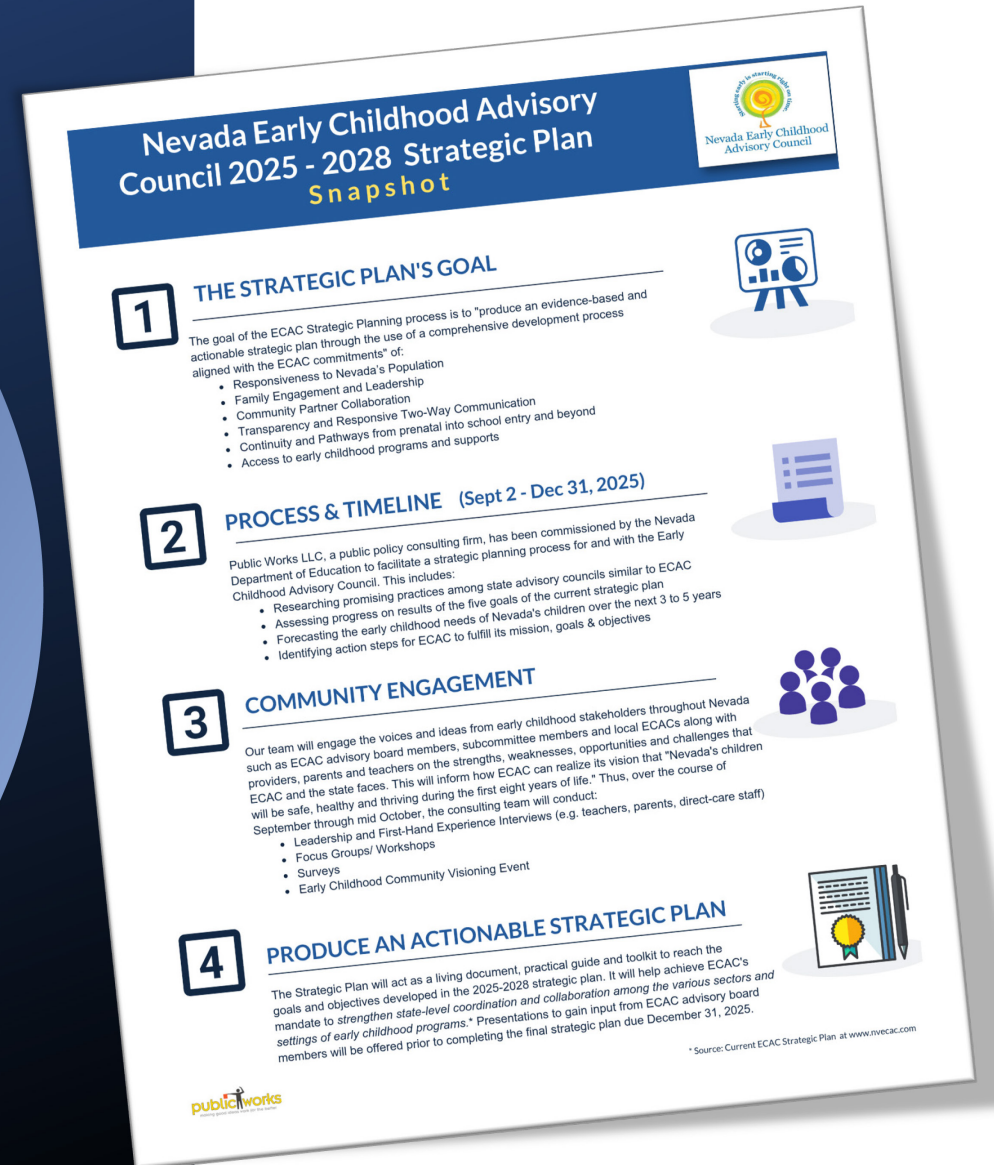


Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

Strategic Plan Update General Membership Meeting

November 19, 2025



Our Agenda

- I. Scope of the Strategic Plan
- II. What We've Done
- III. What We've Learned: The Big Take Aways
 - 1. External Forces Impacting Our Future
 - 2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Challenges, Opportunities
 - 3. What We Heard You Say: Interviews, Surveys & Retreat
- IV. Five Priority Focus Areas Emerge
- V. ECAC's Response: Role & Mandate
- VI. Goals to Guide the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan
- VII. Next Steps

SCOPE OF STRATEGIC PLAN

THE STRATEGIC PLAN'S GOAL

The goal of the ECAC Strategic Planning process is to "produce an evidence-based and actionable strategic plan through the use of a comprehensive development process aligned with the ECAC commitments" of:

