Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

General ECAC Public Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 15, 2026, 5:30pm-7:30pm

Attendance

Members' Present

- B - Edith Farmer, MA Supervisor, Child Care Licensing Department of Supportive Services
- C - Tami Conn, Deputy Bureau Chief Division of Public and Behavioral Health
- D - Brooke Yarborough, Social Services Chief 2, Nevada Department of Health & Human Services
- E- Jenneses Black Education Programs Professional, Nevada Department of Education
- G - Dr. Diane Nicolet, Trustee, Washoe County School District
- I - Deetra Stewart, Family Home Care Provider and Family Childcare Associate President
- J - Dr. Stephanie Vega, Ph.D., Teacher, Washoe County School District
- K - Tiffany Alston, Director of Programs, Sunrise Children's Foundation
- L - Patrice Gardner, M.Ed., ECAC Vice Chair, Education Programs Supervisor, NV Head Start Collaboration Director Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
- M - Dazzrael Lyke, Developmental Specialist 4, Aging and Disability Services Division
- N - Kathy Yoder Bass, Non-Profit Provider
- O- Tiffany Olivas, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Manager, The Children's Cabinet
- P - Abbey Bernhardt, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Nevada Chapter
- Q- Rhonda Laughlin, Program Manager, Head Start, Reno Spark, Indian Colony
- R- Parent Seat (Open/Vacant)
- S – Dr. Amanda Haboush-Deloya, The Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy, UNLV
- S- Brianna Cambra Provider Support Director, The Children's Cabinet
- S - Tina Springmeyer, Director, Department of Child and Family Services
- S- Dr. Linda Young, Founder, The Village Foundation, Former CCSD School Board Trustee
- S - Laura Brown, Monitoring and Compliance Coordinator, Acceleron Head Start
- S- Dr. Jerek Hough, Founder, Abbreviated Learning

Members Absent

- F- Betsy Newman, Part C Coordinator, Clinical Program Planner II, Department of Human Services, IDEA Part C, Aging and Disability Services Division
- H- Dr. Jenna Weglarz-Ward Associate Professor, Early Childhood Multilingual and Special Education, UNLV
- A- Duplicate Seat (Vacant)

Public In Attendance

- Nayesdi Badillo, Family Engagement Specialist, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
- Mary Childrey, Community Member
- Brandi Hearst, ECAC Administrative Coordinator, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education

- Sabrina Jones, ECAC Systems Specialist, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
- Jamie Mendez, Early Childhood Workforce Specialist, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
- Darby Porter, Clark County Library
- Rachel Stepina, PDG B-5 Grant Manager, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
- Anna Villatoro, Family Leadership Coordinator, The Children's Cabinet
- Yosaba Arellano, Education Manager at Head Start of Northeastern Nevada
- Julie Houchins, United Way of Southern Nevada
- Peter Paul Paragas, Sunrise Children Foundation
- Kate Pflughoeft, Associate Grant Manager Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
- Tiarha Huerta, Community Member
- Dolly's Rowan, Early Childhood Teacher, Clark County School District
- Nicholle Goldstein (Nikki), Community Member

Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

- Chair Tiffany Alston called the General ECAC meeting to order and asked Brandi Hearst to conduct roll call.
- The Council was above quorum. Members and attendees were reminded to complete the attendance form provided in the meeting chat.

2. Public Comment #1

- Public comments were made about items appearing on the agenda.
- Dolly Rowan, a Clark County School District early childhood teacher, shared concerns regarding outcomes for students in early childhood special education programs and emphasized the importance of collaboration among educators, specialists, departments, and families. She expressed interest in becoming involved in the work and contributing to her classroom experience.
- No additional public comments were offered.

3. Approval of Flexible Agenda (For Possible Action)

- Amanda Haboush-Deloye moved to approve a flexible agenda.
- Dr. Linda E. Young seconded the motion.
- The motion carried with no opposition noted.

4. Approval of May 20, 2026, Meeting Minutes (For Possible Action)

- Members reviewed the May 20, 2026, meeting minutes.
- Tiffany Olivas requested correction of a guest presenter's last name and consistent spacing and punctuation throughout the document.
- Kathy Yoder Bass moved to approve the minutes with the stated corrections. Patrice Gardner seconded the motion.
- The motion passed. Abbey Bernhardt abstained.

5. Co-Chair Report

- Patrice Gardner provided an update on the funded ECAC administrative support position.
- Interviews had been completed, scoring and applicant notifications were underway, and an offer would be made to the selected candidate.
- The Council anticipated announcing the selected individual at the next General ECAC meeting.

6. First 5 Nevada Family Leadership Council Update

- Tiffany Olivas provided the update on behalf of Anna Villatoro.
  -Family leaders participated in leadership summits and recognition activities celebrating their contributions over the prior four to five years.
  -The current Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant was nearing completion, and future funding for continued formal family leadership training was uncertain.
  -The Children's Cabinet has submitted a competitive application for another round of federal funding. Families would continue to have opportunities to provide feedback and participate through First 5 Nevada and other statewide family leadership efforts.
  -Chair Tiffany Alston encouraged continued collaboration to identify ways to sustain family leadership training in both Northern and Southern Nevada.

