Vermont Child Care and Early Childhood Education Systems Analysis: Stakeholder Engagement Major Themes

Introduction and Methodology

In 2021, Vermont law charged Building Bright Futures (BBF) with overseeing Vermont's Child Care and Early Childhood Education Systems Analysis. BBF issued an RFP, and subsequently hired the team of Foresight Law + Policy and Watershed Advisors to conduct the Systems Analysis. In the fall of 2021 and early 2022, the Foresight/Watershed team conducted interviews and focus groups with over 85 Vermont early childhood stakeholders about the current status of Vermont's early childhood systems. This report was prepared by the Foresight/Watershed team to summarize the major themes of that initial stakeholder engagement effort. Topics addressed in the report include:

- State Government Capacity
- Local Capacity
- The Human Services/Education Dynamic
- Children's Integrated Services
- Special Education
- Collaborative Structures
- Data

What ultimately matters is that the Vermont early childhood system is set up to ensure that children and families have a positive experience – and that those positive experiences lead to beneficial outcomes later in life. The Systems Analysis was launched because there are many providers, community leaders, and state officials working to provide exceptional experiences for children and families, but who cannot maximize their impact given the way Vermont's early childhood system is currently designed. Accordingly, improving state systems is an important strategy for supporting communities and families; the needs of those communities and families is what gives this project a sense of urgency. The Foresight/Watershed team is also keenly aware that just changing governance does not necessarily solve issues with service delivery, and intends to craft its recommendations to reflect that reality.

This document summaries key findings from the stakeholder engagement process. The Foresight/Watershed team does not vouch for the truth of any of the stakeholder statements reported here. But it is clear that there are certain beliefs that are deeply and widely held within the stakeholder community, and this document is meant to help provide a shared understanding of what those beliefs are. There are also some cases where individual comments are reported for added context. All comments are anonymous, as contributors were promised anonymity in exchange for their candor.

The Foresight/Watershed team hopes that stakeholders who have participated in the process to date will see their views reflected here – and that it will help them understand the views of other stakeholders around them, as part of an honest reflection of the system's current status. If

stakeholders believe that it is not an honest reflection of the system's current status, we encourage them to say so. Moreover, as a summary document this report is undoubtedly incomplete; the Foresight/Watershed team encourages stakeholders to share additional thoughts that build on the ideas represented here. Elliot Regenstein of Foresight can be reached at elliot.regenstein@flpadvisors.com; Nasha Patel of Watershed can be reached at nasha.patel@watershed-advisors.com; and feedback can also be provided through the Building Bright Futures website here.

Reports like this are generally not commissioned unless stakeholders with deep investment in the system have serious concerns, and those concerns are reflected here. It is also typical of reports like this that the concerns expressed are primarily about the functioning of state government, and how that impacts efforts and work at all other levels of the system.

One of the most sensitive issues in conversations about early childhood governance is the complex interplay between challenges of system design, and challenges of interpersonal relationships. Both kinds of challenges are reflected here, and it is important to emphasize that challenges of system design can have a major impact on the context of interpersonal relationships – and indeed, can make it very difficult for those interpersonal relationships to be successful. The Foresight/Watershed team has observed that dynamic at work here, and has named it specifically it so that it can be addressed constructively. Much of the work ahead will necessarily be focused on how to build on and strengthen existing relationships while addressing structural obstacles; this will likely include supporting the evolution of those relationships through a discussion of – and potentially the execution of – meaningful structural changes.

In February and early March, the Foresight/Watershed team will share this report widely, and solicit stakeholder feedback. The goal of this stage of the process is to get as much consensus as possible about the system's current status. That consensus will be used in the next phase of the process to inform the Foresight/Watershed team's recommendation. The Foresight/Watershed team will be proposing several different approaches for the state to consider, and for each of those approaches will identify some pros and cons. Because those pros and cons are highly contextual, a shared understanding of the current context will be helpful to setting up those future discussions.

