada is one of only six states across the U.S. that has recently been funded by the Striving Readers - Comprehensive Literacy federal initiative. The Striving Readers Literacy Team has identified the P-3 initiative (described in more detail below) as a core element to the plan for increasing literacy and language skills for children from age birth to 5 years. The primary aim of this grant is to improve the pathway of literacy acquisition for at-risk children and their families. This is a historic endeavor for the state, in that it is the first time that Nevada has undertaken a completely comprehensive approach to literacy acquisition (birth through grade 12 and beyond). Four school districts in Nevada (Clark, Douglas, Lyon, and Washoe) were chosen to receive Striving Readers sub-grants to implement systemic improvements in literacy at the local level. A key tenet of the Nevada's Striving Readers initiative is using technology for networking and sharing best practices, as well as to enable more data-based decision-making.

The Nevada Striving Readers initiative will establish three types of Data-Based Decision-Making (DBDM) Literacy Teams that will collect, analyze, and use high-quality, reliable, valid, and timely data, especially that which is collected on program participants. Training and technical assistance will be provided to subgrantees to ensure they are knowledgeable

[19] Nevada P-16 Advisory Council: Report of Recommendations Regarding Nevada's Longitudinal Data System. August 1, 2012. p16.nv.gov/reports/P16_Report_of_Recommendations_-_Nev

about data collection and research outcomes that can inform instructional practices and policies to effect improvement in student outcomes in ECE settings and K-12 schools.

At the state level, the Nevada State Literacy Team (NSLT) will coordinate statewide efforts to monitor and support initiative subgrantees and their schools, and statewide implementation of the NSLP. One of the first tasks the NSLT will undertake is to develop a policy statement clearly describing the State vision and values, and the use of technology to assist with DBDM in Nevada Striving Readers schools. The NSLT will create a dynamic communication plan to inform stakeholders (e.g., legislators and other policymakers, educators, instructional support staff, LEA leaders, literacy advocacy groups, families) about the technical assistance and training offered through Nevada Striving Readers for participating subgrantees and schools throughout the State.

After a comprehensive review of current data, the NSLT will set goals for the State, develop a strategic plan to guide implementation, monitor outcome data, and advise the NDE and subgrantees. The NSLT will develop and maintain a digital information, dissemination, and collaboration network. The NDE will create and host a virtual “community of practice” that will provide a technology-based medium for school administrators and teachers to access best practices information through the initiative "What Works Clearinghouse". Educators will be able to engage in online discussions with and locate contact information for colleagues; link to resources for administrators, teachers, librarians, and school support staff; and share resources that are tested and/or developed in the initiative. This is especially important for teachers and administrators in rural communities who have limited funds and currently have to drive hundreds of miles to participate in face-to-face professional development opportunities.

As part of the DBDM Literacy Team, key stakeholders will monitor all school data, support school decision-making, provide feedback to subgrantee leaders and school principals to strengthen and improve literacy achievement. Each Nevada Striving Readers school will form a DBDM Literacy Team as part of its Comprehensive Literacy Plan that will include the school principal/assistant principal, teachers from across grade levels and content areas, and other stakeholders (e.g., implementation specialists, literacy coaches, special education teachers, ELL teachers, parents/family members). These teams will align their work with a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework that maintains a purposeful, respectful, and trusting environment in which data can be collected, analyzed, and used to improve literacy achievement.

Technology motivates students, boosts student achievement, enhances instruction and teacher effectiveness, improves leadership and supervision, and broadens communication within and between communities. Nevada will gather a cohort of technology expert educators who can skillfully incorporate cutting-edge information tools and digital content in literacy instruction. Successful subgrantee proposals included a coordinated and comprehensive technology plan that includes (1) the use of technology for assessment, instruction, intervention, and professional development; (2) incorporation of the principles of universal design for learning; and (3) a description of professional development that will

be implemented, including data-driven decision-making, personalized learning opportunities for teachers and administrators, and family involvement.[20]

P-3 Initiative

P-3 is an intentional, integrated way of changing education for young children that refers to the continuum of learning that spans traditional boundaries of preschool learning based programs and the early grades (K-3). The focus is on creating alignment both horizontally (across the age span) and vertically (within grades). This alignment facilitates reciprocity in sharing knowledge and working toward mutual outcomes. Preschool and K-3 are each engaged with and learning from the other, elevating the ability of both to improve within each grade level as well as across grade levels and across the entire continuum from birth through the third grade.[21]

NDE's most current planning efforts reflect a commitment to providing high quality early childhood education and care programs and services. This has led to a broader vision of an integrated P-3 system. The state's plans for a comprehensive P-3 system will link children's experiences in preschool with kindergarten and primary grades largely through; alignment of curricula, the development of Pre-K standards and ongoing joint professional development for principals and teachers. Nevada's Division of Early Childhood Education and other early childhood education and care stakeholders have designated the creation of a P-3 system as a priority.[22]

Structurally, a P-3 system uses consistent assessments for children and learning environments. Alignment of P-3 strategies across programs and initiatives provides additional support for all domains of school readiness. The three priority areas of P-3 include: 1) instructional quality in early literacy and math; 2) social-emotional development; and 3) family engagement. Essential stages of the P-3 spectrum, and the key educational/developmental focus areas of each, are:

- Birth to 3 (crucial period for brain development and social/emotional foundations);
- Pre-K (foundation for public education);
- Full-day K (universal transitions year); and
- Grades 1 to 3 (buttresses for lifelong learning).

Nevada is actively working toward implementing a P-3 approach at both state and local levels, as has been engaged in several key training and planning sessions to support this effort. In Fall 2010, Nevada was selected to participate in the Harvard P-3 Institute, and

[20] Excerpted from Nevada's Striving Readers Grant Application
[21] Excerpted from Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application, (Priority #4), 2011.
[22] Nevada Pre-K Standards: revised and Approved 2010. Building a Foundation for School Readiness and Success in Pre-K and Beyond.

sent a team which included representatives from NDE, DHHS, and Nevada's two largest school districts (Clark and Washoe Counties).

The purpose of this institute is to provide education leaders with the frameworks, research and strategies to develop and sustain aligned Pre-K-3rd programs while connecting the state's efforts to a national network of educators pursuing similar goals across the early childhood and early elementary school years. Decision-makers with the authority to implement P-3 at a systems level made up the team, and included an area superintendent, early childhood directors, and a K-12 literacy director. The attendees developed a mission and vision plan for Nevada which included increased collaboration, communication, determination of data collection tools and reporting systems, and professional development. Institute sessions focused on elements of Pre-K-3rd that are proven drivers for establishing firm foundations for success in learning, including:

- Instructional quality and effectiveness: strategies to help districts, administrators and teachers improve instruction and establish productive classroom environments.
- Language, literacy and early math: understanding how data-driven instruction and increased time in the classroom on learning activities support key cognitive skills.
- Social-emotional behaviors and climate: consider strategies for effective behavior management, strengthening self-regulation and executive functioning and creating a positive climate in classrooms and schools.
- Family engagement: learn techniques for building language-rich conversations, literacy and numeracy into daily routines at home and in collaborative family/school partnerships.
- Strengthen teacher-parent relationships: through home visits and other approaches.[23]

In Spring 2011, the Washoe County P-3 Council (funded by the State Early Childhood Advisory Council in early 2011) hosted two featured sessions as well as a strategic planning breakfast at the Nevada Early Childhood Conference. The sessions were conducted by P-3 experts from Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) and the State of Washington's Toppenish School District. The breakfast was facilitated by the Washoe County School District Deputy Superintendent and the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Reno. Participants included kindergarten teachers, school district and early childhood education and care administrators, university faculty, and early childhood community partners. The input from these planning and training sessions is now driving the work of the local Washoe County P-3 Council, which will serve as a model for the rest of Nevada's local jurisdictions.

[23] Source: http://www.gse.harvard.edu/ppe/programs/prek-12/portfolio/prek-3rd.html

Ongoing joint professional development activities are planned to support local and statewide P-3 implementation, including the institution of a 'P-3 track' at Nevada's annual Early Childhood Conference each year that features leaders and experts from the across the country. The Nevada ECAC will also partner with NDE to develop a similar track within the annual Education Mega Conference targeted to K-12 professionals as a primary strategy to shape the Pre-K-12 paradigm shift and prepare educators to successfully adapt to this level of systems change.

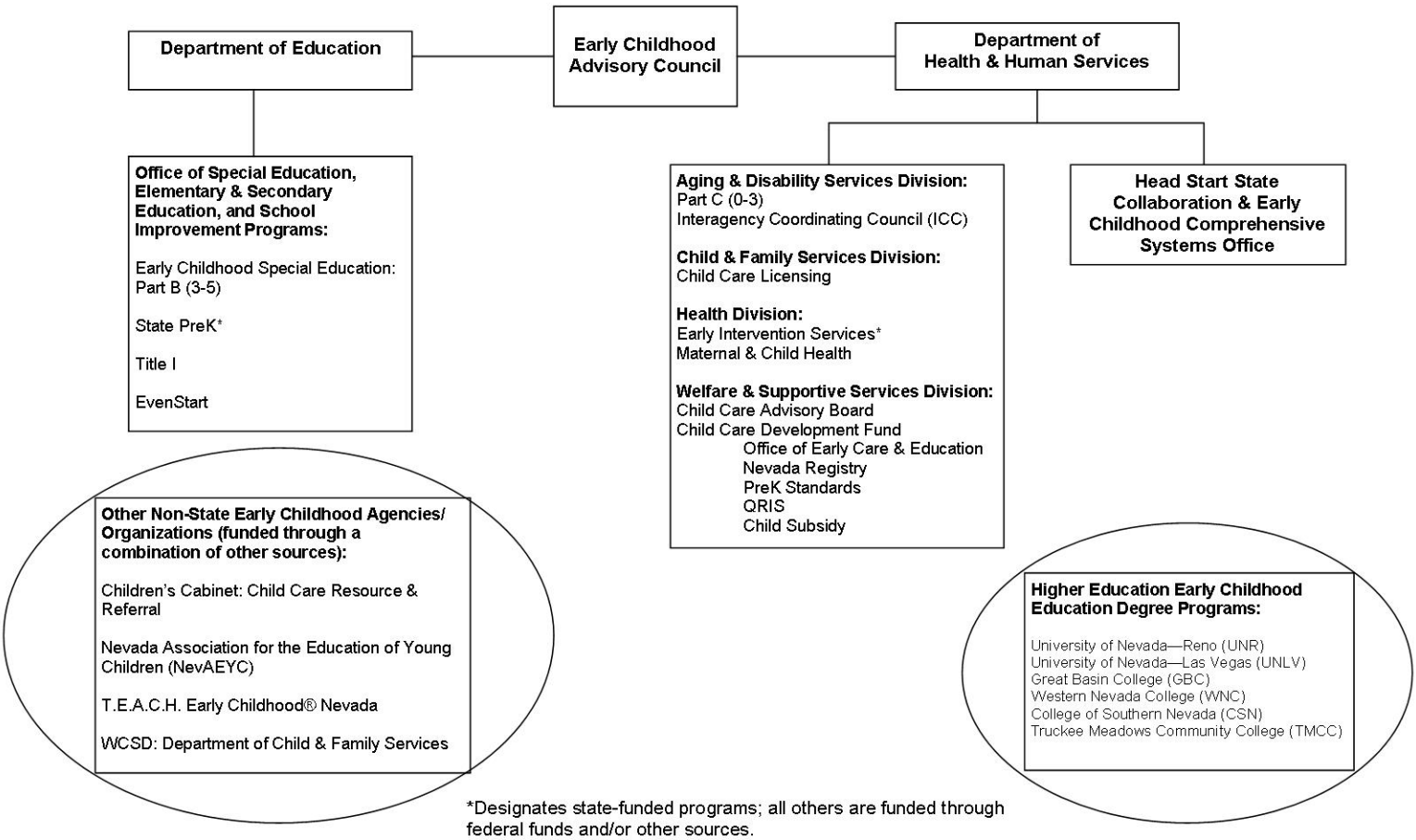
Nevada Report Card

The Nevada Department of Education public education accountability website is known as the **Nevada Report Card** (www.nevadareportcard.com). In compliance with the collection of data required by both federal and state law, this website provides a wealth of detailed information and public access to state, district and school level data in eleven different categorical areas. Information provided includes state-mandated assessments, student discipline, attendance, graduation and dropout rates, fiscal data and much more. Features allow users to "dig" deeper into relevant educational issues. For example, achievement comparisons can be made among schools by demographic characteristics using the custom search feature. Users can also view differences between school districts in terms of categories such as "per-pupil expenditures" using the "Compare" feature. As of the 2010-2011 school year, a new feature provides a measure of student growth in grades 4-8. A student's achievement can now be measured in terms of growth on Criterion Referenced Test's in Reading and Mathematics. Enhanced levels of accessibility and reporting continue to be added.

V. Nevada's Early Childhood System

While Nevada does not have a unified early childhood data collection system, there are many programs and agencies in the state that currently collect data independently. Sources of early childhood education and care include state and locally funded public school programs (e.g. State-funded Pre-K), federally funded early childhood education and care programs like Head Start and Even Start, private childcare providers, and more, all with differing funding mechanisms and accountability requirements. The graphic below depicts the various agencies and entities at both the state and non-state level that fund, regulate, oversee and support the early childhood education and care as well as the support services

Nevada Early Childhood System



*Designates state-funded programs; all others are funded through federal funds and/or other sources.

that make up Nevada's ECE system[24].

Type of ECE Programs in the State[25]	Number of programs in the State
State-funded preschool	11
Early Head Start and Head Start[26]	11
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	9
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	17
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	86
Programs receiving funds from CCDF	367
Other- family child care home receiving CCDF funds	297

The chart on the previous page as well as the graph above that summarizes the number of publicly funded programs in the state demonstrate the complexity of Nevada's ECE system and highlight some of the challenges as well as leveraging opportunities that exist related to building a coordinated ECE data system. Each of the Nevada ECE system entities' roles, responsibilities and funding mechanisms related to ECE is briefly described below.