- Responsiveness to Nevada's Population
- Family Engagement and Leadership
- Community Partner Collaboration
- Transparency and Responsive Two-Way Communication
- Continuity and Pathways from prenatal into school entry and beyond
- Access to early childhood programs and supports

WHAT WE'VE DONE



RESEARCH: Reports
Studies | Needs
Assessments | Data
Indicators



CURRENT STATE: SWOC
Analysis | External Forces |
Forecast Impact



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT:** Interviews,
Surveys, Retreat



**Over 2,000 voices
engaged to inform the
2026-2028 Strategic Plan**



WHAT WE'VE L

THREE MAJOR AREAS

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1

External Forces Underlying the Early Childhood System Over the Next Three Years

Federal Safety Net At Risk: H.R. 1 *One Big Beautiful Bill Act* due to cut : cut Medicaid, health care coverage, SNAP food benefits, and steep cuts to Head Start.

Cost of Early Childhood Services shift to states: Nevada currently among the lowest states investing in early childhood system.

Cost of EC Care & Learning Increases: Lack of Medicaid, Head Start funds means more centers will close & families pay out of pocket they can't afford.

Workforce Shortage Rises: Nevada's wages trail state averages in early childhood careers. Tighter public dollars lead to hiring freezes and wage remain below living wage.

Learning, Mental & Physical Health Needs: Expect MCH health access in rural areas to become scarcer already flagged as "Maternal-care deserts."

Poverty Exacerbates Early Childhood Needs: About 42% of Nevada's children 0 - 8 years living at 200% of federal poverty levels.

2

SWOC ANALYSIS



SWOC ANALYSIS: STRENGTHS



-
- **Strong Commitment and Expertise**
-
- **Federal Grant Alignment**
-
- **Infrastructure Achievements**
-
- **Family Engagement: Authentic Voice**
-
- **Collaborative Facilitation**

SWOC ANALYSIS: WEAKNESSES



-
- **Lack of Sustainable Funding**
-
- **Deciding without Decision-Makers**
-
- **Advisor Without a Home**
-
- **Limited Visibility and Public Recognition**
-
- **Strategic Plan Over-reach**

SWOC ANALYSIS: CHALLENGES



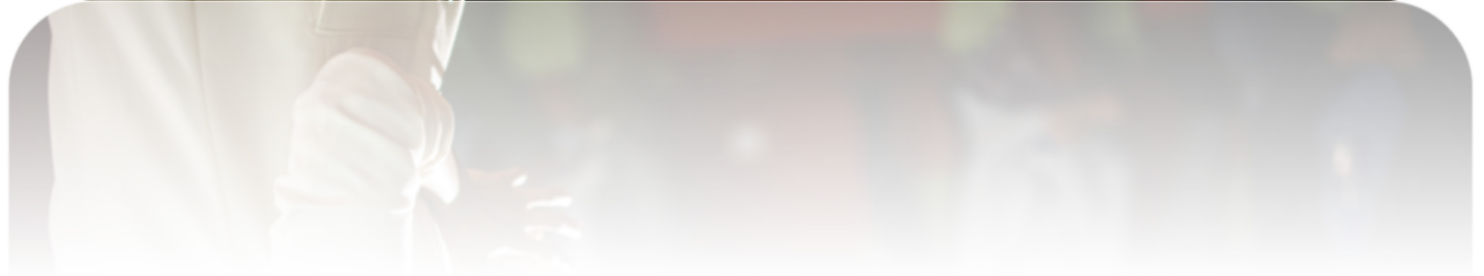
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- **December 2025–July 2026 Funding Cliff**
-
- **Lack of respect for Early Childhood Field**
-
- **Operating in silos**
-
- **Rural and Language Barriers**
-
- **Worsening Workforce Crisis**

SWOC ANALYSIS: OPPORTUNITIES



-
- **Establish Sustainable State Funding**
-
- **Build Partnerships to Sustain ECAC's Work**
-
- **Leverage Visibility, Go Local with Messaging**
-
- **Promote Data-Driven Decision-Making**
-
- **Maximize power of voice & storyteller role**

3 What We Heard You Say



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Community Member Survey

(n =1,777)

62% Parents/Family
24% ECS Providers

**“We spend more
on day care than
on our mortgage.”**

Parent

- **Affordability:** Most dominant theme: cost of early child care very high -- even for working families.
- **Access & Availability:** Lack of services/care especially in rural areas, long wait lists, transportation barriers, ECS “care deserts” throughout NV.
- **Gaps in Disability & Developmental Delay:** Barriers to receive services, often unavailable, limited bilingual supports, long delays in evaluation.
- **Fragmented Early Care System:** Navigate confusing, multi-agency eligibility criteria. High desire a seamless ECS system.
- **Family Well-Being & Mental Health:** Parents overwhelmed, isolated in finding help for children while struggling on very limited incomes.