In addition to highlighting themes from our conversations, we have highlighted some recommendations from previous Vermont reports. Our goal is to highlight what the state has articulated as its desired end state, to give a frame of reference for the current condition. Documents referenced below include the State of Vermont's Children 2021 ("2021 Review") Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan 2020 ("VECAP"), the 2021 Recommendations of the Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council ("SAC"), the Vermont System of Care Report 2021 ("System of Care"), the 2020 Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Task Force Report ("Mental Health") the Vermont State Health Improvement Plan 2019-2023 ("Health"), the Vermont Department of Health Division and Maternal and Child Health Strategic Plan January 2019-December 2022 ("M&C Health"), the 2019 Vermont Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment Report ("Head Start"), the 2019 "How Are Vermont's Young Children and Families?" ("C&F"), the 2018 Building Vermont's Future From the Child Up Think Tank Recommendations ("Think Tank"), and the Blue Ribbon Commission on Financing High Quality, Affordable Child Care Final Report ("Blue Ribbon"). The team also reviewed the Early Childhood Systems Needs Assessment 2020 ("Needs Assessment") and the 2018 Prekindergarten Education Study: Final Report ("Pre-K

Education Study"), which focused more on describing existing conditions than recommending specific changes. In addition to the reports referenced here, the team reviewed numerous other reports and documents that provided additional content; the final Systems Analysis will include an appendix with a complete listing of those reports.

Importantly, this project is a Systems Analysis, and is focused on the health of systems – and how those systems support the people working within them. Where it identifies challenges faced by particular organizations or roles, it should not be read as laying blame on those organizations or the people in those roles.

This document is being shared widely in order to solicit feedback. The Foresight/Watershed team would like very much to hear from stakeholders about what in this report resonated with them, and what did not. The team will be meeting with groups of stakeholders in February and March, but also recognizes that certain reflections may be difficult for stakeholders to share in larger group meetings; accordingly, the team encourages individualized outreach from anyone who has insights to share. Those insights will not be used to create an updated version of this report, but instead to inform future conversations about the state's future direction.

Major Themes

Area	Theme	Desired End State
State Government Capacity	*Leadership Capacity* Leadership capacity takes many forms. Many sources talked about the leadership at the Agency of Education (AOE) and the Child Development Division of the Department of Children and Families in the Agency of Human Services (CDD). Stakeholders generally perceived that while leaders in both AOE and AHS express support for early childhood, there are meaningful disconnects between the political leadership and the line staff in both agencies. This means that the higher-level agenda being pushed by appointed executives is not necessarily reflected in the work of the line staff, and that the staff with the greatest expertise on early childhood are not necessarily included in setting the agencies' high-level agenda. Some themes that emerged included: AOE The concerns about AOE are that it does not understand the early childhood ecosystem, and takes a very school-centric view of the world. There is a sense among private providers that AOE does not appreciate the value added by the mixed delivery system, and pushes for policies that would shift resources away from private providers and toward public schools. There is also a perception that AOE is more focused on oversight and systems than relationships and partnerships, meaning that it cares more about ensuring compliance than about having strong working engagement with the field. CDD The concerns raised about the current CDD leadership is that – in comparison to previous CDD leaders – it has not cultivated a strong relationship with community-level leaders. The perception is that it is focused on centralizing power, and that its lack of understanding of the ECE system is a limitation. Concerns were also raised about the current CDD leadership's lack of early childhood expertise.	Partner with communities, and promote individual staff development (M&C Health p. 4) Adopt organizational and institutional practices that advance equity (Health p. 12) Improve staff recruitment (System of Care p. 22)