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

Under federal ECAC funding, states are directed to conduct assessments of their early childhood service systems, including identifying high risk communities in their states. The Nevada ECAC was established in 2009 by Executive Order to strengthen state-level coordination and collaboration among the various sectors and settings of early childhood programs and perform the tasks required of state advisory councils in section 642B of the Head Start Act. The ECAC was recently continued by Executive Order signed by Governor Sandoval in July of 2011 with the added task of leading development of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. The following goals/outcomes for Nevada's children have been adopted by the Council and guide activities and priorities of the council:

- All children are supported and ready to make a successful transition to school.
- All children have access to early childhood education and care services that are accredited or meet national standards.
- Parents know child development.
- Parents know what to expect from programs and advocate for their children or self.
- Families are partners in decision making at all levels and are satisfied with the services they receive.

[24] Nevada Pre-K Standards: revised and Approved 2010. Building a Foundation for School Readiness and Success in Pre-K and Beyond.

[25] Excerpted from Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application, 2011.

[26] Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

- Families with young children are supported in their communities (employment, education, etc.)
- All children have access to medical home and health insurance.
- Social, emotional, mental health and developmental needs of young children and their families are supported by community-based services.
- Early childhood education and care service provider workforce stabilizes.
- Early childhood education and care workforce receives professional development to ensure quality services for all children (e.g. mental health, disabilities, early childhood education and care, etc.)
- More families report that community-based services are organized to be easy to use.

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council makes recommendations to the Governor's Office, DHHS and NDE regarding policies, funding and program priorities and practices related to this and other early childhood initiatives.

Nevada Department of Education

State Pre-Kindergarten and Part B programs are operated by school districts. In Nevada, ten school districts and one college have state Pre-K grants. Part B Section 619 is operated by every school district. Some districts have one classroom, while the largest school district in the state, Clark County, operates multiple classrooms. Title I classrooms however, are counted by the number of classrooms, as declared by the Nevada Department of Education.

In August 2011, the Nevada State Board of Education approved a revised Strategic Framework to guide planning for improvement of the State's education system. The strategic priorities, goals, indicators, vision and mission constitute the framework, and a task force at NDE is currently in the process of completing the Department's strategic plan by developing the action plans for implementation. The action plans will assure that the important work identified in the strategic priorities is carried out within and across the Offices in the Department. One of the four strategic priorities of the framework is to "provide valid and reliable data to support decision-making for student achievement".[27]

The Offices of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement are currently identifying strategies for infusing the primary drivers of reform throughout their areas of influence within the context of this framework. This reform agenda also acknowledges the increasing paradigm shift and transformation to a Pre-K-12 education system that acknowledges a broader continuum of learning and develop in the realm of public education.

- *Special education services* are provided directly to students by local school districts and are funded from federal grants, State appropriations, and local dollars. All

[27] Excerpted from Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application, 2011.

special education services are delivered in accordance with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed for each special needs student as required by federal law. Among other things, the IEP contains goals and objectives for student achievement, placement information, and a description of the supportive services necessary for a student to benefit from special education. The DOE oversees special education programs provided by school districts.

- *State-funded preschool programs* – There are currently 11 state funded preschool programs. The table below shows the 11 ECE projects, the amount of Nevada ECE funds awarded in 2010-11, and the number of ECE sites. Altogether, the 11 Nevada ECE projects funded under Assembly Bill (AB) 563 supported 36 early childhood education and care sites during SY 2010-11.[28]

2010-11 Funds Awarded and Number of Early Childhood Education and Care Sites **Nevada ECE Projects**	**Amount Awarded**	**Number of Sites**
Carson City School District	$246,599	2
Churchill County School District	$102,897	1
Clark County School District	$1,446,937	10
Elko County School District	$149,277	2
Great Basin College	$123,354	1
Humboldt County School District	$112,683	1
Mineral County School District	$102,897	1
Nye County School District	$123,375	1
Pershing County School District	$120,809	1
Washoe County School District	$708,902	15
White Pine County School District	$101,145	1
Total	**$3,338,875**	**36**

- *Title 1 of the ESEA*: Since the enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, preschool services to eligible children have been an allowable use of Title 1 funds. There are 86 Pre-K programs funded under Title 1 in Nevada.[29] As the Title 1 grantee, NDE is responsible for oversight of all Title 1 programs, including preschool programs operated with Title 1 funds. These funds can support ECE programs and endeavors in a variety of ways, including:
  - disseminating information, through publications, conferences, and other events, that describe how Title 1 funds can be used to support ECE programs;
  - developing State preschool standards in the cognitive and language domains;
  - monitoring programs to ensure that Title 1 preschool is meeting program goals;

[28] Assembly Bill 563- Nevada Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program: Building a Foundation for School Readiness and Success in K-12 and Beyond. FY 2010-11 Evaluation Report. Prepared by David Leitner, Pacific Research Associates.
[29] Excerpted from Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application, 2011.

- considering early intervention as an appropriate measure to prevent later academic difficulties when providing technical assistance to schools that are in school improvement; and
- providing funds for professional development and improving the cognitive focus in preschools through special initiatives.

In addition to supporting Title 1 preschools through broad-based efforts, NDE provides targeted support to local education authorities (LEAs) through technical assistance that is specifically focused upon improving local program quality.

Nevada Department of Health and Human Services

The NDHHS Director's Office houses the Head Start State Collaboration, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems and Early Childhood Advisory Council coordination. Other programs managed within DHHS include: Child Care Development Fund, IDEA Part C, Maternal Child Health and Home Visiting, Early Childhood Mental Health, Child Care Licensing, Medicaid, Nevada Check UP (SCHIP) and Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT). These programs work with the Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office and the Early Childhood Advisory Council to align program priorities and funding to achieve the goals set herein without jeopardizing the integrity of implementation or unique requirements of the individual programs within DHHS.

Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office: The Nevada Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office (HSC&ECS office) is federally funded by three federal grants. The HSC&ECS grant is received from the Administration for Children and Families – Office of Head Start. The Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant is through the Health Services and Resources Administration – Maternal Child Health Bureau. The Nevada HSC&ECS is located in the Director's Office of the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services.

Nevada Head Start Collaboration Office - Through statewide partnerships, the Nevada Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office enhances relationships, builds systems, and promotes comprehensive quality services to meet the needs of young children and their families. The office exists through grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start and the Health Resources Services Administration, Maternal Child Health Bureau. The Nevada Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office is currently leading efforts to build a comprehensive system of early childhood education and care services across the state, so all children can enter school ready to learn.

Early Head Start and Head Start Programs – Head Start and Early Head Start programs promote school readiness for economically disadvantaged children by enhancing their social and cognitive development through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services. Head Start programs serve

children ages 3-5 and their families. Early Head Start programs serve pregnant women and children birth to 3 and their families. The federal Office of Head Start (OHS) provides grants to operate both Head Start and Early Head Start programs directly to public and private agencies in Nevada. Programs engage parents in their children's learning and help them in making progress toward their educational, literacy and employment goals. Significant emphasis is placed on the involvement of parents in the administration of local Head Start programs.

There are currently 11 Early Head Start and Head Start grantees in Nevada, most with multiple sites. The Nevada Head Start Association (NvHSA) is a non-profit organization found in 1993 that serves as the unified voice of Nevada's Head Start grantees (including Head Start, Early Head Start and Tribal Head Start) and works jointly with HSSC/ECSO to support them and to advocate for Nevada's Head Start children. The Nevada Head Start Association Board members are Nevada Head Start program staff and those that oversee the program. Each Head Start grantee has four representatives who serve as members. The representatives include one Head Start director, one Head Start parent, one Head Start staff and one grantee representative.

Early Childhood Systems - The Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Project works across five areas, all of which have a relationship to the HSSCO initiative areas. This is the primary purpose of combining the two projects.

1) Medical Homes / Health Care
2) Social-Emotional Development / Mental Health
3) Early Childhood Education and Care
4) Parenting Education
5) Family Support Services

Division of Aging and Disability Services - IDEA Part C Office: The IDEA Part C Office provides the oversight of Part C (early intervention services) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This Office is responsible for:

- The monitoring of Part C programs and activities;
- Providing technical assistance to programs;
- Developing procedures for resolving complaints;
- Develop policies and procedures related to financial matters;
- Identification and coordination of resources;
- Developing interagency agreements;
- Resolution of disputes;
- Ensuring delivery of services in a timely manner; and
- Data collection.

Part C of the IDEA was crafted with a vision of comprehensive, interagency, multidisciplinary, family-centered, and community-based services accessible to all infants and toddlers with disabilities and to many who are at risk for disabilities. The Early Intervention system is required to be a statewide system of coordinated,

comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency programs providing appropriate early intervention services to all infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The system must include the following minimum components:[30]

a) A definition of the term "developmentally delayed" that will be used by the state in carrying out programs
b) Timetables for ensuring that appropriate early interventions services will be available to all infants and toddlers with disabilities in the state
c) A timely, comprehensive, multidisciplinary evaluation of the functioning of each infant and toddler with a disability in the state and the needs of the families to assist in the development of the child
d) An Individualized Family Service Plan for each eligible child including service coordination
e) A comprehensive Child Find System, including a system for making referrals to service providers that includes timelines and provides for the participation by primary referral sources
f) A public awareness program for focusing on early identification of infants and toddlers with disabilities
g) A central directory which includes early intervention services, resources, and experts available in the State
h) A single line of responsibility in a lead agency designated by the Governor for carrying out general administration and supervision of programs and activities including program monitoring, procedures, and dispute resolution
i) Policies and procedures relating to standards to ensure that personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained
j) A system for compiling data on the numbers of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families in the state in need of early intervention services

Health Division: The Nevada State Health Division (NSHD) administers several programs related to early childhood education and care, supportive services, and family health and wellness. These include the following-

- *Child Care Licensing*: All licensed child care facilities in Nevada are currently regulated by one of two licensing entities; the Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance (HCQC) - Child Care Licensing Unit (State) or Washoe County Child Care Licensing. The HCQC Child Care Licensing Unit (formerly the Bureau of Services for Child Care under the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) licenses, regulates and monitors all facilities located outside Washoe County. The HCQC enforces the state child care licensing regulations, which are the minimum requirements for child care in Nevada. The regulations for child care facilities in

[30] http://health.nv.gov/BEIS_PartC.htm

Washoe County must meet, but can (and do) exceed, the requirements set forth in the state child care licensing regulations.

- *Early Intervention Services*: The mission of Nevada's Early Intervention Services (NEIS) is to identify infants and toddlers who are at-risk for, or who have developmental delays; provide services and supports to families to meet the individualized developmental needs of their child; and facilitate the child's learning and participation in family and community life through the partnerships of families, caregivers and service providers.
- *Maternal and Child Health*: The Bureau of Child, Family, and Community Wellness strives to be the state leader in Maternal and Child Health (MCH) issues by providing research, data analysis from needs assessment and the development of initiatives and recommendations to address the findings of needs assessments, standards development, technical assistance, legislative testimony, quality assurance, and information resources to staff, planning groups, policy makers, and other agencies whose activities affect the MCH populations. The bureau accomplishes its various direct and supportive ECE services and activities through the expertise of a variety of professional staff including Health Program Specialists, Health Program Managers, Health Educators, and Nutritionists.

Department of Welfare and Supportive Services: The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services is the designated lead agency to administer the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The State Office of Early Care and Education was established under the State Child Care Administrator's Office to oversee and coordinate the quality improvement funds received through the CCDF. It is an umbrella agency for programs funded through the CCDF. Programs funded through this office include: Accreditation Support, Southern Nevada's Child Care Training Program, Child Care Registry, The Apprenticeship Program, Pre-K Standards Development, Child Care Scholarships and Infant/Toddler Quality Improvement Grants.

The CCDF Child Care Program assists low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance and those transitioning from public assistance in obtaining child care so they can work. CCDF funds are also used for Quality activities to improve the quality of child care by financially assisting child care providers in their professional development and maintaining healthy, safe, appropriate learning environments for children 0 to 12 years of age. Other services under Quality include Resource and Referral for parents seeking child care and consumer information on the aspects of quality child care. Resource and Referral services are available to all Nevada families at no cost. There are 367 programs and an additional 297 family child care homes receiving subsidy funds.[31]

[31] Excerpted from Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application, 2011.

Nevada System of Higher Education: The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) (formerly the University and Community College System of Nevada "UCCSN") was formed in 1968 to oversee all state-supported higher education in Nevada. The table below summarizes the postsecondary institutions in NSHE that offer credential and/or degreed ECE programs.

Postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators	**Number of Early Childhood Educators that received an early learning credential or degree (2009-10)**	**Aligned with the State's current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials?** *(Yes/No/Not Available)*
University of Nevada Las Vegas	37	Yes
University of Nevada Reno	20	Yes
Great Basin College	8	Yes
Truckee Meadows Community College	7	Yes
College of Southern Nevada	7	Yes
Western Nevada Community College	Not Available	Not Available

State of Nevada Demographer: The State of Nevada Demographer (SND) is contained within the Nevada Small Business Development Center at the University of Nevada, Reno. The SND is funded by the Nevada Department of Taxation and conducts annual population estimates for Nevada's counties, cities, and towns. Regional Economic Models are used by the SND to forecast and project estimates based on U.S. Census data. The SND has the capacity to create custom data requests for public and private agencies. The variables that are available from the SND include: annual population estimates, annual population projections, age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin for the state's population, and profiles of Nevadans by top occupation groups.

County, District, and Local Initiatives

There are multiple ECE-related initiatives and planning efforts underway at the local level that have significant implications for this project in terms of data collection, analysis and sharing that has the capacity to improve program quality and ECE outcomes in general. These underscore the need for formal linkages and structured coordination to ensure successful implementation. This list is by no means exhaustive, as there are numerous groups and efforts involving parents, caregivers, private ECE providers, health and human service agencies and others that exist and are deemed critical to local implementation. However, it is not possible to list them all here.

