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Draft Early Childhood Governance Recommendation

As Utah continues to advance our support for our youngest learners and their families, redesigning our current governance model could create greater coherence among policies and services while addressing current issues with fragmentation. Careful and deliberate assessment of Utah’s early childhood governance structure is an integral step in **improving coordination, quality, and equity in programs and services**. Addressing the current issues related to early childhood governance is essential to improving the services and resources available for children from birth to age five and their families.

The table below outlines the early childhood programs across state agencies. It includes the FY20 expenditures, estimated staffing levels, and associated technology systems.

Early Childhood Programs (Agency)	FY2020 Expenditures	Notes	Estimated Staffing [*]	Systems
Child Development Programs				
Baby Watch Early Intervention Programs (IDEA, Part C) (DOH)	\$21,886,412		8	Child Health Advanced Records Management (CHARM)
Home Visiting Program (DOH)	\$3,288,780		11	
Women, Infants and Children Nutritional Program (DOH)	\$46,391,124		18	eWIC infrastructure
Child and Adult Care Food Program (USBE)	\$2,197,555	<i>Federal expenditures only</i>	7	
Early Care and Learning Programs				
Child Care Quality Initiatives (DWS)	\$14,397,655		7	CAC website
Child Care Subsidy Program (DWS)	\$69,594,667		4 OCC Staff 28 ESD	eREP Provider Portal
Child Care Licensing (DOH)	\$2,747,159		30	Child Care Licensing Portal
High Quality Preschool Programs (DWS)	\$7,326,842		3	CAC website
Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities (IDEA, Part B) (USBE)	\$3,474,279	<i>Federal expenditures only</i>	3	
Early Childhood Professional Development (DWS)	\$317,606		6	CAC website
Head Start Collaboration Office (DWS)	\$174,186		1	
Early Childhood Utah (DOH)	\$641,722		11	ECIDS
<small>* Staffing estimates from limited program information available</small>				

Governance Models

In general, governance refers to the means by which authority and accountability is assigned. The model used gives authority within the identified agency or agencies for activities including:

- Decisions around budgeting and managing resources (e.g., fiscal and human resources)
- Data management
- Developing, implementing, and monitoring policies, programs, and regulations

Ideally, assigning the authority and accountability of governance ensures purposeful oversight of the enterprise. In the space of early childhood, this entails defining the future state’s organizational structure and its placement of authority and accountability for making program, policy, finance, and implementation decisions for publicly funded early care and education for children from birth to age five. When a governance model is designed well, it should include coordination, alignment, efficiency, and accountability. These are the cross-cutting values that the model elicits.

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Utah's Path Forward

Considering the diverse supports and resources that are currently available in Utah for early childhood, consolidating services may alleviate fragmentation concerns. Establishing a single agency for all services may be too great of risk given the breadth of services and the funds of knowledge available. Utah may be better suited to consolidate our services under two divisions instead of three (DOH, DWS, and USBE). Given there is a natural division of authority and accountability considering the resources and supports we offer, establishing one entity to oversee early childhood health, safety and care and another to attend to early learning opportunities (e.g. preschool) is an effective path forward. Establishing the Office of Early Care to oversee all efforts and initiatives related to the health, safety and care of children from birth to age five would increase coordination of the current services housed under multiple agencies at this time. Assigning authority related to early learning opportunities offered through preschool (public and private), educator licensing, and professional learning to the Utah State Board of Education as it aligns with other work being done in K-12 education and would increase coherence and consistency across the educational landscape. More specifically, this division would include:

Designated Governor Cabinet Member To serve as the lead in ensuring collaboration across divisions	
Office of Early Care	Office of Early Learning
Combining of DWS, DOH, USBE Personnel	USBE Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home Visiting Program (DOH)• Women, Infants, and Children Nutritional Program (DOH)• Child and Adult Care Food Program (USBE)• Child Care Quality Initiatives (DWS)• Child Care Subsidy Program (DWS)• Child Care Licensing (DOH)• Early Childhood Professional Development System- Related to Child Care Experiences (DWS)• Baby Watch Early Intervention Programs (IDEA, Part C) (DOH)• Head Start Collaboration Office (DWS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preschool/School Readiness Programs<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ High Quality Preschool Programs including UPSTART (USBE/DWS)○ Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities (IDEA, Part B) (USBE)○ Public and Private Preschool Programs• Early Learning Standards• Educator Licensing (USBE)• Early Learning Center Licensing (New--USBE)• Early Childhood Professional Development System--Related to Preschool Learning Experiences and Aligned to the Professional Learning Standards as defined in code