Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council
Starting Early is Starting Right on Time

Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council Workforce Development Subcommittee Public Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 14, 2026, Time: 11am.- 12:30pm
Virtual Meeting ID: 894 0430 3882 Passcode: 924963

Attendance

Members Present - 10 of 14 Members Present

1. Jamie Mendez, Workforce Development Co-Chair
2. Dr. Jerek Hough, ECAC Workforce Development Subcommittee
3. Brianna Cambra, Provider Support Director, The Children's Cabinet
4. Patrice Gardner, ECAC Vice Chair, Education Programs Supervisor, NV Head Start Collaboration Director, NDE, Office of Early Learning and Development
5. Lela Gonzales, Workforce Development Coordinator, The Children's Cabinet
6. Dazzrael Lyke, Developmental Specialist 4, Aging and Disability Services Division
7. Shelly Nye, Program Director, The Nevada Registry
8. Rachel Stepina, PDG B-5 Grant Manager, Office of Early Learning and Development, Nevada Department of Education
9. Deetra Stewart, Family Home Care Provider
10. Brooke Yarborough, Social Services Chief 2, DSS, Nevada Department of Human Services,

Members Absent

11. Jenesse Black, K-8 ELA Education Program Professional, NDE, Office of Teaching and Learning
12. Betsy Newman, Part C Coordinator, Clinical Program Planner II, Nevada Department of Human Services | IDEA Part C, Aging and Disability Services Division
13. Dr. Denise Sidney, College of Southern Nevada
14. Dr. Jenna Weglarz-Ward, Associate Professor, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Public in Attendance

15. Tiffany Alston, ECAC Chair
16. Amber Duncan, Building Capacity Manager, The Children's Cabinet
17. Brandi Hearst, ECAC Administrative Coordinator, NDE, Office of Early Learning and Development
18. Sabrina Jones, ECAC System Specialist, Office of Early Learning and Development,
19. Robin Marx-Mackerley, NevAEYC Executive Director
20. Zontonnia Moore, Department of Human Services/Division of Family Services (DHS/DCFS)
21. Nicole Sallers, Community Member

Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

- Jamie Mendez called the meeting to order at 11:37 a.m.
- Lela Gonzales conducted roll call, as noted above.

2. Public Comment #1

- No public comment was offered.

3. Approval of Flexible Agenda (For Possible Action)

- Brianna Cambra moved to approve the flexible agenda.
- Shelly Nye seconded the motion.
- Members voted unanimously. The motion carried.

4. June 30, 2026, Meeting Minutes Review and Possible Approval Vote (For Possible Action)

- Rachel Stepina requested corrections to the minutes, including removal of an incorrectly listed and duplicated name under the quorum count; a related attendance correction; correction of "fixe; correction of Dr. Hough's name; changing "Night Approach" to "Team Approach"; adjusting bullet indentation; changing "Team" to lowercase under the PDG team; and clarifying which items under Tasks 2 and 3 were reviewed in depth by the Subcommittee.
- Shelly Nye requested corrections to the historical context for the advisory groups, noting 2005-2017 for the General Advisory Committee and 2017-2022 for the Training Approval System Advisory Workgroup. She also identified hanging slashes and parentheticals requiring correction, including a parenthetical on page 3 under the Workforce Framework Memo.
- Brandi Hearst made edits during the meeting.
- Shelly Nye confirmed the correct timeline for the previous Training Approval System as 2017-2022.
- Brianna Cambra moved to approve the minutes with the corrections.
- Shelly Nye seconded the motion.
- Members voted unanimously. The motion carried.

5. Co-Chair Report

- No updates were provided.

6. Defining "Workforce" (Discussion for Possible Action)

- Dr. Jerek Hough presented common national language and definitions of workforce composition to support consistent data collection. He described the workforce as direct-service program staff and professionals who support those direct-service professionals and discussed the range of settings where children receive early education and support services.
- Members discussed whether the Subcommittee's role is to define the workforce and the importance of distinguishing direct and indirect roles.
- Rachel Stepina recommended exploring macro- and micro-level distinctions and connecting the definition to the Subcommittee's goals and objectives.
- Shelly Nye emphasized that Nevada has worked to maintain a distinct early childhood education profession with professionals qualified for specialized roles. Lela Gonzales recommended beginning with the Nevada Registry field-position list, and Shelly Nye noted that the Registry has a comprehensive list of direct and indirect position types.
- Members discussed the importance of consistent terminology, including distinguishing Early Childhood Education (ECE) from Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC).
- Robin Marx-Mackerley and Patrice Gardner noted that common language could help legitimize the profession, improve clarity across state agencies, and support advocacy efforts.
  -Next steps included continuing discussion of who is included in the workforce, using Nevada Registry job titles as a starting resource, establishing a timeline for an operational definition, and preparing several functional workforce definition options for consideration at the next meeting.