Intermediary Organizations, Local Early Learning Councils and ECE Data Sources In Nevada

- Children's Cabinet
- Elko County Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children
- Nevada Children's Data Center
- Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (UNLV)
- Nevada PEP
- Nevada State Parent and Information Resource Center
- Reno Association for the Education of Young Children
- Southern Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children
- Southern Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Tribal Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Tri-county Early Childhood Advisory Council (Lyon, Carson and Douglas counties)
- The Lincy Institute (UNLV)
- United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierras
- United Way of Southern Nevada
- Washoe County Early Childhood Advisory Council

VI. Nevada's ECE Data Resources

State-level Agencies and Funding Streams

As noted in the previous section, there are a number of state agencies responsible for various components of Nevada's ECE system. In order to build a coordinated ECE data system, it is imperative for these agencies to interact and coordinate their respective activities. Even though Nevada has limited information that applies to all young children in the state, these agencies do maintain a great deal of information about specific programs and services and about the programs and providers of those services. This needs assessment endeavors to summarize the data that is currently available, albeit fragmented, to potentially be incorporated into a coordinated data system that is linked with NDE's K-12 longitudinal data system.

States finance a variety of services for young children, usually according to different eligibility criteria and the availability of funding, and maintain information about these services. These include the programs listed in the previous section, such as:

• Child care subsidy programs;

• Preschool programs under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);

• State-funded preschool programs;

• State-funded home visiting and family support and resource center programs;

• Early intervention services for infants and toddlers under Part C of IDEA;

• Child protective and foster care services for children in need of assistance;

• Health care services under Medicaid and the Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which include behavioral and mental health services;

• Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) income support participation; and

• Supplemental nutrition assistance programs (SNAP) and, of particular relevance and importance to young children, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.

Information System Resources

Nevada has a variety of information systems in place that provide a foundation upon which to build a coordinated ECE data system. The NDE longitudinal data system, known as "Bighorn" is at the core of this foundation, and currently tracks K-12 student data statewide, which includes 12 Data Quality Campaign (DQC) elements presently. Additionally, the system can track data from state-funded Pre-K programs, and NDE has in-house program developers, making it relatively easy to build and adapt the system as needed to incorporate ECE data.

Nevada's statewide longitudinal data system allows NDE to accurately manage, analyze, disaggregate, report, and use individual student data. In terms of security, users' roles determine their level of access to data within an application based on the distinct roles of state, district, and school. The System of Accountability Information in Nevada (SAIN) is the system that consists of nightly data collections from school districts. The SAIN system tracks student demographics, attendance, courses, course grades, program participation, disciplinary actions, and state administered assessment results. Students are tracked on a daily basis, providing Nevada with the capacity to produce state required reports that support Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), compliance with *The No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), accountability reporting, and state and federal mandated reporting requirements, such as the federal Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN) reporting and the *Nevada Annual Report of Accountability* (ARC).

There are several data sources and pathways for this system with a potential for additional data being integrated into the system. The current data sources are: District Student Information Systems; SASIxp (Clark County); PowerSchool (rural counties); Infinite Campus (Washoe County); Assessment data from third party vendors; Unique ID System; and NDE data (e.g. school information). The data in the SAIN system are processed from these different pathways as the data are moved through the system. These pathways are the connectors between key components of the system, which include a backup system, a consolidated storage database, the statewide unique student identification system, and a database designed for reporting and analysis.

NV SEARS: The NDE's special education data system for reporting on Accountability and Performance Review (APR) indicators and collecting and reporting district compliance monitoring data is known as Nevada Special Education Accountability and Reporting System (NV SEARS).[32] NV SEARS is a secure web-based application that was initially developed in 2008. NV SEARS contains the following major components:

- Data reports for all APR indicators and state and LEA levels to assist in improvement planning efforts.
- Local district profiles for all indicator data.
- Onsite compliance monitoring tool for file reviews.
- Auto determination of need for Corrective Action Plan based on results of file reviews.
- Individual student noncompliance determination and correction tracking.
- Dashboard for NDE's real time view of ongoing progress relative to Corrective Action Plans and individual corrections.
- District profiles with tables and figures with state education authority (SEA)-editable report descriptions.

[32] http://www.spedsis.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=74

- Full featured NDE survey development and maintenance tools.

Like Bighorn, NV SEARS has the capacity to expand over time to accommodate additional components.

Non-NDE Data Systems for Early Childhood Education and Care

Nevada Registry: As a recognition and data collection system for early childhood education and care (ECE), The Nevada Registry is in the unique position to be able to gather a vast amount of data about the workforce in the state.[33] Data is collected on a daily basis through the process of Career Ladder placement and the training approval system. The data collected from the Member Application is used to build Career Development Files for each member and helps the Registry to accurately reflect an individual's unique professional and educational background in ECE.

The information collected through the application process and the training approval system is never disclosed with any identifying information attached. Any data provided to the public is aggregated. Participation in The Nevada Registry became a requirement for all caregivers working in licensed child care settings in April of 2009 (as per State Child Care Licensing regulations R112-06 and R001-09) and was officially announced statewide in October of the same year. It is anticipated that statewide participation will be fully phased in by the end of 2012.

The Nevada Registry serves as a clearinghouse of information for the field of ECE by offering Career Ladder placement, an online calendar of training, community resources/information, a statewide job board, professional development planning, a Trainer Directory and more. The Nevada Registry is also responsible for the approval of all informal training in the state of Nevada. The program aims to help lessen the stigma and increase the status of the ECE profession by promoting a well trained and skilled workforce of ECE professionals, recognizing the professional and educational achievements of ECE professionals and by raising the standards for training approval through the establishment of a pool of qualified trainers who meet higher criteria/approval standards.

Nevada Child Care System (NCCS): The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services has a child care system in place (NCCS) which administers child care funds for eligible parents in Nevada, and supports the collection, storing and reporting of information to the federal government.[34] It determines participant eligibility, processes attendance rosters, provides case management capabilities and authorizes payments to child care providers. In addition, the system interacts with existing Welfare databases and provides data and reports for continual monitoring. NCCS interfaces with NOMADS, which is the Nevada computer system that is used to determine eligibility for TANF, SNAP, and Medicaid. Division staff reviews a sampling of cases and perform independent verifications to determine correct

[33] http://www.nevadaregistry.org/about/program-statistics/program-statistics.html
[34] https://dwss.nv.gov/index2.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=424&Itemid=2

payments have been made. A monthly review of sample cases includes review of provider attendance/billing records. A monthly report is provided which includes trend analysis. Audits are completed by divisional staff, other state agencies and independent auditing companies. Client and provider records are included in these audits.

County and District Data Collection

Nevada Early Childhood Education Program (State Funded Pre-K). The 2009 Nevada State Legislature passed Assembly Bill (AB) 563 that continued the funding of the Nevada Early Childhood Education Program. Through this legislation, NDE offers competitive grants to school districts and community-based organizations to initiate or expand pre-k education programs. Grantees participate in data collection to support mandatory evaluation of the program, which identifies specific evaluation requirements for early childhood education programs funded under the legislation. The type of data contained in the most recent evaluation report includes:[35]

- Data Collection Instruments Used
- Number of Children Participating in Non-Nevada ECE Programs Before and Simultaneously with Nevada ECE
- The Status of Children if They Did Not Participate in the Nevada ECE Program
- The Number of Nevada ECE Staff by Position
- Highest Level of Education and Experience of Nevada ECE Project
- Number of Projects That Provided Teachers and Aides Training by Hours
- Average Scheduled Hours of Parenting and Early Childhood Services
- The Number of Projects That Provided Various Parenting Services to Families
- The Number of Families Exiting the Program by Reason
- Assessment Average Scores and Gains
- Parent and Child Reading Time in Minutes
- Performance on Nevada CRT, by Grade
- Total Hours Children Spent in ECE
- Total Hours Adults Spent in Parenting Education
- Number of Months Families Spent in ECE Program
- Ratings for All Nevada ECE Program Site Visits on the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Sale (ECERS) and the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool (ELLCO)
- Parent/Teacher Conference Rate and Comparison

Head Start and Early Head Start. Many counties have one or more Head Start site. Head Start, which is granted through federal programs, have completed or developed school

[35] Assembly Bill 563- Nevada Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program: Building a Foundation for School Readiness and Success in K-12 and Beyond. FY 2010-11 Evaluation Report. Prepared by David Leitner, Pacific Research Associates.

readiness goals that are supported by child-level data. Head Start (Including Migrant, Tribal, and Early Head Starts) collect a large array of data on participating children and families. Head Starts must also participate in community needs assessment. The type of data collected includes:[36]

- Program information
- Family Information: Demographics, Socioeconomic Status, Income/Benefits
- Child Information
- Risks
- Focus Child Birth Information
- Program Services
- Subsequent Births
- Child Care
- Child Health and Behavioral Health Information and Services
- Family Needs and Support
- Parent/Caregiver Work/Education Activity
- Parent/Caregiver Education Level
- Family Benefits/Income
- Parent Interview
- Child Assessment
- Child BMI-related
- Cross-Source Child Outcomes (as of Grade 5)
- Child Care Observations
- Child/Caregiver Observations
- Teacher Interview/Report
- Father Interview

Private Early Childhood Education and Care Providers (licensed care, home and center-based operated by individuals or private corporations). The data collected by licensed centers and home-based providers throughout the state vary greatly, and is largely dependent on licensing and funding sources. Some centers may have extensive child assessment processes; depending on the school approach different tools are used. For example, some schools develop portfolios for children using a variation of work sampling. Some may use checklists to monitor progress toward identified skills, or rating scales. In general, private providers do not maintain substantive data systems to store, maintain and report assessment data. New NSHD child care provider licensing regulations contain the following requirements related to assessment of children:[37]

- Identify the interests and needs of each child enrolled

[36] http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/hs/data_arch/index.html
[37] http://health.nv.gov/childcare/R032-07RA.pdf

- Describe the developmental and educational progress of each child enrolled who is not attending public or private elementary school
- Identify the need for and referral for developmental screening and diagnostic assessment, if appropriate
- Describe the methodology for developing curriculum for the children enrolled
- Within three months of enrollment, assess the child by use of, without limitation, portfolios, observations, checklists, rating scales and screening tools. Such an assessment must be repeated biannually thereafter to monitor and support the learning and development of each child enrolled in the facility.

Wide Availability of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3 and ASQ-Social Emotional). Easter Seals *Make the First Five Count* has made available the Ages and Stages Questionnaire online to all Nevada families.[38] This tool screens for developmental delays in communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social skills for children up to 5 ½ years of age. Easter Seals has agreed to work with the state to make aggregated data (with no individual identifiers) available to support the goals of a coordinated ECE data system.

Information from Parents and Families. The type of assessment and other data collected from and about students and families varies by county. Families complete surveys, forms, and questionnaires to provide information about their child. In addition to demographic, socioeconomic and health data, Programs often collect data on parent engagement initiatives to understand and evaluate the effects of parent engagement.

National Data Sources to Inform State Policy and Practice

In addition to state administrative data sources and state-sponsored surveys and other state sources of information, Nevada can draw upon national data sources that provide state-level information to provide insights into its early childhood system. The U.S. Census and American Community Survey can be used at the state level to provide information on the number of young children in the state, by age and by race, ethnicity, and language (whether they live in a linguistically isolated household). This data can further be disaggregated to the county and city levels, and estimates soon will be available even at the census tract level annually. Census data provides the best source of information for the number of young children, by race and ethnicity, poverty status, and other factors within and across a state. In addition, the Census Bureau provides additional opportunities for state-level analysis of the questions posed by the census, where additional breakdowns of the data may be made. As an example, the Census and the American Community Survey ask a question about 3 to 5 year-olds, “Did your child participate in a preschool program?”

[38] http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageNavigator/ntlc10_mffc_homepageasq.html

Many other organizations and government agencies provide data related to children at both the national and state level.[39] A comprehensive list of these is provided in Appendix E. Those with specific state data bases include:[40]

Cornell Linking Economic Development and Child Care 50-State Database: Cornell University created this database to provide an overview of all current, national sources of comparative data on the early childhood education and care sector including: child care economic data, demographic data, and early childhood education and care program (policy) data. http://government.cce.cornell.edu/doc/reports/childcare/50state.asp

Extension Cares Initiative: Child Care County Profiles: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Cares Initiative provides access to Child Care County Profiles for early childhood education and care, school-age care, and teen programs. The tool enables users to compare state to national averages, view all counties in the state, or access information for a particular county in any of the 50 states. The profiles provide information on the general population and child populations, general economic and education information, and family characteristics and work patterns. http://eci.ext.msstate.edu/cgi-bin/county_profile.cgi

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics: The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (the Forum) is a collection of 20 Federal government agencies involved in research and activities related to children and families. The Forum sponsors Childstats.gov, a web site that offers easy access to statistics and reports on children and families, including: population and family characteristics, economic security, health, behavior and social environment, and education. www.childstats.gov/index.asp

KIDS COUNT: KIDS COUNT offers several interactive online databases that allow visitors to create free, customized data reports. The report choices vary by system, but include the ability to generate custom profiles, line graphs, maps, and rankings, and download raw data. http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT.aspx

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC): Section 619 Profile: NECTAC has collected state data on special education programs for over a decade. Data from the twelfth edition of the Section 619 Profile (2003) supplements data available. http://www.nectac.org/sec619/sec619.asp#619profile

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Program: This web site provides public access to the most recent data about children with disabilities served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These data are collected annually by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs in accordance with Section 619 of IDEA. They are provided in the form of tables produced for the Annual Reports to Congress. http://www.ideadata.org/

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[39] Nevada Children's Data Center, http://nevadachildrensdata.org/data-sources/

[40] Child Care and Early Education Research Connections - http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/sdatools/studies/3804

VII. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Summary of County Assets Related to Data Systems

The following table summarizes by county the assets and opportunities that were identified by stakeholders and research during the needs assessment process related to building a coordinated, early childhood data system in Nevada. Planning should capitalize upon these assets wherever possible, which should be leveraged for implementation.