Area	Theme	Desired End State
	Collaboration Stakeholders raised concern about how collaboration is working, in multiple directions. There is a sense that AOE and CDD do not work together effectively. Numerous providers told stories of struggling to navigate the differences between how the two agencies approach the field; numerous stakeholders told specific stories about discussing a specific problem separately with each agency, and receiving conflicting guidance from the two on how to address the issue. The disconnect in the execution of basic functions – such as data collection and professional development – can reinforce schisms at the local level. This dynamic has been identified before, including in the Pre-k Education Study (page 45). *Staff Capacity* There is a wide perception that both the Agency of Education (AOE) and the Child Development Division of the Department of Children and Families in the Agency of Human Services (CDD) are understaffed. To a meaningful degree that appears to be an intentional choice on the part of the current administration. That choice is defensible, but has consequences. In the case of CDD, the perception is that the division is in a tricky position. Recent initiatives to dismantle the Department did not come to fruition. But the specter of that initiative hanging over CDD has made it hard for CDD to retain and recruit talent. Overall, the sense of the field is that the state's emphasis on expanding access means that it has not developed the staff capacity needed to help providers improve quality.	
Local Capacity	Vermont has private providers who are providing outstanding services to children while actively engaging in their community; it also has school leaders who are delivering great pre-k and showing community-level leadership on early childhood issues. But that is not true everywhere. Local capacity is very uneven, and developing sustainable collaboration can be challenging in low-population rural communities. One struggle at the local level is a lack of support from the state. There is a sense that the state acts reactively to put out fires, and lacks an affirmative vision for its role in supporting communities.	Create strong community capacity (VECAP 2.3) Support family engagement (SAC Rec. 3.2) Improve equitable access, including supporting state

Area	Theme	Desired End State
	Regardless of the state role, many communities lack coherent systems for delivering early childhood services. The low pay in the field makes it hard to attract talented staff, and in most communities there is not adequate funding for local coordination and collaboration. The communities that have been able to support coordination and collaboration believe that their work has improved the experience of children and families. As noted above, policy disconnects at the state level actually reinforce the incoherence at the local level. The different requirements for services school and private settings can make it difficult for those providers to collaborate, or even to see themselves as part of the same system. State policy also allows for experiences that vary dramatically from neighborhood to neighborhood, without strong enforcement of minimal expectations that can serve as a baseline for local innovation. Exacerbating the problem of local coordination is that geographic boundaries are not aligned. The education and human services agencies have very different regional and local configurations. This makes it harder for state staff to coordinate their support for local collaboration and improvement efforts. All told, the lack of focus on local capacity leads to significant equity issues among communities. Some communities have had the resources to develop more coherent local approaches, and there are examples of outstanding community collaborations. Unfortunately, the communities with the greatest need generally have not been able to develop successful local structures.	administrative capacity (SAC Rec. 4.1) Make the system easier for families to navigate (Mental Health Rec. 4) Make the system easier for families to navigate (C&F, p. 40) Create a system of hubs (Think Tank, p. 4)
The Human Services/ Education Dynamic	Picking up on a theme noted above, stakeholders largely fall into either an "education" camp or a "human services" camp. There's tension between them at every level: the legislature, the administration, in communities. There are examples of collaboration and successful partnership for the state to build on, but it's important to acknowledge this elephant in the room. Some stakeholders articulated this divide somewhat differently, focusing on the distinction between "public" and "private" service providers (particularly in the early education and care space). Some stakeholders also described the existence of a "public health" camp that does not fit neatly with either education or human services.	Expand and improve UPK (SAC Rec. 4.2, 2021 Review p. 8)