Early Childhood Sector Survey

(n=212)

56% Early Childhood Education

17 % Maternal Child Health

Majority 4+ years in field

“We lose passionate teachers every year as they can’t survive on what early childhood pays.”

Provider

- **Affordability:** Families cycle in & out of centers/care due to changing subsidy requirements and increase in care.
- **Access & Availability:** lack of full-day & extended care hard on working families, insufficient infant slots. Parents quitting jobs without affordable child care.
- **Quality of Care & Workforce Shortage:** Cite need for living wage, access to training and career pathways to advance in the field. Need to respect their expertise.
- **Fragmented Early Care System:** Agencies, programs & funding streams operate in silos. Families must navigate complex & duplicative steps to get help.
- **Investing in ECS Needed:** Early childhood care and learning must be seen as bedrock to Nevada’s economic & social infrastructure.

Thought Leader Interviews ⁽²⁸⁾ & Retreat

“Other states have dedicated budgets for their ECACs ...we rely on temporary grants and volunteer labor.”

- **Overall validation of findings:** from 2,000+ survey respondents.
- **Initiatives to engage families:** evening meetings, Parent Leadership Council, and incentives are very effective.
- **Building cross-sector relationships:** has improved with health, education and non-profit partners. We need a greater public presence.
- **Opportunities for growth:** reduce the number of sub-committees and meetings (currently 82 annually), re-think the five goals to align with current needs assessment and strategic planning.
- **The challenges ECAC faces:** lack of state funding , uncertainty and cuts in federal ECS funding, reliance on patchwork of temporary grants, lack of state centralized ECS entity.
- **Retreat participants:** generate 13 goals/objectives/initiatives to consider for 2026-2028 Strategic Plan.

Five Priority Focus Areas Emerge



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PRIORITY AREAS FOR ECAC TO FOCUS ON GOING FORWARD 2026-2028



**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**



**CONNECTED
SERVICE SYSTEM**



**FUNDING &
AFFORDABILITY**



**ADVOCACY &
INFLUENCE**



**ORGANIZATIONAL
CAPACITY**

CONNECTIVE THREADS AMONG ALL FOCUS AREAS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | DATA-INFORMED | MISSION DRIVEN ADVOCACY

EMBRACING ECAC'S ROLES

ADVISING
RECOMMENDING
CONVEYING AUTHENTIC VOI
ADVOCATING

PRIORITY FOCUS AREA	DESCRIPTOR	GOAL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	Focus on the early childhood workforce shortage, career pathways, fair compensation, recruitment and retention and state investment strategies.	Promote the growth and sustainability of a qualified early childhood system workforce that is fairly compensated and supported.
CONNECTED SERVICE SYSTEM	Focus on the need for a well-coordinated early childhood system of services with ease of use for families to navigate and access.	Promote an integrated, aligned, and family-centered early childhood system that strengthens coordination and access across agencies and data systems.
FUNDING & AFFORDABILITY	Focus on the need for adequate funding of an early childhood care, development & learning system affordable for Nevada’s families.	Advocate for sustainable funding streams for early childhood systems and affordable early care and learning programs.
ADVOCACY & INFLUENCE	Focus on strengthening ECAC’s role in giving authentic voice to early childhood system needs with informed recommendations to address them.	Elevate the visibility and value of coordinated early childhood systems dedicated to enhancing children’s lives.
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	Focus on enhancing ECAC’s infrastructure, governance, funding and resources to fulfill its mission, goals and work during 2026-2028	Establish a sustainable operational infrastructure to fulfill the mission and mandate of the Early Childhood Advisory Council.

OUR FIVE DRAFT GOALS TO CONSIDER

- 1. Promote the growth and sustainability of a qualified early childhood system workforce that is fairly compensated and supported.**
- 2. Promote an integrated, aligned, and family-centered early childhood system that strengthens coordination and access across agencies and data systems.**
- 3. Advocate for sustainable funding streams for early childhood systems and affordable early care, developmental and learning programs.**
- 4. Elevate the visibility and value of coordinated early childhood systems dedicated to enhancing children's lives.**
- 5. Establish a sustainable operational infrastructure to fulfill the mission and mandate of the Early Childhood Advisory Council.**

NEXT STEPS



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