District	Assets Related to Data Systems
Carson City	• A willingness and interest to implement a statewide assessment • A desire to share information across districts and recognition of the benefits that would have for teachers and students • New partnerships and collaborations in place as a result of the Striving Readers grant application process • A new strategic plan that creates a climate supporting a school readiness definition • ECE providers who support the school readiness definition and want information to help children and parents prepare for kindergarten entry • Membership of the tri-county ECAC
Churchill	• The concentration of early childhood education and care at one site (Northside Early Learning Center), which facilitates collaboration and data collected throughout the year and is used to improve instruction, set expectations among teachers, and to compare school averages to other populations. • Pre-K and kindergarten programs that share data. The principal is aware of the demographics and progress of children within the school. Assessment information is used to help improve instruction and the overall programming • A Transition Program. When a child goes from kindergarten to the elementary school, a sheet of information is sent that includes summary information: MAP score in reading and math; KPALS score, whether the child is an English Language Learner (High, Medium, Low), whether they have an Individualized Education Plan by type, positive traits, behavior issues, and placement suggestions, if any • Coordination among the Pre-K, Head Start, kindergarten, and elementary schools • Interest within the school district and to Northside to have information that can be shared across school and district boundaries • Interested in data to improve programs and fully prepare children for elementary school. Comparison data is also valued so that the school can see where students are and set goals for improvement • Momentum in starting a local ECAC
Clark	• Infrastructure and leadership are in place and supportive of a common,

	statewide data system. • Community leaders and funders are supporting improved school readiness outcomes through commitment to United Way of Southern Nevada's Education Council and its leadership team • An active local ECAC with broad participation of diverse ECE stakeholders. • The Higher Education community (UNLV and CSN) are engaged in quality improvement efforts, and a number of public and private preschool classrooms are participating in QRIS activities and training • The desire to share information to benefit children's learning and outcomes is shared by most stakeholders • The CCSD Literacy Plan, which lays a foundation for a common assessment tool and process with its focus on evidence-based instructional strategies and methodologies as well as data-based decision making • A Literacy Plan that aligns with the Common Core State Standards and focuses on all teachers delivering the core curriculum effectively so that expectations for what students should know and be able to do are clearly articulated; allowing for measuring gains over time through assessments and other measures
Douglas	• Infrastructure and leadership are in place and supportive of a common, statewide data system • Willingness and interest to implement a statewide assessment • The desire to share information across districts and recognition of the benefits that would have for teachers and students • The Striving Readers grant and the additional resources and infrastructure it will afford DCSD • A strong partnership with Washoe Head Start with intent to increase linkages with pre-school and parents through the Striving Readers grant. • Most ECE providers in the county support the school readiness definition and want information to help children and parents prepare for kindergarten entry • An active local ECAC with broad participation of diverse ECE stakeholders
Elko	• A local ECAC is in early stages of development • Collaboration and shared goal-setting has strengthened as a result of the Striving Readers application process • A plan is already in place to strengthen the district's technology infrastructure • The majority of parents completing a KEDS survey (72.7%) indicate that it is a good idea for information about their child's progress to be exchanged between educators and other providers, as long as the information is used to support their child's development and is not misused • Invested Board of Trustees and forward-thinking superintendent see the value of early childhood education and care. • ECSD is already working in partnership with GBC, the tribes, and community-based providers to look at all options related to improving student, school, teacher and district performance. • Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are set up in state pre-K facilitate support and information sharing, spread of best practices, and peer support.

	These could be expanded to incorporate non-district programs, as well as to improve linkages between pre-K and kindergarten educators.
Eureka	• All ECSD teachers are highly qualified, and continually monitor student achievement, and strive to improve instruction of standards to promote greater student learning • Usage of state of the art technologies including SmartBoards and 1:1 computers • A plan to strengthen the district's technology infrastructure • There is already a data system in place, so adding a cohort to what is in place would not be difficult • Relatively small student/county population allows for easier management of data entry and analysis • Strong culture for collaborative planning and peer-to-peer learning will support planning and progress toward data-driven decision making • High level of parent engagement already exists to facilitate community buy-in • Supportive Board of Trustees and forward-thinking superintendent are willing to look at all options related to improving student, school, teacher and district performance and achievement • ECSD values the use of data for planning and decision-making, as well as to inform students about what is expected of them and how they are performing
Esmeralda	• Smaller community size makes it easier for teachers and administrators in Esmeralda County to be informed about their students • Esmeralda County Schools are technologically advanced • Esmeralda County School District staff has experience using technology to aid instruction
Humboldt	• An existing plan to strengthen the district's technology infrastructure • A relatively small student/county population that allows for easier management of data entry and analysis • Strong culture for collaborative planning and peer-to-peer learning will support planning and progress toward data-driven decision making • Supportive Board of Trustees and forward-thinking superintendent are willing to look at all options related to improving student, school, teacher and district performance
Lander	• An existing plan to strengthen the district's technology infrastructure • Relatively small student/county population allows for easier management of data entry and analysis • Strong culture for collaborative planning and peer-to-peer learning will support planning and progress toward data-driven decision making • Strong existing relationships between school district and pre-K centers • A high level of parent engagement exists to facilitate community buy-in • Supportive Board of Trustees and forward-thinking superintendent are willing to look at all options related to improving student, school, teacher and district performance
Lincoln	• A relatively small student/county population allows for easier management of data entry and analysis. • A clear and direct chain of command, coupled with high level of trust

	• Good communication and community relationships • High level of parent engagement exists to facilitate community buy-in
Lyon	• Plan in place to formalize and implement a district-wide evaluation system for the District Literacy Program • Awarded a Striving Readers grant which will provide the additional resources and infrastructure to support implementing a data system that links to NDE • Intent to implement computer-based assessment by aligning MAP assessment with the Common Core State Standards • A management data warehouse will be implemented as part of Striving Readers, and additional data will be housed in the student learning and management data warehouse managed by the data analyst and used by DBDM Literacy Teams • Common Formative Assessments are under development by WestEd and will be moved to a computer based system • A Work Sample System will be used to monitor progress and plan instruction • Membership of the Tri-County ECAC and a number of partnerships in place, including the Healthy Communities Coalition, Boys and Girls Club and Community Chest
Mineral	• Hawthorne Elementary School offers free preschool services and onsite administrator which offers a distinct advantage when it comes to building a coordinated ECE system. The preschool is located on the Hawthorne Elementary School grounds • Relatively small student/county population allows for easier management of data entry and analysis • A strong interest in school readiness and data that supports the need for high quality early childhood education and care. Kindergarten class sizes are small and there is currently full-day kindergarten at both elementary schools.
Nye	• Committed educators who advocate for all children and are interested in achieving improved outcomes • High level of parent engagement exists to facilitate community buy-in • Existing programs such as state Pre-K, Title I & ECE special education • Support for P-3
Pershing	• A small student/county population allows for easier management of data entry and analysis • An existing culture for collaborative planning and peer-to-peer learning will support planning and development of more formal linkages with community-based ECE providers • High level of parent and community engagement already exists • Supportive school board and superintendent place a high value on early childhood education and care • Elementary school principal has a background in early childhood education and care and understands the importance of data-driven decision making
Storey	• The district is small, and there is only one center-based provider, which facilitates information and data sharing • An existing system that works well in part because of relationships and good internal communication • An interest in improving availability of data about children that are entering

	kindergarten.
Washoe	• In a survey of Washoe County parents, 65% felt that a data system that would allow organizations and agencies to share data from preschool through 12th grade was a good idea • More than three quarters of providers and educators surveyed agree or strongly agree that an early childhood data system that would allow various systems to share information for the purpose of improving outcomes for children is a good idea • Existing data systems that could be built on or leveraged. In addition to school district systems, Head Start, Early Head Start, and some private providers report that they collect data and store it in a database • In general, there is an interest in collecting data to improve instruction, programs, and outcomes for children • Many stakeholders identified ways in which a coordinated data system could improve aspects of their service delivery to children and families
White Pine	• An existing plan to strengthen the district's technology infrastructure • A relatively small student/county population allows for easier management of data entry and analysis, relationship building, and tracking progress • An invested Board of Trustees and forward-thinking superintendent see the value of early childhood education and care and are willing to look at all options related to improving student, school, teacher and district performance • Infrastructure is already in place to allow for assessment to be done online, because every classroom in the district has a teacher computer • Community involvement in the school remains high with support from both parents and the business community which are strong advocates for their students and the school • Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) set up in state Pre-K allow for support and information sharing, communication of best practices, and peer support. • Little People's Head Start has worked with the district on an informal basis to communicate about the scores of children transitioning to kindergarten from Head Start compared to other preschools so that they know what needs to be improved. The school district values this information sharing and tracking, and uses the data to better understand children's needs at kindergarten entry. • School district ECE staff have strong formal and informal connections with both publicly and privately-funded Pre-K programs in the county.

ECE Stakeholder Feedback on Data Collection, Use, and Sharing

As part of the needs assessment process, ECE providers, elementary school teachers, and other stakeholders and parents were surveyed about their opinions related to strategies for improving school readiness for Nevada's young children. The survey was taken by 201 provider/stakeholders and 537 parents. A summary of survey results related to both a kindergarten entry assessment as well as a coordinated data system can be found in Appendix A. As summarized in the table below, the majority of survey respondents are

"bought in" to the strategy of developing a statewide ECE data system to support improved school readiness outcomes and see value in sharing data across systems to support this goal.

BUY-IN	Providers/Stakeholders		Parents	
	An early childhood data system for Nevada would allow various systems to share information for the purpose of improving outcomes for children. What is your reaction to the idea of developing a statewide early childhood data system? N = 197		A common kindergarten entry assessment for Nevada would mean that in every district, readiness for kindergarten would be measured in a similar way. Do you think that statewide kindergarten entry assessment is a good idea? N = 531	
	Strongly or Somewhat Agree	**82.8%**	**Yes**	**79.8%**
	Neutral	15.2%	No	5.6%
	Somewhat or Strongly Disagree	2.0%	Not Sure	14.5%

GOALS	**Parents identified which goals are most important in data sharing across different systems N = 468**	Very Important	Somewhat Important
	Teachers have information about the child to help guide their instruction	76.9%	17.0%
	Teachers are aware of special needs and strengths of the child	**85.0%**	**12.0%**
	Preschools and childcare have information about how well they have prepared children for kindergarten so that they can make improvements	74.6%	19.6%
	Districts and schools have more information for planning	63.5%	26.3%
	It is easier for children to move among schools or districts	60.4%	24.3%

Stakeholder Concerns & Considerations

The data system will be driven by the common kindergarten entry tool and process that is chosen to be implemented, so it is important to understand the impact that this choice will have on counties and districts, and how it will affect their ability to collect, use, report and analyze data for communication, performance improvement, and decision-making. For example, in some districts, student data is used to help understand and measure teacher effectiveness. Assessments are administered by people other than the child's teacher to help provide objectivity. In other cases, assessment is for the purpose of informing curriculum development and instruction methods. Teachers integrate assessments in teaching practice with individual children, recording important milestones as they are achieved. Still other assessments are completed with the assistance of computers, providing standardized information about the child quickly for the purpose of understanding baseline, curriculum match, and progress. The time per child, as well as training required for administrations, and cost, varies depending on overall purpose and instrument used.

In some districts, such as Washoe and Clark, there is considerable investment in a specific tool. Investments include all resources – training time, expense of purchasing or developing the tool, and commitment to data systems that support collection, maintenance and reporting of assessment data. This may translate into reluctance to change existing instruments and processes that are working well for their purposes.

Districts have different practices for sharing information about assessment. In most cases, assessment data is maintained by at the school/provider level, and there is limited capacity to aggregate and share available data. Many schools and districts actively share information with parents through parent-student conferences. Report cards are the most common way that schools provide assessment information to parents about kindergartner's progress. Most districts have portals where parents can access information about their child; however, assessment data is not often available through tin these data systems and parents of kindergartners are less likely than parents of older children to know how to access this information. Schools and districts are typically very protective of children's data, taking privacy laws very seriously. Data is not typically shared with any organization or program outside of the school or district, with the exception of providing access to parents or legal guardians.

Stakeholder feedback regarding concerns relative to data collection and sharing are summarized below:

- 85.4% of provider/stakeholders identified that the cost to ECE and care providers is the most significant concern.
- 73.5% of parents identified that the ability of schools and systems to collect and report information accurately is the greatest concern (Appendix A, Table 8).
- 28.0% of parents are not very concerned or at all concerned about privacy and security of data, while 53.2% of parents reported that privacy/security of data is very or slightly concerning (Appendix A, Table 7).

CONCERNS	Concerns about the following issues related to an early childhood data system		
		Providers/ Stakeholders n = 189	**Parents n = 516**
		Very or Somewhat Significant	Very or Slightly Concerned
	Cost to districts and schools	75.4%	56.1%
	Cost to ECE and care providers	**80.1%**	58.9%
	Misuse of data	75.1%	68.0%
	Data analysis and reporting capacity	77.5%	
	Time away from instruction	77.7%	54.7%
	Teacher burden	75.1%	50.7%
	Pressure on children	70.2%	60.0%
	Privacy & security of data concerns	64.4%	66.6%
	Concerns that children will be labeled		66.3%
	The ability of schools and systems to collect and report accurate information		**73.4%**

A Look at other State Models

With the recent federal funding of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, there are a number of states that Nevada can look to which have implemented one or more of the components of a statewide ECE data system successfully and can be used to provide a model for Nevada to adapt in its implementation plan. However, that number is still small, and most states are in the earliest phases of implementing their plans, which generally take several years to fully "prove". The following states have put systems, policies and/or practices in place that are highlighted by the Early Childhood Data Collaborative as "state success stories".[41]

Colorado: Colorado's recently awarded $17.4 million Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant includes plans to link federally and state-funded early childhood intervention, care and education programs managed by the Colorado Department of Human Services to the state's education data system, including the matching of child identifiers used in various early childhood databases to the student identifier used in the K–12 data system. In 2008, Colorado legislation mandated the development of an interdepartmental data protocol for the collection, storage, sharing and release of data. The protocol will include directives on the circumstances that allow the sharing and release of data and compliance with all state and federal privacy laws.

Connecticut: As part of the Early Childhood Information System, 2009 Connecticut legislation mandated the development of a cross-agency unique program identifier for state-funded early childhood education and care programs. A unique identifier will allow state leaders to gain a non-duplicated count of programs, many of which blend and braid various public funding sources, and to assess outcomes for each individual site.

Florida: Florida's "P-20" statewide longitudinal data system merges data from 26 state agencies, and since the mid-90's has collected and analyzed student demographics, enrollment, courses, test scores, financial aid, and awards, as well as data on curricula, educational institutions, staff demographics, certifications, and professional development. Florida is able to capture information about Pre-K services offered by public school districts, and it collects information from both public and private providers who receive public funds to operate Florida's voluntary Pre-K (VPK) programs. Using the data collected, the state "grades" VPK providers based on their students' performance on the kindergarten readiness assessment.