Area	Theme	Desired End State
	Stakeholders identified specific practical distinctions between the two camps – e.g. teacher licensing, professional development, pay and benefits – but also noted that the two worlds have different norms and expectations. This dynamic has been identified previously, in the Pre-K Education Study ([pages 16-17](#)). One dynamic identified by some stakeholders is that school buildings in communities that have lost population have empty space that they can use for pre-k – making it hard for private providers to compete, given their need to pay rent. But because pre-k is only for ten hours a week, it needs to be integrated with other services – including but not limited to child care – and many stakeholders expressed concern about the ability or inclination of school districts to do that integration. There are, however, some examples of school districts that have been leading in this work. Stakeholders widely believe that the design of the state's pre-k program is deeply flawed, and very difficult to implement successfully at the local level. The pre-k program is subject to joint oversight by CDD and AOE; the problems with the program's design may be exacerbating tensions between the two agencies. Moreover, in many communities the pre-k program appears to be the primary point of contact between private providers and school districts, and its design flaws appear to be contributing to friction at the local level. The state's approach to pre-k oversight appears to have been adopted with the aspiration that it would lead to improved coordination between the human services and education sectors; because that aspiration has not been achieved, a redesign of the program might be an important step in improving relationships at the state and local level.	
Children's Integrated Services	Children's Integrated Services (CIS) is an innovative approach Vermont has used, developing services that are integrated at the state level – with the intention of making it easier for families to access the package of services they need. CIS has been highlighted nationally, and its flexibility is valued by families. The fact that it shifts administrative burden from families to the state is widely believed to be positive. But CIS has reached an unfortunate equilibrium that is relatively common for innovative programs: it is big enough to require a lot of work, but not big enough to "become the system" and eliminate the need for duplicative effort. Instead, it has become a parallel system coexisting uneasily with the primary system, which is an administrative challenge. Accordingly, stakeholders report that at the local level CIS providers feel like they are disconnected from the larger early childhood community, despite CIS' focus on integrating services.	Strengthen CIS (SAC Rec. 2.2) Involve Head Start in supporting CIS (Head Start p. 25)

Area	Theme	Desired End State
	Like other functions of state government, Children's Integrated Services is seen as understaffed. Stakeholders indicated that the comprehensive nature of the CIS approach has made it hard to define success for CIS – or to collect data on what success looks like. The divide in the stakeholder community among human services, education, and public health also has made it more difficult for CIS to develop a broad constituency.	
Special Education	The question of how best to deliver special education to preschool-aged children in rural communities came up from several stakeholders. Some stakeholders noted that in Vermont, many adults live in one community and work in another – and they may seek child care in the community where they work, or even in a third community between where they live and where they work. This can be a challenge if their child is identified for special education services, because the responsibility for those services sits with the home school district. Some education stakeholders have articulated special education capacity as a key reason to centralize early childhood services at school districts, given their superior capacity in that area. Human services stakeholders were more likely to advocate for increased flexibility in special education service delivery, allowing children to receive services in the settings where families have actually placed them.	
Collaborative Structures	Most stakeholders expressed appreciation for the existence of collaborative structures -- including the Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council, seven Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan Committees, and 12 regional councils. But there were some dissenting voices. One concern raised about the formal collaborative structures is that they are a place where participants put their best foot forward in a scripted manner, rather than digging into complex problems and trying to solve them; by this take, the behaviors at common tables are not reflective of those away from those tables. Another concern raised was that collaboration is a means, not an end – and that the existence of collaborative structures does not appear to have led to meaningful policy change.	Include families in decision-making (VECAP 2.4) Require parent representation (SAC Rec. 3.1) Engage parents on Local Interagency Teams (System of Care p. 21) Engage families in designing the system (Blue Ribbon p. 34)
Data	The desire for improved data is strong, and there are promising nascent efforts to produce better information – and support that data production with analytics and reporting. But the overall	Commit to early childhood data

Area	Theme	Desired End State
	infrastructure for producing data is not adequate to the task, particularly when it comes to linking data across agencies.

One concern raised was that political leaders want better data, but to date have not spent the resources needed to produce that data. There have been some unsuccessful efforts to improve data systems in the past, and good project design will be needed to succeed in future work – and to build trust.

Stakeholders generally acknowledged that there is not yet a consistent culture of using data for decision-making at the policy level, but pointed to important work going on to change that culture (including a new BBF website, and a new Data & Evaluation Committee organized by BBF). At the operational level there are some examples of successful data use, although there is inconsistency in data use practices across state agencies – and across communities.

Stakeholders agreed that more could be done to improve data collection. Making data useful to the programs actually collecting information would be important to improving the accuracy of data. Moreover, those providers need better supports and training – and the data systems they are using need to be more user-friendly.

Data is seen as an important tool for furthering racial equity.

