



# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Advisory Council holds second meeting of 2024**

**ALBUQUERQUE, NM** – This week, the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Advisory Council held its second meeting of the year, welcoming new council members, reporting on subcommittee recommendations, and reviewing the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department’s (ECECD) top priorities as the agency closes out FY24 and prepares for FY25.

“This is an important moment for early childhood education and care here in New Mexico,” said **ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky**. “We’re aligning early childhood and healthcare systems and strengthening collaboration between ECECD and the Public Education Department (PED) to advance positive outcomes for children, especially students with special needs. The ECEC Advisory Council is essential in giving families, providers, community and business leaders, and policymakers a voice in the development of the state’s cohesive and equitable prenatal-to-age-five early childhood system that

families want and deserve.”

“The ECEC Advisory Council is the most effective and engaging government committee I have ever served on. The Secretary and her team utilize the expertise of the council and within the broader community by proactively and intentionally seeking input to shape and develop early childhood policy,” said **New Mexico Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Rob Black, who sits on the Advisory Council.** “In New Mexico, we are focused on creating a system that supports our families by providing access to affordable, quality child care, thereby reducing financial stress on families and improving outcomes for our youngest New Mexicans.

Major topics addressed in the meeting include:

- Welcoming former New Mexico Lt. Governor Diane Denish and New Mexico Voices for Children Deputy Policy Director Jacob Vigil, who joined as at-large members to lend their extensive early childhood experience and knowledge to the council.
- Presenting an overview of New Mexico’s Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) three year plan (2025–2027), which is used by the federal Office of Child Care (OCC) to evaluate ECECD’s compliance with federal rules and regulations, and serves as the framework for the administration of federal child care funds. Members of the public are invited to review the draft plan and leave feedback in the public comment portal: <https://www.nmececd.org/ccdfsessions/>.
- An overview of the new Medicaid Managed Care system, Turquoise Care, and how the changes will interact with Medicaid Home Visiting programs, including four additional models that will be reimbursed through Medicaid:
  - Healthy Families America
  - Family Connects
  - Safe Care Augmented
  - Child First
- Progress toward transitioning responsibility for IDEA Part B-619, the section in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that provides for special education for preschool-age children, from PED to a joint responsibility with ECECD. This move, which was mandated under Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s Executive Order 2023-063, will shift early childhood special education to a shared collaboration between ECECD and PED for improved alignment, coordination, and service delivery for New Mexico families.

The ECEC Advisory Council is comprised of state and local education leaders, early childhood professionals, service providers, Tribal representatives, parent representatives, and other individuals representing communities impacted by early care and education policies. The Council engages with a wide range of stakeholders to guide and build upon the State's ongoing work to create a comprehensive, affordable, and high-quality prenatal-to-five system that meets the needs of New Mexico's children and families. The ECEC Advisory Council fulfills a federal requirement for states to establish a state advisory early childhood council. A recording of the May 22, 2024, ECEC Advisory Council meeting and presentation slides are available on the Council web page at:

<https://www.nmececd.org/ecec-advisory-council/>.