Illinois: The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Student Information System includes a unique child identifier for children in publicly-funded early childhood education and care (ECE) programs. For each child in the system, ISBE tracks ECE program participation, whether a child meets criteria for being "at risk" and/or low

[41] http://ecedata.org/state-success-stories/

household income, and family structure (e.g., two-parent vs. single-parent family). School administrators and teachers have access to data for an individual child in their classrooms. In aggregate, the state uses descriptive data to meet reporting requirements and to support longitudinal research on child outcomes.

Maryland: Maryland's early childhood data system includes an assessment of school readiness that is administered to all public school kindergartners. Since 2007, when Maryland established the unique K–12 student identifier, this school readiness information has linked to the K–12 education data system, allowing the longitudinal tracking of child outcomes. Because information is disaggregated by type of prior care (e.g., Head Start, family child care) and by participation in programs such as special education services, the state can use the longitudinal results to improve state-funded early childhood education and care programs.

Pennsylvania: The goal of Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning is to regularly assess the development of children from birth to age 5 who receive state-funded early childhood education and care services. Early childhood education and care providers collect child information across seven developmental domains using a research-based, authentic assessment aligned with the state's early learning standards. Currently, children are evaluated multiple times a year in state-funded Pre-K and Head Start supplemental programs, child care centers with three- or four-star quality ratings, early intervention programs, and Accountability Block Grant programs.

In 2005, the National Governors Association (NGA) Taskforce on School Readiness recommended that states:

• Implement unified data collection requirements, training opportunities, and professional standards across prekindergarten, childcare, and Head Start programs;

• Establish common measurements and consistent data reporting mechanisms to enable information sharing and analysis across state agencies and programs and between the state and local levels; and

• Invest sufficient resources to support consistent data collection efforts.

In its conclusion, the report stated that "governors can focus on building 'ready states' by supporting a coordinated and comprehensive infrastructure for early childhood, integrating data systems and supporting evaluation efforts to inform decisions, and holding decision makers and stakeholders accountable for measurable results."

"Building the Foundations for Bright Futures," Final Report of the NGA Taskforce on School Readiness, National Governors Association, 2005.

Defining the Ideal System for Nevada: Recommendations

Mining the experiences of other states in their incorporation of early childhood data into statewide longitudinal data systems will be important to identifying best practices and further developing these systems in Nevada. The key to a comprehensive information system on young children is tied directly to school readiness, i.e. knowing what children "know and can do" at the time of kindergarten entry. This represents an essential outcome for efforts in the early years to ensure children start school healthy and equipped for

education success. It represents a key factor in determining what challenges schools face and must address in raising achievement.

The domains that comprise Nevada's definition of school readiness interact in affecting future growth and learning and are correlated with one another. Children who are behind their peer group in more than one domain face many more obstacles to catching up than those who are behind in only one domain. For this reason, Nevada needs to adopt a reliable kindergarten entry assessment that measure children's status across all of the five domains in order to achieve the goals that have been articulated around building a coordinated ECE data system that is linked to the K-12 longitudinal data system.

Well-designed indicators are required for accurate evaluations of the range of system components that influence school readiness, including teaching methods, curricula, professional development strategies, and program effectiveness. These system-indicators are useful for continuous improvement efforts, such as reporting trends in the quality of early learning opportunities and outcomes, and identifying unusually effective Pre-K-3rd efforts, including approaches that show the most promise in preventing or closing achievement gaps for children at risk of low achievement. These indicators can also be valuable to teams of ECE administrators, staff developers, and teachers drawn from the full range of ECE programs to study how children are progressing, and to design targeted professional development strategies.

System-indicators can be made available to the public and key stakeholders through a specific "systems" portal in formats such as comprehensive written reports or descriptive tables presenting specific indicators with interpretive text. Since parents, teachers, principals, and school districts have overlapping but distinct information needs, the system-indicators portal can be designed to make only relevant indicators available to particular stakeholder groups.

The effective state ECE system is one that has collaborative educational standards and strategies, curricula, assessment and professional development that are jointly planned and strongly aligned across the spectrum of preschool through higher grades. The ideal system would also incorporate public funding for full-day education starting at age three, including voluntary, full day Pre-K for three- and four-year-olds and required full-day kindergarten. Family engagement is an essential component of any ECE system, and should focus on supporting parents and caregivers as partners in their child's education so that they can promote and reinforce what children learn in school.

A centralized and coordinated information system is critical to maintain, track and make data available by region, level of organization (schools district, and county), demographic characteristic and school readiness domain. Strong feedback from all 17 counties was provided that the system should be developed with sufficient flexibility in the data collection component to accommodate the unique needs of local communities. Establishing a coordinated ECE data system in conjunction with a common kindergarten entry assessment would be a worthwhile investment for Nevada and would help to achieve the following:

- Increase parents' understanding of their child's optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development;
- Support ECE educators to plan and individualize curriculum based on data-driven information about their students;
- Provide school districts with the data needed to determine patterns, identify areas of high need, guide curriculum development, and improve educational programs;
- Assist service providers for young children to assess how well early childhood education and care services perform in raising the developmental level of young children prior to entry into school; and
- Evaluate the overall ECE system and inform strategic planning, training and technical assistance activities, and quality improvement efforts.

The findings from this needs assessment and the feedback from all 17 counties related to the need for additional resources for implementation support the funding and leadership recommendations of Nevada's P-16 Council in its recent report to Governor Sandoval. In addition to recommending a $4million allocation from the Nevada Legislature, the report recommends a centralized governance structure to oversee a data system that aligns P-20 education data. In order for implementation to be both successful and sustainable, it is essential for the governance and leadership of Nevada's ECE system to be centralized, ideally within the Office of the Governor, and structured in a way that facilitates the coordination of the multiple state agencies that are responsible for managing and sharing data, in conjunction with the counties and districts.

Next Steps

Based on the recommendations summarized above, which are driven by stakeholder input, research, and ECAC guidance to define what the implementation plan for this project should include, the following "next steps" are proposed for consideration in order to move the implementation plan forward.

1. In conjunction with the kindergarten entry assessment workgroup, the data system workgroup needs to identify and enumerate the specific data elements to include in the integrated data set for tracking and analysis. These data elements must serve as the appropriate indicators to support decision-making about program quality and student progress.
2. Additionally, the data system workgroup needs to inventory the data that exist and the data's strengths and limitations, including: demographic data from census and other sources, administrative data and matches, survey and parent reporting data, and mapping capacities.
3. The workgroup should develop detailed guidelines regarding the full range of content to be included in ECE data system, and should develop guidelines on the structure and format of the three "portals" with particular attention to the need for all data to be included in a single, integrated dataset. The data must be organized with individual

students as the unit of analysis and with all data for that student on the individual record, including data about the child's classrooms, teachers, schools, and family. Philadelphia's KIDS Integrated Data System provides an example of a fully functional integrated data system, including data from a wide range of programs and agencies.

4. To support appropriate data management and access, the workgroup needs to define what information will be included in the micro-data files, and identify who (e.g. researchers and evaluators) must have access to micro-data files, the systems indicator files, and the student indicator files. Files should include data on each child's student assessments, attendance, teachers, and schools, as well as information from other administrative records systems, including demographics, health care providers, and participation in special education, free and reduced price lunch programs, or programs such as child welfare, TANF, and SNAP.[42]
5. The workgroup should explore select state models to develop guidelines regarding the structure and format for system-indicators that will ensure easy access to information in a timely fashion. This may involve defining "pre-populated" tables and could also involve the development of a system for creating special user-defined tables.
6. The workgroup should develop guidelines which are linked to Nevada's current P-20 efforts underway identifying and delineating the specific types of information needed by principals, teachers, and parents, recognizing that parents will require specific types of information only for their own children, while teachers will need access to a broader array of information for each of their students, and principals will need access to information for all students in the school.
7. The workgroup should develop guidelines for safeguarding the confidentiality of the data, and for creating common standards to ensure privacy regulations, rules, and procedures of multiple agencies are addressed and followed. These guidelines should outline the methods and procedures by which various stakeholders can access data in a way that is timely and also ensures the confidentiality of students, teachers, and schools.
8. Information about young children and their development is needed to identify needs and opportunities throughout the early years; focus attention and inform policy development to address gaps and needs; track enacted policies for achieving their objectives; and assess progress for policies collectively achieving the goal of third grade reading proficiency.

The information gathering activities outlined in this report have helped to inform the recommendations made here; however, there still remain unanswered questions that should be addressed as the KEDS project moves forward in this effort. For instance, although the site visits and focus groups gave some insight into county resources and district policies,

[42]Data Quality Campaign, 2011c; The Early Childhood Data Collaborative, 2011.

additional contact will help to clarify their receptivity, challenges, opportunities, and the appropriate timing for implementation. Additional focus groups could be conducted once a kindergarten entry assessment has been selected in order to test its acceptability with local communities and facilitate the selection of key indicators. Finally, it would be helpful to determine whether the State has or would be willing to dedicate any resources toward this initiative.

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Appendices

A. Survey Data

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Survey Respondents from Each County	% Survey of Provider/Stakeholders n = 201	% Survey of Parents n = 537	
Carson	4.5%	2.0%	
Churchill	2.0%	0.4%	
Clark	**40.8%**	**57.9%**	
Douglas	8.5%	1.2%	
Elko	0.5%	10.9%	
Esmeralda	0.5%	0.0%	
Lincoln	1.0%	0.6%	
Lyon	1.5%	1.8%	
Mineral	3.0%	0.0%	
Nye	5.5%	0.6%	
Pershing	1.0%	0.2%	
Storey	0.5%	0.0%	
Washoe	30.8%	24.4%	
Survey Completed in Spanish	%	%	
	0.0%	11.4%	
Participation in KEDS Focus Group	% Completed survey during/after KEDS focus group n = 201	% Participated in KEDS focus group n = 537	
	50.2%	6.7%	
Field of Practice n = 180	%	% Parents with children ages: n = 532 - 536	
Special Education	4.4%	**5 or younger**	**90.3%**
Health and Human Services	6.7%	6-10 yrs	36.1%
Education (K-12)	26.1%	11-18 yrs	21.0%
Education (Early Childhood)	**60.6%**		
Advocacy/Policy	2.2%		
Position/Job Title n = 176	%		
Administrator/Director	36.9%		
Early Childhood Education and Care Provider	17.0%		
Parent	5.7%		
Teacher/Instructor	**40.3%**		
Organization Type n = 190	%		
Public	**36.8%**		

	Private	27.9%	
	Non-profit	34.7%	
	Public/Charter	0.5%	

Table 1

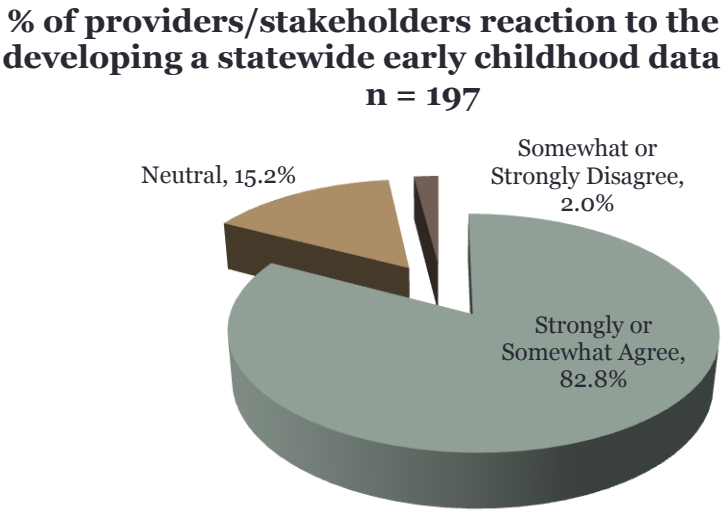

Figure 1

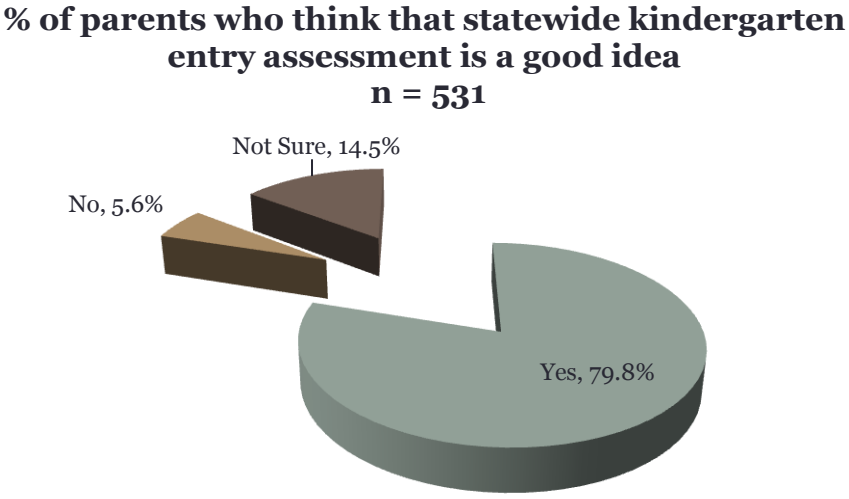

Figure 2

BUY-IN

Providers/Stakeholders		Parents	
An early childhood data system for Nevada would allow various systems to share information for the purpose of improving outcomes for children. What is your reaction to the idea of developing a statewide early childhood data system? n = 197		A common kindergarten entry assessment for Nevada would mean that in every district, readiness for kindergarten would be measured in a similar way. Do you think that statewide kindergarten entry assessment is a good idea? n = 531	
Strongly or Somewhat Agree	**82.8%**	**Yes**	**79.8%**
Neutral	15.2%	No	5.6%
Somewhat or Strongly Disagree	2.0%	Not Sure	14.5%

Table 3

PURPOSES

Over 88% of respondents indicate that the following state purposes are appropriate and/or important for a statewide kindergarten entry assessment process.		
	Providers/ Stakeholders n = 197	**Parents n = 494**
Help guide individual instruction	88.7%	93.6%
Support transition from early childhood education and care (ECE) to kindergarten	94.8%	94.6%
Screen for potential special needs	**97.5%**	96.3%
Help guide planning for early learning investments	90.6%	
Help guide classroom instruction	89.0%	
Help families prepare children for kindergarten		95.1%
Inform parents of strengths and areas of growth	95.9%	**96.7%**
Help guide district and school planning	90.5%	91.6%