There are some people working on data analysis, but stakeholders do not believe there are enough analytics staff people to meet the system's need. Stakeholders would also like to see improved access to integrated data for research and analysis purposes, leveraging partnerships with higher education and other partners.

Stakeholders do not currently see a coherent plan for data use, but would like for the Systems Analysis to advance that conversation.

Note: An expanded version of these findings was shared with the Data and Evaluation Committee on January 20, 2022. This summary reflects the results of that Committee's conversation. | integration, and using data for impact (2021 Review p.8) Use data and best practices to scale MTSS (SAC Rec. 2.1) Develop a comprehensive data system to support CIS (SAC Rec. 2.2) Commit to data integration and governance (SAC Rec. 5.1) Use data to show program impacts (SAC Rec. 5.2) Improve longitudinal data systems (Mental Health Rec. 4) Invest in improved data systems (C&F p. 40) Address barriers to Head Start participation in data systems (Head Start pp. 26-27) |

Concluding thoughts from the Foresight/Watershed Team

As stakeholders review and consider these major themes, the Foresight/Watershed team would like to offer some reflections on the findings. These reflections are drawn from their national research, and from ideas raised in the stakeholder conversations that do not fit neatly into the major themes.

Leadership: Vermont's early childhood system lacks unitary leadership. In some other states, there is a senior empowered leader whose full-time job is looking out for the best interests of the early childhood system as a whole – and who has line authority for major early childhood funding streams, including at a minimum pre-k and child care. No such person exists in Vermont, and the overall dynamic of the system reflects that absence. As the Think Tank report says (p. 10), "Governance for the future early care and learning system would include clear leadership and authority for decision-making[.]"

Culture of change: One theme expressed by many stakeholders is that Vermont has a culture of not wanting to create "losers." Many stakeholders said that the state is constantly looking for ways to make everyone better off without making anyone worse off. For example, if a proposal would make many categories of stakeholders much better off but would be mildly detrimental to another category of stakeholder, the proposal would not move forward – even though as a whole the system would likely be better off if it did.

But it is not realistic to demand a path for moving forward that every single stakeholder believes will be superior to the status quo. So if the Systems Analysis process leads to a broad but not unanimous consensus about potential next steps, the Administration and Legislature will need to determine how to move forward. They will need to decide whether the concerns raised are so serious that the broad consensus should not move forward, and whether the concerns identified by opponents can be addressed or mitigated. It is important to contemplate this cultural issue early in the process, before there is any sense of which stakeholders could end up on which side of this divide.

Data: Data use in Vermont, as in many states, is trapped in a vicious cycle. The data available is not reliable or useful, so it does not get used, and the capacity to analyze it and act on it does not get built. Vermont is trying hard to break that cycle, and create a system in which timely and reliable data is actually used to achieve clearly-articulated goals. This culture change has many potential benefits, not the least of which is the fact that it will help policy and practice leaders focus on "the whole child" – as opposed to focusing on individual services and their implementation, in isolation from other services. The Foresight/Watershed teams will present recommendations for developing a virtuous cycle, which should support the state's overall approach to governance.

The nature of the early childhood field: The early childhood field is broad; it includes child development, health, mental health, education, and more, and is connected to many other initiatives focused on parents and families. Many early childhood professionals nationally emphasize the benefits of a holistic approach – one reflected in Vermont's CIS initiative. But in Vermont as in many other states, political structures can reinforce an anti-holistic mindset. At this point it is not clear to many in the field what the goals of the early childhood system are – or even whose job it is to define those goals.

The role of the state: One major goal of the Systems Analysis is to make sure that important decisions are made by the right people, with the right information. It is also about making sure that the right capacities are in place to support those decisions.

In general, local leaders will be in the best position to make decisions that benefit from ongoing interaction with families and providers. The state will be in the best position to house oversight and backbone capacity – and to address issues where statewide consistency is a value. The state can then configure its capacity to ensure that both the state and communities are in a position to be successful.