7. Subcommittee Updates

- Data Subcommittee: Amanda Haboush-Deloye highlighted Nevada Registry's new data dashboard, which provides accessible workforce and professional learning data to support decision-making.
- Workforce Development Subcommittee: Dr. Jerek Hough reported that the Subcommittee had begun defining the early childhood workforce to support identification of workforce needs, stakeholder voice, recommendations, and future work plan activities.
- Other subcommittee updates were available through submitted reports.

8. Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee - Bylaws Revisions and Recommendations (For Possible Action)

- Patrice Gardner reported that the Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee completed an extensive review to align the bylaws with the new ECAC Strategic Plan, current statute, and current operating structure.
- Sabrina Jones reviewed the summary of changes, including updates related to statutory language, subcommittee flexibility, terminology, officer responsibilities, vacancies and member responsiveness, meeting and voting language, fiscal administration, nondiscrimination language, regular bylaws review, and the ECAC membership seat chart.
- The revised fiscal-support language was discussed to clarify that ECAC support would not be limited to the Nevada Department of Education and could be supported by another designated state entity.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve the revised bylaws.
- The motion passed with no opposition noted.

9. Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five Sustainability Update

- Rachel Stepina reported that PDG B-5 programmatic funding concluded June 30, 2026, and the 120-day liquidation period runs through October 28, 2026.
  -The team planned to complete final federal reporting within the liquidation period so Nevada's updated outcomes could be included in the next federal report.
  -Participating programs were reminded to retain required grant records for three years after June 30, 2026.
  -The sustainability framework includes one-page action plans addressing suggested approaches, anticipated challenges or barriers, current resources, relevant companion documents, and partnerships. Action-plan templates were available for ECAC support and the ECAC Strategic Plan.

- Rachel shared the federal forecast for a potential one-year PDG B-5 SMART grant focused on Strategic Measurement, Analytics, and Results using Technology, including early care and education technology and data infrastructure.
- Members were shown the final designed ECAC Strategic Plan. Printed copies were being prepared for Council members, and the final accessible version of Nevada's Pathway to Universal Pre-K was also highlighted.

10. Agenda Item Not Discussed

- The Council used the approved flexible agenda and did not take up Agenda Item 10 due to time constraints.

11. ECAC Partner Updates

- The Council did not review partner updates individually during the meeting because of time constraints.
- Members were directed to review the submitted Partner Update Report online.

12. September Meeting Agenda Items

- Tiffany Alston invited the group to submit suggested agenda items for the September General ECAC meeting to ECAC Administration Team.

13. Member Updates and Announcements

- The Family Child Care Association of Nevada announced a regional conference scheduled for October 17, 2026, at the College of Southern Nevada Cheyenne Campus.
- Dr. Linda E. Young shared information regarding an upcoming early learning institute and plans to distribute details to school districts, universities, and partner programs.
- Jennese Black shared the Read with Me Nevada summer reading challenge for children from birth through third grade and encouraged members to share the available literacy resources with families and educators.
- Amanda Haboush-Deloye shared upcoming public awareness resources and events, including Breastfeeding Awareness Month materials, early childhood obesity prevention resources, the Healthy Kids Festival/Step Up for Kids event on September 26, 2026, and Children's Week at the Legislature in March 2027.
- Chair Tiffany Alston noted a possible opportunity to coordinate family storytelling activities with the September 26 event rather than holding separate events.

14. Public Comment #2

- Rachel Stepina expressed appreciation to the PDG B-5 contractors, specialists, ECAC members, and partners for their contributions throughout the 42-month grant period.
- Dolly Rowan reiterated the importance of coordinated early childhood services, family engagement, and practical training for parents. She shared a resource link in the chat for members to review after the meeting.

15. Adjournment

- Chair Tiffany Alston thanked members and attendees for their participation and adjourned the meeting.

Action Step Summary

- ECAC staff: Correct May 20, 2026, minutes, including the guest presenter's last name and consistent spacing and punctuation.
- ECAC leadership/staff: Complete the administrative support hiring process and provide an update at the next General ECAC meeting.
- ECAC leadership and partners: Continue exploring sustainable opportunities for family leadership training and participation following the conclusion of current grant funding.
- ECAC staff: Finalize and post the approved revised bylaws and maintain follow-up on any provisions still requiring additional legal or administrative clarification.

- PDG B-5 team: Complete liquidation and final federal reporting activities and continue development of sustainability action plans.
- Council members: Review the ECAC Partner Update Report and other meeting resources available online.
- Council members: Submit suggested September agenda items to ECAC staff.
- ECAC/partners: Explore coordination of family storytelling activities with the September 26 Healthy Kids Festival/Step Up for Kids event.

Meeting Summary

The General ECAC approved the flexible agenda, corrected May meeting minutes, and revised bylaws; received family leadership, subcommittee, PDG B-5 sustainability, strategic plan, and member updates; and identified follow-up actions related to administrative capacity, family leadership sustainability, online partner resources, and September meeting planning.