Table 5

GOALS

Parents identified which goals are most important in data sharing across different systems n = 468	Very Important	Somewhat Important
Teachers have information about the child to help guide their instruction	76.9%	17.0%
Teachers are aware of special needs and strengths of the child	**85.0%**	**12.0%**
Preschools and childcare have information about how well they have prepared children for kindergarten so that they can make improvements	74.6%	19.6%
Districts and schools have more information for planning	63.5%	26.3%
It is easier for children to move among schools or districts	60.4%	24.3%

Table 4

DOMAINS	Over 90% of provider/stakeholders indicated that the following areas are important to measure in a statewide kindergarten assessments process n = 196			
		Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral
	Social and emotional development	83.7%	14.3%	2.0%
	Language and early literacy	**89.1%**	**9.3%**	1.6%
	Physical development and health	72.5%	23.3%	4.1%
	Cognition and general knowledge	79.7%	17.2%	2.6%
	Approaches to Learning	74.5%	18.8%	5.7%

Table 6

APPROACH	Provider/stakeholders reacted to the following potential implementation approaches for a statewide kindergarten assessment process n = 197			
		Strongly or Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat or Strongly Disagree
	One standard assessment process for all districts	**68.2%**	11.5%	20.3%
	Districts choose tools and methods from a specified list	60.5%	20.0%	19.5%
	Districts develop local procedures that meet specified criteria	61.7%	19.1%	19.1%
	All decisions are made by districts with external TA support	47.5%	23.5%	**28.9%**
	Provider/stakeholders indicated their reaction to the following possible approaches for collecting information on what children know and are able to do n = 197			
		Strongly or Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat or Strongly Disagree
	Direct assessments	82.5%	8.7%	8.7%
	Checklists, questionnaires, rating scales	80.9%	12.9%	6.2%
	Portfolios and work samples	**85.8%**	8.4%	5.8%

Table 7

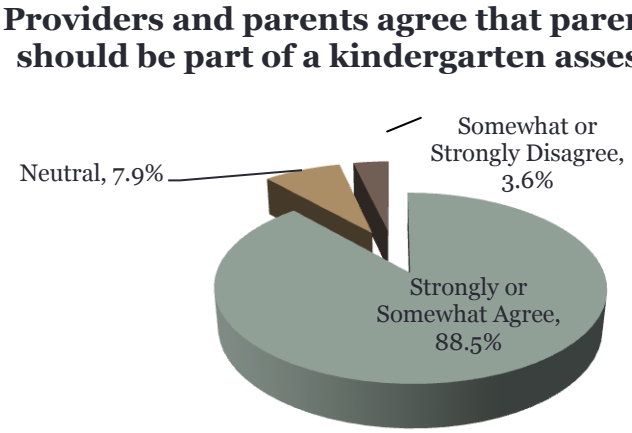

Figure 3

CONCERNS

Concerns about the following issues related to an early childhood data system		
	Providers/ Stakeholders n = 189	**Parents n = 516**
	Very or Somewhat Significant	Very or Slightly Concerned
Cost to districts and schools	75.4%	56.1%
Cost to ECE and care providers	**80.1%**	58.9%
Misuse of data	75.1%	68.0%
Data analysis and reporting capacity	77.5%	
Time away from instruction	77.7%	54.7%
Teacher burden	75.1%	50.7%
Pressure on children	70.2%	60.0%
Privacy & security of data concerns	64.4%	66.6%
Concerns that children will be labeled		66.3%
The ability of schools and systems to collect and report accurate information		**73.4%**

Parents have the following concerns about kindergarten assessment process n = 523			
	Very or Slightly Concerned	Neutral	Not Very Concerned or Not Concerned at All
Cost to districts and schools	55.2%	25.2%	17.5%
Misuse of data	62.9%	15.4%	20.9%
The ability of schools/systems to assess children in a meaningful way	**73.5%**	14.5%	11.0%
Time away from instruction	53.5%	23.7%	21.5%
Teacher burden	48.0%	26.6%	23.4%
Pressure on children	53.9%	17.6%	27.3%
Concerns that children will be labeled	61.3%	16.3%	21.9%
Privacy & security of data concerns	53.2%	18.2%	**28.0%**

Table 8

CHALLENGES

Provider/stakeholders anticipate the following challenges in implementing a statewide kindergarten assessment process n = 200		
	Very or Somewhat Significant	Less Significant or Not Significant at All
Cost to districts and schools	85.4%	11.1%
Training of teachers or assessors	**89.8%**	8.7%
Misuse of data	64.9%	32.0%
Data analysis and reporting capacity	71.8%	23.9%
Time away from instruction	76.7%	20.2%
Teacher burden	77.7%	19.6%
Pressure on children	66.1%	32.3%
Privacy Concerns	61.1%	**37.3%**
Security of Data	64.1%	34.4%

Table 9

OPEN ENDED	Providers/stakeholders provided additional questions, concerns or positive feedback related to the kindergarten entry assessment, early childhood data system or both n = 44	
	Theme	Description of Theme
	Other (16)	Some providers/stakeholders asked questions (5), commented on how questions were phrased (2), commented on the conference (1) or not being part of the focus group (1); other respondents left their contact information (2), stated an opinion to separate children of differing performance levels in the classroom (1), and commented on the status of their ECE (1); None & N/A (3).
	Assessments and standards that are developmentally appropriate, authentic, positive (7)	Providers/stakeholders commented that assessments should be authentic and incorporated into daily learning (1), positive environment (1) and should be developmentally appropriate (2); respondents promoted development of the whole child with individual learning styles (2); one respondent commented on the concern of becoming a data driven and outcome school, where children miss out on play and opportunities to learn (1).
	Loss of teaching time for administering assessments (4)	Providers/stakeholders commented that taking teacher time away from instruction for individual assessment is a concern (3) and that teachers need all of the instructional time with the new common core (1).
	Increase support/training and programs (4)	Providers/stakeholders commented that parents and teachers more training (2) and that it is important to plan programs with support from leaders of all sectors (1); another respondent commented for the need to increase ECE programs to provide help for everyone's child (1).
	Data system that is connected, streamlined and whole (4)	Providers/stakeholders support the premise for systematic data collection and same assessments for all children (2) and agree that streamlining ECE and checking for overall success of the program in kindergarten makes sense (1); one comment has interest in monitoring kids as a whole system for the state (1).
	Private ECE (4)	Providers/stakeholders commented that assessments required for public education should not be enforced in private schools (1) because they are already using their own assessments that one respondent commented would like to continue using (1); another respondent reported the need for increased communicate between CCSD and private schools (1); a comment was made that private schools are over-preparing students for kindergarten (1).
	Another assessment not needed (2)	A respondent summarized concerns regarding the necessity and use of standardized tests, especially when qualitative data regarding students' performance is collected through the year by teachers (1) and indicated that another assessment is not necessary (1).
	Promote all day kindergarten (2)	Providers/stakeholders comment in support of all-day kindergarten (2).

Table 10

OPEN ENDED	Parents provided additional questions, concerns or positive feedback related to the kindergarten entry assessment, early childhood data system or both n = 88	
	Theme	Description of Theme
	Other (19)	Some parents asked questions (4); parents commented teacher time spent in education (3); parents requested information on KEDS focus group (1) and commented on teaching more languages in schools (1); None & N/A (10).
	Concerns and the negative use of assessment & information sharing (17)	Parents commented about limiting data sharing due to privacy violations (4), even though a parent stated that data sharing may help kids, families and educators (1); parents commented on utilizing information to benefit kids (1) and not to share information that labels them in a negative way (2), especially in regard to minority children (1); parent commented on concern that teachers/administration/district may not use assessment information correctly to help an individual child succeed in kindergarten (1); parents commented that assessments may overwhelm or put stress/pressure on children in kindergarten (3) when their attention would be better on appropriate developmental activities that are fun (1), grow confidence, camaraderie (1), social skills (2).
	Promotion of assessment (15)	Parent commented that assessments must be rigorous and also remain true to assessing skills that should be mastered (1), so that all children enter with the same skills (1); parents commented that assessment is a good idea to make sure that children do not fall behind (3) and to measure what they have learned (1); parents wished assessment was already in place for previous children (2); parent commented that kindergarten entry assessment is an excellent program (1) to give children a head start (2), but the measure must be impartial where parents can leave additional comments for insight and not bias the assessment (1); parents commented that assessment can benefit children and help teachers/parents (2), and assessment is crucial in seeing developmental and social/emotional delays as well as strengths (1).
	Fairness & disadvantage in assessment (10)	Parents commented that assessments are good but not for the purpose of leaving children behind or putting them in lesser ability classes (2); parents stated that Nevada's children are disadvantaged due to larger classrooms in public school (1), lack of expectation for children to attend kindergarten and lack of oversight in day care (1); parent stated that pre-K assessments are discriminatory because all students do not have the same chance to attend due to financial resources (1); parent stated that a pre-K assessment by a non-college educated professional seems unfair (1); parent commented that assessments must be fair across the board (1) and standardized so that all children have the same assessment environment (2); parent commented putting kids in kindergarten when they are not ready interrupts other kids from learning (1).
	Early entry program & full-day kindergarten (10)	Parents commented that advanced children under age 5 would benefit from starting in an early entry program, not being held out of kindergarten (5); parents commented that kindergarten should be all day (3) because kids are not equally prepared when all day kindergarten is not mandatory (1); parent recommended the use of electronic devices in early education (1).
	Budget/ spending issues (9)	Parents commented that a childhood data system is a waste of time, money, and spending should be allocated to under-resourced teachers (2) who have a low staff/child ratio (3) and are being laid off (1); parents commented that too much time and resources are spent on testing and not enough on instruction (2); a respondent suggested to use releases of information to obtain information instead of buying an expensive state system (1).
	Parent information sessions (8)	Parent commented that expectations of children entering kindergarten are very unclear and confusing (1), and parents would benefit from schools hosting information sessions for parents to prepare children for kindergarten (3) by the time children are age 3-4 (1); parents commented that information sharing is vital among parents and educators (2) who need more training and classes (1)

Table 10

B. Outreach Tools

Targeted Stakeholder Matrix: Key Informants

FORUM	STAKEHOLDERS	
	Kindergarten Entry Assessment	**ECE Data Systems**
Key Informants	• State/district agency leadership involved in implementing a kindergarten assessment tool • Experts in implementing high quality ECE programs • State/local funders and licensing entities • Maternal and child health experts • Policy experts (e.g. NICRP, NAEYC) • Childcare Resource and Referral • United Way of Southern Nevada	• State/district agency leadership involved in data systems • State/local funders for ECE and school data systems • ECE program experts – local and state • information system experts and IT staff (state/county/local – as relevant) • UNR Early Head Start Center for Excellence
Key Informants: Sample Questions	• What national trends, discussions, and/or partnerships are in play? • What are the challenges with implementing a kindergarten assessment? • What information does the Department want/need about their students' readiness for school? • What is important to be considered during the planning process? • What best practices do you recommend for Nevada's implementation of KEDS? • What tool should be used? • What should the assessment include? • How often should assessment occur?	• What is the State/District vision for a coordinated ECE data system? • What data systems are already in place? • What are the challenges with implementing a data system? • What resource sharing opportunities have been identified? • To what extent to the various ECE systems exchange data currently? • What challenges are unresolved related to privacy issues, data exchange across systems, system collaboration, unique identifiers, system capacity issues, provider capacity issues, county-to-county and provider-to-provider variance in what is collected?
Key Informants: Questions	• What policy challenges exist at the district level? (e.g. union, workforce, regs) • What information would be envisioned for Kindergarten Assessment? • Are there tools or instruments that would meet these needs best? • Do any of Nevada's counties have a preferred model already in operation?	• What resources (training, funding, hardware/software, upgrades, staffing) are needed to implement the necessary improvements in order to have the ideal system in place? • What data is currently being collected through the United Way TAPS program? • How is early childhood education data linked to school data?

Targeted Stakeholder Matrix: Focus Groups

FORUM	STAKEHOLDERS	
	Kindergarten Entry Assessment	**ECE Data Systems**
County Site Visits & Focus Groups	• Relevant School district personnel • Publicly funded ECE providers – including Head Start and Early Head Start, State Pre-K, Title 1 and Even Start programs • Child care centers • County social services • County/regional collaboratives • Local ECACs • Local MCH/EIS staff • PTA, PEP, parents, caregivers • Cultural/inclusion- representative groups (e.g. tribes, English language learners, etc.) • reps from Higher Ed • Representatives from Advocacy groups	• Relevant school district personnel • information system experts and IT staff (state/county/local – as relevant) • evaluators and program monitors • health care providers • End users of data (Administrators, Teachers, parents, providers, etc) • Data system administrators • Funding agency representatives • Childcare resource and referral • Local ECACs • Higher Education representatives • Child care licensing personnel

County Site Visits and Focus Groups: Sample Questions

- What information do parents want/need about their child's readiness for school?
- What information do teachers want/need about their students' readiness for school?
- What information do schools want/need about their students' readiness for school?
- What tool should be used?
- What should the assessment include?
- What concerns, if any, do you have about Kindergarten Assessment / data systems?
- What children should be assessed?
- When should assessment occur?
- How often should assessment occur?
- What are the challenges with implementing a kindergarten assessment?
- What is the best ways for parents to get information from schools about their child?
- What resources are currently used for kindergarten assessment?
- What questions or concerns do families have about Kindergarten and a statewide data system?
- What cultural/environmental barriers exist for the families you serve, related to assessment and data collection?
- What are child care providers most concerned with related to helping children get ready for school?
- What would the community level impact be (funders, parents, providers, etc) related to implementing KEDS?
- What resources are used for data collection and reporting?
- What data systems are already in place?
- What data is currently being collected?
- How is data currently collected/what tools are in place?
- How is data currently used and by whom?
- What are the challenges with implementing a data system?
- How should data be used?
- What burdens currently exist for providers related to data collection and reporting?
- What data do you wish was available?
- What privacy concerns exist for the families you serve?
- What cultural/environmental barriers exist for the families you serve, related to assessment and data collection?
- What data is currently being collected related to programs, teachers and environments?