In many states one goal of a process like this Systems Analysis will be to take burdens off of families and communities and put them on the state. That approach could be inconsistent with the current administration's focus on having a lean state government. The administration's approach puts a premium on articulating the operational benefits of any capacity contemplated for state government, and ensuring that it has an essential operational purpose. It could also be a rationale for establishing a public-private partnership to perform important state-level functions.

It is important to emphasize that there are certain costs that are paid by somebody, even if that somebody is not state government. When state government lacks capacity, the cost of that is often felt at the community and provider level – where the lack of coherence and support adds additional expense, including through the costs of compliance with conflicting mandates. In any fair accounting of the costs of maintaining a system, expenditures at the state level must be considered in light of their potential savings at other levels.

If proposed state-level expenditures will create efficiencies and reduce burdens elsewhere, that should be a legitimate justification for those expenditures – but if proposed state-level expenditures do not have that effect, then it is reasonable to consider whether they are not actually worthwhile. There is no question that some of the changes the state will consider in early childhood governance come at some cost. But those costs must be weighed against the cost of the status quo, which places the burden inequitably on the families and communities with the most limited resources.

State government structures: While there is widespread acknowledgment that the current state structure is not working, there is also skepticism from some in the field that rearranging oversight at the state level will make any meaningful difference at the provider level. For any state-level change to be meaningful may require achieving at least three things:

- Clarity about what exactly state-level governance change is meant to accomplish. Focusing on the concrete ways in which governance change should benefit communities, providers, and the field should guide any decisions about what new state government structures should look like. A strong connection between system goals and system design is a key to the success of early childhood governance.
- Creating the kind of empowered, high-level leadership that can offer the field real coherence – both in operations (described more fully in the next bullet), and in messaging. Part of the problem for early childhood right now is that it has no single ambassador from the administration to the legislature, the provider community, families, and the public; creating a single leader who has programmatic oversight and the ability to communicate about it could create a stronger sense of early childhood as an empowered field.

- Operationally, the state could benefit by organizing around function rather than funding stream. Fund distribution, definitions of quality, professional development, enrollment, and more are currently administered separately for each different service; having a holistic approach could be a significant benefit for providers and communities. Note that this does not mean that all services need to be identical; it simply could mean that services are better harmonized, and that any differences in approach are the result of intentional and thoughtful choice rather than simply differences in oversight responsibility.

One lesson learned from other states is that simply moving oversight of programs from one agency to another does not bring about the kind of change the field needs. Any change in oversight has to be paired with a commitment to systems change, and new kinds of expertise (described further below).

In addressing this issue, the state will surely be mindful of a tension between designing structures that are meant to be durable over years (or even decades), and navigating the current interpersonal dynamics of the state's leaders inside and outside government. There are no easy answers here; all government structures are populated by actual people, and the human dynamics of this moment are deeply relevant.

Supporting communities: The challenge of building local capacity is by no means unique to Vermont, particularly in communities with limited resources. The state has a role in framing and supporting local work, regardless of which agency is in charge. Sorting out the right geographic organization of the system is one function that would benefit from unified oversight.

The human services/education divide: At this point, there is enough scar tissue between the human services and education camps that any path forward must acknowledge that history and articulate a plan for addressing it. The differences between the camps are not irreconcilable, and they share many goals. The problem is not that one camp is right and the other is wrong; the problem is that there are two camps, when there needs to be one.

Indeed, one rationale for unified oversight of early childhood services is that early childhood has become a policy area that demands its own expertise. The diverse array of early childhood services do not fit neatly into historical definitions of "human services" and "education" as distinct categories; they are properly and proudly both. The expertise needed to successfully oversee an early childhood system is its own kind of expertise, one that neither AHS or AOE has yet been charged with developing.

Many states have struggled with the awkward fit of early childhood services into traditional paradigms for organizing governmental services, and ultimately decided that early childhood is its own category worthy of its own leadership. One lesson learned from other states: until this issue is addressed, it never goes away -- and once states have addressed this issue, they do not turn back. Vermont will need to wrestle with this concept, and how address how the idea of early childhood expertise will fit into its overall approach to state government.