- Dr. Hough agreed to provide workforce definition options at the next meeting, and Shelly Nye agreed to share Nevada Registry job titles.

7. Review Workforce Questionnaire Results (Information and Discussion)

- Members reviewed the Workforce Questionnaire results.
- Dr. Hough summarized member self-assessments regarding recruitment and retention, compensation and workforce sustainability, workforce wellness and burnout, career pathways and professional growth, and workforce diversity and representation.
  -Most responses were in the "Developing" range. Results included 55.6% developing for recruitment and retention, 66.7% developing for compensation and workforce sustainability, 75% developing for workforce wellness and burnout, 44% developing for career pathways and professional growth, and 55.6% developing for workforce diversity and representation.
  -Short-answer responses emphasized workforce intersectionality, understanding where and how the workforce connects, and understanding the workforce pipeline.
- Rachel Stepina noted that 9 of 14 Subcommittee members responded and asked whether the goal remained full participation.
- Dr. Hough stated that full participation had been the original goal, but participation could not be required. The survey would be considered complete, and the results indicated that the Subcommittee remains in a developing phase of learning and growth.

8. Workforce Representation within the Subcommittee (Information and Discussion)

- The item was tabled for the September meeting.

9. Work Plan Activities and Alignment (Information and Discussion)

- Members reviewed how the workforce definition could align with the Workforce Development goals and objectives in the work plan.
- Jamie Mendez asked where the workforce definition fits within the existing objectives. Rachel Stepina suggested that it fits across Goal 2 and may require a separate subcategory because it affects all Subcommittee goals.
- Shelly Nye suggested treating the definition as a prerequisite objective, potentially Objective 2.0. Rachel Stepina suggested placing it as a key objective directly under the goal, with possible language such as "Create an aligned definition of the early childhood workforce."
- Members discussed adding an activity reflecting adoption of a functional definition of the early childhood workforce. Potential next steps include reviewing Nevada Registry sector roles, defining the proposed outcome or deliverable, and preparing workforce definition options.
- The Subcommittee identified the September meeting as the target for considering and adopting the new objective.

10. Agenda Items for September 8, 2026, Evening Meeting (Information and Discussion)

- No additional agenda items were requested.

11. Member Updates (Informational and Discussion)

- Lela Gonzales shared an invitation to the Child Care Provider Action Committee meeting on August 20 at 1:00 p.m.
- Deetra Stewart reminded members that the Regional Conference is scheduled for October 17 in Las Vegas.

12. Public Comment #2

- No public comment was offered.

13. Upcoming Meetings (for discussion)

- Members discussed scheduling the September 8, 2026, Workforce Development meeting to improve provider participation.
- Suggestions included holding the meeting after 6:00 p.m.; beginning at 5:30 p.m. to mirror the General ECAC evening schedule; placing workforce-relevant content between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m.; and considering a Saturday meeting.
- Patrice Gardner recommended surveying providers regarding preferred participation times. Suggested survey options included evening, weekday, or Saturday availability and September meeting options.
- Jamie Mendez stated that a short survey would be distributed to help determine the September meeting time.
- Shelly Nye offered to share the survey through the Nevada Registry news page. Rachel Stepina recommended using one survey with broad distribution.
- Brandi Hearst will distribute the survey through the Family Child Care Association of Nevada, Nevada Registry, First 5, members, and professional networks. Brooke Yarborough will distribute it through the DSS listserv.
- Jamie Mendez reminded the group that the meeting schedule was included on the agenda

14. Adjournment

- Jamie Mendez adjourned the meeting at 12:56 p.m.
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Action Step Summary

- Workforce Definition: Dr. Jerek Hough will prepare functional workforce definition options for consideration at the next meeting.
- Nevada Registry Resource: Shelly Nye will share Nevada Registry job titles/position types to support development of the workforce definition.
- Work Plan Alignment: Continue developing a key objective/activity for an aligned early childhood workforce definition and bring options forward for consideration at the September meeting.
- Workforce Representation: Return the Workforce Representation item to the September meeting.
- September Meeting Survey: Distribute one broadly shared survey regarding provider preferences for evening, weekday, or Saturday participation and September meeting options.
- Survey Distribution: Shelly Nye will share the survey through the Nevada Registry news page; Brandi Hearst will distribute it through identified early childhood networks; Brooke Yarborough will share it through the DSS listserv.

Meeting Summary

The Workforce Development Subcommittee approved June 30, 2026, minutes with corrections, discussed development of an aligned early childhood workforce definition, reviewed workforce questionnaire results and work plan alignment, and identified follow-up actions related to workforce representation and provider engagement for the September meeting.