C. Summary of Contacts and Information Sources by State of Nevada and Each County

Including surveys, there are more than 830 contacts and information sources from the State of Nevada. The table at the end of this section summarizes contact and information sources for the State of Nevada by each county. It is important to note that the total number takes into account that some numbers listed in the table are not unique for surveys and focus groups. In addition, two counties have several other contacts that were not quantifiable: Nye County kept the number and names of people who participated in the focus group confidential and Washoe County had "many parents" participate in outreach. These participants are gratefully acknowledged in addition to those who participated in the State of Nevada as other stakeholder groups.

Inventory of Interviews, Focus Groups, and Conferences / Meetings
State of Nevada
Nevada School Readiness Summit
Monthly Webinars with stakeholders (April, May, June, and planned for July)
Presentations to Nevada ECAC (April, June)
Interview with Glen Meyer, Director of IT, NDE
Interview with Sonya Horsford and Fatma Nasoz – Lincy Institute (UNLV)
Interview with Anna Severens, Education Programs Professional, Early Childhood School Improvement Programs Office of Special Education, Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs
Nevada Association of Superintendents
NAEYC Conference – Focus Groups
Head Start Partnership Meeting
Mega-Conference (provided materials and information at boot)
PTA Conference Las Vegas – Hosted booth
Interview with Dave Leitner, Evaluator for NV Pre-K Programs across the state
Nevada PEP – Focus Group (Northern Nevada video-conferenced with Southern Nevada)
TECAC focus group and Indian Education Summit
Interview with Sherry Rupert, Tribal ECAC Coordinator
Questionnaire sent to all Tribal Head Start sites in Nevada
Title 1 Coordinators
Carson City
Site visit with superintendent and key staff
Focus group with parents and staff of Western Nevada College Child Development Center
Tri-County ECAC
Churchill County
Site visit and interview with school principal of Northside
Observations of Pre-K assessments at Northside
Brief Interview with CSA Northside Head Start
Interview with CSA Head Start Director
In Process: Provide information to Churchill ECAC
Clark County
Interview and focus group with Little Scholars staff
Interview with UWSN staff, contractors and evaluators

Interview with Nykki Mead, Bright Horizons
Focus group with Early Childhood Program Staff, Clark County School District
Phone interview Lisa Pitch
Focus group Family Day Home Care Providers
Phone interview with Clark County School District superintendent designees
Focus Group targeting ECE Providers in Southern Nevada
Douglas County
Focus group with assistant superintendent and administrators
Focus group with all district kindergarten teachers
Focus group with Tri-County Early Childhood Advisory Council
Elko County
Focus Group with Great Basin College, Head Start, School Board members
Site visit Elko County School District (Assistant Superintendent and NEIS)
Conference call with PACE Coalition and Head Start Director
Esmeralda County
Focus group with teachers and administrators
Interviewed superintendent
Eureka County
Interview with superintendent and Pre-K teacher
Humboldt County
Focus group with superintendent, elementary school principal, and technology administrator
Lander County
Focus group with superintendent, elementary school principal and kindergarten teachers
Lincoln County
Site visit and interview with superintendent
Lyon County
Focus group with superintendent and staff
Focus group with kindergarten teachers
Met with Tri-County ECAC
Mineral County
Focus group with elementary school teachers and administrators including Pre-K
Interviewed superintendent
Nye County

Site visit with ECE Providers and elementary school teachers
Provided multiple contacts to school district (declined participation at this time)
Pershing County
Focus group with elementary school principal and pre-K teachers
Storey County
Site visit at elementary school with kindergarten teacher and early childhood teacher
White Pine County
Interview with superintendent
Focus group with Head Start and kindergarten teachers
Conference call with kindergarten coordinator and private childcare provider
Washoe County
Focus group with diverse group of stakeholders representing ECE, higher education, resource and referral, Head Start, K-12 education, etc.
Focus group with ECE providers (private)
Interview with kindergarten coordinator and federal/state programs administrator WCSD
Interview CSA Head Start
Focus group CSA Head Start parents
Interview with Early Childhood Program Early Childhood/Kindergarten Special Ed. Consultant
Focus Group targeting ECE Providers in Northern Nevada

State of Nevada

Surveys

Questionnaire sent to all Tribal Head Start sites in Nevada

Interviews

Glen Meyer, Director of IT, NDE

Sonya Horsford and Fatma Nasoz – Lincy Institute (UNLV)

Anna Severens, Education Programs Professional, Early Childhood

Dave Leitner, Evaluator for NV Pre-K Programs across the state

Sherry Rupert, Tribal ECAC Coordinator

Focus Group

NAEYC Conference – Focus Groups

Nevada PEP – Focus Group (Northern Nevada video-conferenced with Southern Nevada)

TECAC focus group and Indian Education Summit

Other Stakeholder Groups

School Improvement Programs Office of Special Education, Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs

Nevada School Readiness Summit

Monthly Webinars with stakeholders (April, May, June, and planned for July)

Presentations to Nevada ECAC (April, June)

Nevada Association of Superintendents

Head Start Partnership Meeting

Mega-Conference (provided materials and information at boot)

PTA Conference Las Vegas – Hosted booth

Title 1 Coordinators

Carson City

Surveys

As of June 30 2012, 9 providers and 10 parents from Carson City had answered the parent survey.

Group Interview/Focus Group Participants

Susan Keema, Associate Superintendent, Carson City School District

Richard Stokes, Superintendent, Carson City School District

Focus Group Participants

Andrea Doran, Western Nevada College, Child Development Center

Erik Hess, Western Nevada College, Child Development Center Parent Board

Casandra Blankenship, Western Nevada College, Child Development Center

Sally Morgan, Western Nevada College, Child Development Center

Frances Sullivan, Head Start, Tri-County ECAC

Vicki Chandler, Carson City Health and Human Services, Tri-County ECAC

John Childress, United Latino Committee, Tri-County ECAC

Churchill County

Surveys

Four provider surveys were completed from Churchill County. Of these none participated in a focus group. Two parent surveys were completed. These parents also did not attend a focus group.

Outreach

Superintendent Dr. Carolyn Ross

Joanne Everts

Interview/Focus Group

Principal Greg Malcovich – Northside Elementary School

Renee Bybee – CSA Head Start Northside Early Learning Center (via phone)

Leanna Hale and Lynn Houghton, CSA Head Start

Observation

Kindergarten Entry Assessment (May 2012)

Clark County

Surveys

As of June 30 2012, 82 providers from Clark County had answered the survey. Description of those who answered survey. More than two thirds (60 or 68.5%) identified their background or field as early childhood education and care. The remainder of respondents represented special education (4.1%), K 12 (15.1%) and advocacy/policy (2.7%). More than half (56.2%) were administrators or directors, 17 identified themselves as teachers/instructors (23.3%), and the remaining three stated they were parents.

As of June 30 2012, 292 parents from Clark County had answered the parent survey. Nine of the surveys were completed in Spanish. Nine out of ten parents (261) participating in the survey had at least one child age 5 or younger. Ninety –five respondents (32.57%) had a child between the ages of 6 and 10; and, 66 respondents (22.6%) had a child between the ages of 11 and 18. Only 20 individuals (7%) completing a parent survey also participated in a KEDS focus group.

Group Interview/Focus Group

CCSD

Kathlene Banak, Early Childhood Program

LeNora Bredsguard-Brown, Project Facilitator, Literacy, K-12

Sue Daellenbach, Assistant Superintendent, Assessment, Accountability, Research and School

Improvement

Jeff Halsell, IDS-Instructional Data Services/Testing

Deena Holloway, Coordinator, Literacy Innovative Programs

Eric Johnson, Director, Math and Instructional Technology

Julie Rae Kasper, Early Childhood Program

Lisa Pitch, Coordinator, Department of Research, Assessment, Accountability, Research, and

School Improvement

Karen Schiemer, Coordinator, Mathematics, K- 5

Karen Stanley, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Professional Development

Early Childhood Educators

D'Ann Blatt, Manager/Director Litl Scholars School

Carol Levins, Director, Creative Kids Learning Center

Nikki Mead, Regional Director Bright Horizons

Michael Thompson, via written submission for Child Care Association of Nevada

Gary Vause, Owner, Litl Scholars School

UWSN

Margot Chappel, Director, Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office

Dolores Hauck, Director, Community Development

Angela Simmons

Clara Westfall

Focus Group Participants

Please note that names are from sign in sheets. In some cases, the spelling of the name was difficult to read, and therefore, there may be errors among some names.

UWSN TAPS Directors Meeting

Andriana Leon, Hill & Dale

Jeri Seidman, Hill & Dale

Suzanne Cordero, Kinder Cottage

Sarah Wright, Kinder Cottage

David Wary, NCA Learning Center

Kristy Kao, NCA Learning Center

Rhonda Clausen, UWSN

Ruby Collins, VELC

Stacy Burrell Turner, UWSN

Brandi Heiseler, WMG

Denice Feldman, Kids Corner

Kim Crandall, Creative Beginnings

Clara Westfall, UWSN

Tammy Gates, Hill and Dale

Family Care Home Providers Network

Tiffany Orbon, Tiffany's Tots

Gayle Thomsen, Ms. Gayle's Little School

Nicole Gardner, Gardner Family Daycare

Sheryl Howard, Tiny Tots

Kristine Miller Anderson, Vineyards Family Child Care

Marie Nisou, Marie's Home Daycare

Yvonne Montenegro, Here We Grow

Laurie Ciardullo, Roots & Wings Daycare

Stuckey Elementary School Teachers

Debra Bingaman

Yve Eiholzev-Abbey

Beth Charbonneau

Jennifer Forbes

Jennifer Anderson

Susan Gary

Jennifer Sanchez

Sennita Schultz

Rose Orth

Linda Lamb

Lynn Gahr

Janelle Maul

Grayce Nordberg – Gilman

Adel Connor – Smith

Analeigh Schweilh

Kylie Bakle

Deborah Rasmussen

Deborah Messer

Cassandra Jones

Erica Yanez

Caren Diane

Elizabeth Allen

Nevada Registry KEDS Focus Group

Christina Herrera, Acelero

Diane L. Piper, Acelero

Julie Rae Kasper, Clark County School District

Terry Mapson, Child Care Provider Training Consultant

Dawn Fritz, Family Care Home

Guadalupe Magallanes, Kidz Kidz Kidz

Brooke Montrond, Kidz Kidz Kidz

Nilanthi Panikkar, My Little Margies Preschool

Rebecca Parsons, My Little Margies Preschool

Angela Woywod, Centennial CC

Donita Murphy, Faith Lutheran Preschool

Cheresa Barefield, The Little Bare's In the Field Child Care

Lonnie Kritzler, Congregation Ner Tamid

Mary Riding, In Home

Rebecca Weaver, Calvary Chapel Preschool Spring Valley

Jaleece Barnum, Junior Junction

Jolynne Barnum, Junior Junction

Susan Whitney, Junior Junction

David Walton, Challenge School

Lisa McIntyre, Bright Beginnings

Meagan Andrade, KinderCare

Claire Tudiell, UNLV

Mardee Wright, UNLV

Shawnee Liefer, Christ Lutheran Children's Center

Barbie Blakeley, CDE, Lake Mead Christian Academy

Kayla Boykin, Kidz Kidz Kidz

Loretta Pilafas, KinderCare

Nancy Breneman, KinderCare

Sheryl Howard, Tiny Dots

Douglas County

Surveys

As of June 30 2012, 17 providers from Douglas County answered the survey. All 17 represented either K-12 or ECE teachers with 13 representing the kindergarten teachers in Douglas County.

As of June 30 2012, 6 parents from Douglas County had answered the parent survey. All six were parents of children ages 0 to 5 and none of them had attended a KEDS focus group.

Group Interview/Focus Group

Interviews

Kerry Pope, DCSD Director of Curriculum

Brian Frazier, DCSD Director of Assessment and Grants

Jan Visger, DCSD Director of Special Services

Susan Moore, Professional Development Trainer

Lyn Gorrindo, DCSD Assistant Superintendent

Focus Group Participants

Karen Backenbacker, Douglas County Social Services, Tri-County ECAC

Laura Williams, Jacks Valley Elementary School

J. Michelle Norris, Pinon Hills Elementary School

Brooke Wood, Jacks Valley Elementary School

Kay Kocian, C. C. Meneley Elementary School

Kathryn Oxoby, C. C. Meneley Elementary School

Melinda Neilander, Minden Elementary School

Mary Kay Dale, Jacks Valley Elementary School

Konnie Susich, Zephyr Cove Elementary School

Leslie Flynn, Gardnerville Elementary School

Kathy, Great, Scarselli Elementary School

Valerie Wilkinsin, Scarselli Elementary School

Elko County

Surveys

As of June 30 2012, 55 parents from Elko County had answered the parent survey. (Of these, 92.7% report being the parent of children age 5 or younger.)

Group Interviews/Focus Groups

Kerry Ann Aguirre, Northeastern Nevada Regional Hospital

Melissa Aguirre, Communities in Schools of Northeastern Nevada

Carol Banghart, Elko County School District

Jan Brizee, State of Nevada Office of Consumer Health Assistance

Jack French, Elko County School District

Corrie Herrera, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living

Brenna Malone, Head Start of Northeastern Nevada

Lynette McFarlan – Great Basin College Early Education Program

Ron Pavelko, Friends of the Elko County Library

Michele Oke, PACE Coalition

Cathy McAdoo, PACE Coalition

Chris Pacini, Family Resource Center of Northeastern Nevada

Martha Schott-Bernius, Nevada Early Intervention Services

Tammy Wright, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living

Connie Zeller, Great Basin College Preschool

Esmeralda County

Surveys

As of June 30, 2012, 1 provider from Esmeralda County had answered the survey.

As of June 30, 2012, no parents from Esmeralda County had answered the parent survey.

