Nevada ECAC 2027 Policy Recommendations for the 2026 Annual Report

ACTION REQUESTED: The Nevada ECAC Policy & Finance Subcommittee is submitting the following policy priorities for potential inclusion in the Nevada ECAC 2026 Annual Report.

The following recommendations reflect the priorities identified through the 2026 Nevada ECAC policy survey and align with the Nevada ECAC's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, prior annual reports, and adopted policy priorities. Collectively, the recommendations would establish the governance, financing, organizational capacity, and data infrastructure needed to create a more coordinated, equitable, and sustainable early childhood system for Nevada's children, families, and providers.

1. Establish a Dedicated Nevada Early Childhood Fund with Sustainable State Revenue Streams

Establish a permanent Nevada Early Childhood Fund, supported by dedicated and sustainable state revenue streams, to coordinate and strategically invest resources in programs and infrastructure serving children from the prenatal period through age eight and their families.

Key provisions should:

- Prioritize expanded access to affordable, high-quality child care, mixed-delivery Pre-K, and home-visiting programs, with an emphasis on serving vulnerable and underserved populations. [Link to ECAC definition]
- Support early childhood workforce compensation, benefits, professional development, and retention.
- Allow for grants, low-interest financing, or other support that support early childhood providers to open, expand, improve, and sustain programs.
- Establish transparent eligibility criteria, measurable outcomes, public reporting, and safeguards ensuring that funds supplement rather than replace existing early childhood investments.
- Permit the state to leverage appropriations with federal, local, employer, and philanthropic resources.

2. Provide Dedicated State Funding and Capacity for the Nevada ECAC

Establish dedicated and sustainable state funding to support permanent staff capacity and operational infrastructure for the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council to fulfill its statutory responsibilities and lead implementation of Nevada's early childhood strategic priorities.

Key provisions should:

- Support dedicated executive, policy, fiscal, data, communications, administrative, and family-engagement capacity.
- Support operational infrastructure including, but not limited to, strategic planning, family engagement, interpretation and translation, and accessibility to support meaningful engagement by families, cross-sector early childhood professionals and other impacted populations in Nevada's urban, rural and frontier communities.
- Establish transparent public reporting and measurable outcomes for the utilization of all public funds.

3. Establish an Integrated Early Childhood Governance Structure

Establish a unified, accountable early childhood governance structure with the authority and capacity to align programs, funding, regulations, and family access across all early childhood programs and services.

Key provisions should:

- Clearly define responsibility for statewide early childhood strategy, budgeting, program coordination, accountability, and outcomes.
- Align childcare subsidies, child care licensing, Pre-K, early intervention, home visiting, workforce development, and related family-support programs while preserving specialized program expertise and avoiding service disruptions.
- Create a coordinated accountability framework with shared goals, performance measures, and reporting requirements across programs and services.
- Streamline duplicative applications, eligibility determinations, monitoring processes, and provider requirements, including continued development of a common or universal application for families.
- Require sustained engagement and consultation with families, providers, educators, local communities, and populations that experience barriers to access.

4. Develop a Statewide Early Childhood Integrated Data System

Authorize and fund a phased statewide Early Childhood Integrated Data System that securely connects program, workforce, fiscal, access, and outcome data across Nevada's early childhood system.

Key provisions should:

- Establish interagency data governance, common definitions, data-sharing agreements, privacy protections, security standards, and clear rules governing appropriate data use.
- Connect data across child care, Pre-K, early intervention, health, home visiting, child welfare, workforce, and other relevant programs where legally permissible.

- Produce actionable information on service access, unmet need, workforce supply, provider capacity, family experiences, funding distribution, program quality, and child outcomes.
- Disaggregate data by geography, age, disability, language, program setting, and other relevant factors while protecting individual privacy and avoiding the identification of small groups.
- Provide policymakers, agencies, communities, and the public with accessible dashboards and recurring reports to guide investments and measure progress.
- Implement the system in phases, beginning with a governance framework, legal privacy protection analysis, inventory of existing data assets, priority use cases, and sustainable financing and maintenance plans.

Together, these recommendations provide a practical framework for moving Nevada from fragmented, time-limited initiatives toward a coordinated early childhood system with clear accountability and sustainable financing. The Nevada ECAC recommends that the Governor and Legislature advance these priorities as an integrated agenda, recognizing that governance, funding, organizational capacity, and data must work together to improve access, affordability, quality, and outcomes for Nevada's children and families.