Individual Interview

Gary Gazaway, Superintendent of Esmeralda County

Eureka County

Interviews

Ben Zunino, Superintendent, Eureka County School District

Margaret "Maggie" Dyer, Kindergarten Teacher, Eureka Elementary School

Humboldt County

Group Interview/Focus Group

David Jensen, Assistant Superintendent (incoming Superintendent), Humboldt County School District

Tim Connors, Principal, Grass Valley Elementary School

Kelly Novi, Director of Curriculum and Technology, Humboldt County School District

Lander County

Interviews

Jim Squibb, Lander County School District Superintendent

Focus Groups

Lorrie Sparks, Principal, District Homeless Liaison, Battle Mountain Elementary School

Cindy Obieta, Pre-K Coordinator, Battle Mountain Elementary School

Valerie Lane, Kindergarten Teacher, Battle Mountain Elementary School

Barbara McIntosh, Kindergarten Teacher (retiring), Battle Mountain Elementary School

Participant in KEDS Information Meeting - Statewide Conferences

Doug Staton, PTA, Battle Mountain

Lincoln County

Surveys

As of June 30, 2012, two providers from Lincoln County had answered the survey.

As of June 30, 2012, three parents from Lincoln County had answered the parent survey.

Key Informant Interview

Nykki Holton, Lincoln County School District Superintendent

Lyon County

Surveys

As of June 30 2012, three providers from Lyon County answered the survey. All three represented either ECE teachers with in Lyon County.

As of June 30 2012, 9 parents from Lyon County had answered the parent survey. All nine were parents of children ages 0 to 5 and none of them had attended a KEDS focus group.

Interview/Focus Group

Interviews

Scott Lommori, Director of Testing and Educational Technology

Claudia Fadness , Director of Curriculum and Accountability

Kathy Griffin, Grants Coordinator

Pam Tognoli, Special Education Data Manager

Nadine Boschert, Student Information Systems Administrator

Focus Groups

Tami McDonald, Lyon County Human Services, Tri-County ECAC

Leanna Hale, CSA Head Start (Washoe, Churchill, Lyon)

Jennifer Chico, Kindergarten Teacher, Lyon County School District

Lucella Glazier, Lyon County School District, Tribal ECAC

G. L. Roy, Tribal ECAC, YPT

Kerry Stevens, Kindergarten Teacher, Lyon County School District

Bonnie Bobrick, Kindergarten Teacher, Lyon County School District

C. Champagne, Kindergarten Teacher, Lyon County School District

Kim Swanson, FIS, PTA Conference Attendee

Linda Barba, FIS, PTA Conference Attendee

Mineral County

Surveys

As of June 30, 2012, 6 providers from Mineral had answered the survey.

As of June 30, 2012, no parents from Mineral County had answered the parent survey.

Group Interview/Focus Group

Teri White, MCSD Superintendent

Stephanie Kheuy, Principal Hawthorne Elementary School

Teri Arrends, Teacher Hawthorne Elementary School

Tara Musselman, Teacher Hawthorne Elementary School

Stacy Madrid, Teacher Hawthorne Elementary School

Valorie Fletcher, Special Ed./ Early Childcare Specialist Hawthorne Elementary School

Holly Qualls, Speech Pathologist Hawthorne Elementary School

Nye County

Surveys

As of June 30, 2012, 11 providers from Nye County had answered the survey. Most of those who answered the survey were teachers (62.5%), but some respondents were early childhood education and care providers (25%) or an administrator (12.5%).

As of June 30, 2012, three parents from Nye County had answered the parent survey.

Group Interview/Focus Group

Interviews

Natasha Wickenden, ECE provider

Sarai Gromis, ECE provider

Focus Groups

A focus group was conducted on April 16th, 2012 in Beatty. Focus group participants from Nye County included teachers, early childhood education and care providers, ELL professionals, a NCSD counselor, and other professionals from relevant fields. In the interest of confidentiality the names of the participants have not been included in this report.

Pershing County

Interviews

Shea Murphy, Principal, Lovelock Elementary School

Focus Groups

Alyson Collins, Special Education Teacher, Lovelock Elementary School
Brooke Wagner, State Pre-K Teacher, Lovelock Elementary School

Storey County

Outreach

Superintendent Dr. Robert Slaby
Principal Todd Hess
Presentation to the Nevada Department of Education Title 1 Coordinators meeting

Interviews

Sonja Hicks, Kindergarten Teacher Hugh Gallagher Elementary
Lisa Sinnot, Special Education Teacher Hugh Gallagher Elementary

Washoe County

Surveys

As of June 30, 2012 62 providers from Washoe County had answered the survey. Most (73%) represented early childhood education and care, 15% represented K-12 education, 6% special education, 6% Health and Human Services and 1 (2%) representing advocacy / policy. 40% of these providers also participated in a focus group.

As of June 30, 2012 122 parents from Washoe County had answered the parent survey. Of respondents, 91% (111) have a child age 5 or younger, 42 have a child between the ages of 6

and 10, and 15 have a child between the ages of 11 and 18. Less than 3% (3 participants) had attended a KEDS focus group where they had learned more about the project.

Group Interview/Focus Group

WCSD
Dawna Ogden, Kindergarten Coordinator WCSD
Kristin McNeill, WCSD Chief Strategies Officer Office of State and Federal Programs
Lindsay Anderson, WCSD Director of Government Affairs
Cindy Roller, WCSD E.C./Kinder Special Ed. Consultant

CSA Head Start
Leanna Hale, CSA Head Start Program Director
Lynn Houghton, CSA Head Start Program

Focus Group Participants

Please note that names are from sign in sheets. In some cases, the spelling of the name was difficult to read, and therefore, there may be errors among some names.

Tribal ECAC, Indian Education Summit
Deserea Quintana
Amanda Bob
Gloria Smith
Maria War
Jessica McCloud
Rhonda Laughlin
Naomi Hanczrik
Connie Melendez
Sandy Emm
Mike Tinsley
Sherry Meedes
San San Tin

Washoe County Providers – Focus Group 1
Margaret Oberg, Home Care Provider
Virginia Saiz, Kindergarten teacher
Allena Dills, Teacher/ Instructor

NAYEC Conference
Virginia Saiz
Rebecca S Viziny

CSA Partner Meeting
Leanna Hale
Lynn Houghton
Crystal Swank

Washoe County Stakeholder Focus Group

Melissa Burnham
Dawna Ogden
Sherry Waugh
Dianne Nicolet
Christy Fernandez
Cindy Johnson
Marty Elquist
Lynn Houghton
Leanna Hale

CSA Head Start Policy Council – Parents

Rosa Acosta
Maricela Trujillo
Theresa BelloAnn Maria Corona
Minerva Gaytar
Lora Carnes (Family Engagement & Community Partnership Manager)
Maria Fernandez (WCSD Parent University Representative)

Washoe County Providers – Focus Group 2

Julie Hitchcock
Trisha Madrigal
Julie O'Leary
Rosie Marie Verncicio
Melissa Fallon
Angel Brown
Erin Higgs
Danielle Lewis
Jennifer Parker
Annie Stevens
Kamika Green
Bernadette Such Mabrook
Molly Bunkew
Stephanie Black
Denise Cross
Sandy Kromydas
Marianna Ashley
Ashly Smith
Susana Harris
Samantha Russell
Tanner Kester
Tachrista Sires
Erin Mesa
Michelle MacKay
Belinda Martinez
Brittina Kujon Hill
Kim Stevens
Carolina Pino
Rhonda Laughlin
Danielle Patrick

Other Outreach

Many parents from Washoe County were provided information at the PTA Conference held in Southern Nevada.

White Pine County

Individual Interview

Bob Dolezal, Superintendent, White Pine County School District

Group Interviews/Focus Groups

Jenny Ahlvers, Early Childhood Teacher, David E. Norman Elementary School
Laura Dennis, Director, Magic Carpet Preschool
Mary Eldridge, Director, Little People's Head Start
Mary Flanagan, Teacher, McGill Elementary School
Julie Krch, Director, Learning Bridge Center
Shawna Wooldridge, Kindergarten Teacher, Lund Elementary School

Summary of Contacts & Information Sources by the State of Nevada and each County								
	*Surveys	Interview	*Focus Group	Outreach	Observ.	Group Interview/ *Focus Group	Info Meeting	**Total Number of Contacts for Each County**
**State of Nevada		6						6
Carson City	19	2	7					28
Churchill County	6			2	1	3		12
Clark County	374		73			19		466
Douglas County	23	5	12					40
Elko County	55					15		70
Esmeralda County	1	1						2
Eureka County		2						2
Humboldt County						3		3
Lander County		1	4				1	6
Lincoln County	5	1						6
Lyon County	12	5	10					27
Mineral County	6					7		13
**Nye County	14	2	No Data					16
Pershing		1	2					3

Summary of Contacts & Information Sources by the State of Nevada and each County								
	**Surveys*	*Interview*	**Focus Group*	*Outreach*	*Observ.*	*Group Interview/ *Focus Group*	*Info Meeting*	**Total Number of Contacts for Each County**
County								
Storey County		2		3				5
**Washoe County	184		65	Many parents		6		255
White Pine County		1				6		7
Subtracting non-unique cases where a provider/parent completed a survey and also participated in a focus group								-137
Total Number of Contacts for the State of Nevada								**830**

*Numbers in these categories may not be unique

**Numbers in these categories may not include all contacts and information sources

D. CEDS Data Indicators for Nevada

The following table provides a template to facilitate the planning workgroup's selection of indicators related to Nevada's selection of a common kindergarten entry assessment, and to summarize the type of data being reported by Nevada's agencies and funding streams that support ECE programs. The data elements selected are those recommended by CEDS (Common Education Data System) for early learning programs. It is recognized that Nevada's implementation of a coordinated system may select additional and/or expanded elements and indicators that align with Nevada's definition of school readiness; however, this list will serve as the preliminary standard and recommendation for the purposes of this report, and can be used as a starting point to guide the work of the ECE data system implementation planning team during Implementation planning.

Data Element	State-funded Pre-K	Child Care Subsidy Programs	IDEA Part B	IDEA Part C	Title I	Head Start/Early Head Start	Health/ Medicaid/ CHIP	TANF, WIC, SNAP
CHILD LEVEL DATA								
Identity (Name)								
Gender								
Birth date								
Race/Ethnicity								
Program Eligibility								
Homeless Status								
Address/Contact								
Health Data: immunizations, vision/hearing/dental screening, birth weight, weeks of gestation								
Insurance coverage								
Developmental screening and assessment (dates, findings)								
Disability and Type								
Language								
ECE Program enrollment, attendance and participation								
EIS/Special Ed Services								
Participation in school food program								
FAMILY LEVEL DATA								
# in Family/Household								
Residency Status								
Income								

Data Element	State-funded Pre-K	Child Care Subsidy Programs	IDEA Part B	IDEA Part C	Title I	Head Start/Early Head Start	Health/ Medicaid/ CHIP	TANF, WIC, SNAP
Parent/Guardian identity								
Parent/Guardian relationship to student								
Education								
Employment								
PROGRAM STAFF LEVEL DATA								
Identity/Name								
Gender								
Age								
Contact information								
Education Level								
Training, Degree, Certification, or Specialty Area								
Degree Type and Date								
Degree Source								
Early Childhood Credential								
Language								
Employment								
PROGRAM LEVEL DATA								
Name								
Location								
Contact Information								
Site Information								
Certification and Accreditation								
Licensure								
Dates of Operation								
Ages Served								
Staffing Ratios								
Hours of Operation								
Eligibility Criteria								
Program Descriptions								
Waiting List Information								
Program Setting								
QRIS Score								

E. National Level Data Sources

Administration for Children and Families: part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, promotes the economic and social well-being of children and families. Example Data: Descriptive statistics and trends at both national and state levels in foster care, adoption, child abuse, neglect, and child welfare.

Applied Survey Research: provides community assessments, health assessments, evaluations, censuses, surveys, and strategic planning. They have databases covering early childhood development, family violence, health, and many others. Example Data: Community assessments, educational achievement, homelessness and other information.

Center for Disease Control (CDC): an agency under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, promotes public health and safety. The National Vital Statistics System collects data concerning public health. Example Data: Data concerning births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and fetal deaths. Also included are quick facts about child maltreatment and traumatic brain injury, provided by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, also an agency of the CDC.

Center for Innovation and Improvement: works with states to improve education. They provide districts, schools, and families with information and skills to make informed decisions about education. Example Data: Data include school assessments, educational achievement, educational improvement, and other education related information.

Child Trends: a nonprofit organization that conducts research on children at all stages of development. They focus on using research to improve outcomes from children. Research includes information about poverty, welfare, early childhood development, education, families, health, well-being, positive development and youth development. Examples of Data: National and some state data covering many topics such as diploma attainment among teen mothers, child poverty trends.

Children's Defense Fund: collects national and statewide childhood data about poverty, welfare, health, early childhood development, education, housing, hunger, mental health, violence and many other topics. Example Data: National and statewide data including health coverage, abuse, neglect, infant mortality rate, birth weight, child hunger.

ChildStats Forum on Child and Family Statistics: produces an annual report titled America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being. This report provides a summary of child well-being in the U.S. and also monitors changes over time. The report provides many types of data and is also used to engage discussions and policy changes. Example Data: Information related to child well-being are provided including demographic, family, social environment, economics, health, behavior, education, adoption, and others.

CLASP: collects information that will help children be safe, health, nurtured and prepared to succeed. Example Data: Information includes health, child care, education, demographics, infant and toddlers, and many other topics.

County Health Rankings: an organization that ranks each county in the country by both health outcomes (length and quality of life) and health factors (such as individual health behaviors, clinical care, economic factors and the physical environment). Example Data: Rankings are available on premature death, low birth weight prevalence, access to health care, number of children in poverty, air pollution, and access to healthy foods.

National Center for Children in Poverty: part of the School of Public Health at Columbia University, The National Center for Children in Poverty is a research center that promotes health and well-being for low-income families and children. NCCP puts together reports based on the US Census American Community Survey. Example Data: Low-income demographics, such as parental education, obesity rates, and parental employment.

U.S. Department of Education: in charge of establishing the education policies for the public schools throughout the country. Example Data: Enrollment, age, sex, race, school achievement, funding, staff, policies.

U.S. Department of Agriculture: responsible for policy on farming, agriculture, and food. The USDA oversees the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), which administers the nation's various nutrition assistance programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the National School Lunch Program (FRL), and the Women, Infants, & Children program (WIC). Example Data: Statistics concerning food programs, such as participation and cost.