APPENDIX

Vermont Early Childhood Systems Analysis Interviewees

Name	Role	Organization
Rep. Sarita Austin	State Representative	House – Education
Meg Baker	Universal PreK Coordinator	Addison Central School District
Paul Behrman	Chair	Vermont Head Start Association
Drew Bennet	Ed Statistician	Agency of Education
Karen Bielawski-Branch	Home visiting	Vermont Department of Health, Division of Maternal & Child Health
Rebecca Bishop	Operations Director	Bennington Head Start
Seth Bowden	President	Vermont Business Roundtable
Rep. Jessica Brumsted*	State Representative	House of Representatives – Human Services
Dr. Breena Holmes	Associate Professor of Pediatrics	Vermont Children's Health Improvement Project; former Director, Vermont Department of Health, Division of Maternal & Child Health
Elizabeth Brown	Director, Rutland County Head Start	Rutland Mental Health Services
Sean Brown	Commissioner	Department for Children and Families
Sandra Cameron	Director of Public Policy	Vermont School Boards Association
Lori Canfield	Head Start Director	Southeastern Vermont Community Action
Sherry Carlson	Private co-chair to ELD, Chief Program Officer	Let's Grow Kids
Morgan Cole	Former Children's Integrated Services Director	Formerly Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Xusana Davis	Executive Director	Racial Equity Advisory Panel
Douglas (DJ) Denniston		Child Development Division
Flor Diaz Smith*	Board Member	Washington Central Unified Union School District; Vermont School Boards Association
Paul Dragon*	Executive Director	Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
Nicole Dubuque	Policy Director	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Lexi Duquette*		Parent
Sheila Duranleau	Director of Programs	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Jen Fortman	Parent co-chair F&C	Parent
Jeff Francis	Executive Director	Vermont Superintendents Association
Daniel French	Secretary	Agency of Education

Name	Role	Organization
Megan Fuerst	Legislative Associate	Action Circles
Eddie Gale*	Vermont Program Director	AD Henderson Foundation
Dimitri Garder	Founder	Global Z
Rey Garofano	Child Care Quality Program Administrator	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Deb Gass	Executive Director	Brattleboro Town School District's Education Services
Wendy Geller	Division Director, Data Management and Analysis Division	Agency of Education
Sandra Grave	Director	Champlain Valley Head Start
Miranda Gray*	Interim Deputy Commissioner	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Cynthia Green	Farm to Early Childhood Education Partnership Coordinator	Shelburne Farms
Sen. Ruth Hardy	State Senator	Senate - Health and Welfare
Shelley Henson	Director of Early Education	Champlain Valley School District
Diane Hermann-Artim	Associate Academic Dean	Community College of Vermont; chairs the Early Childhood Higher Ed Consortium
Margot Holmes	Current PCC Network President	PCC Network
Danielle Howes	Program Improvement Manager, Children's Integrated Services	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Monica Hutt	Chief Prevention Officer	AHS
Linda January	Director	Otter Creek Children's Center
Amy Johnson*	Former President	Parent Child Center Network President
Ken Jones*	Economic Research Analyst	Vermont Agency of Commerce
Bob Keeley	Education Project Manager	Agency of Education
David Kelley	Research & Statistics Section Chief	Agency of Education
Renee Kelly*	Director, Vermont Head Start Collaboration Office	Department for Children and Families, Agency of human Services
Janet Kilburn	Early Childhood Director	Vermont Department of Health, Division of Maternal & Child Health
Chloe Leary*	SAC private co-chair, Executive	Winston Prouty Center
Matt Levin	Executive Director	Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance
Sheri Lynn		Lynn Management Consulting
Sen. Ginny Lyons	Chair Senate Health and Human Services	Senate - Health and Welfare
Denise Main	Executive Director	Sunrise Family Resource Center

Name	Role	Organization
Janet McLaughlin	Executive Director	Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children
Mike McRaith*	Assistant Executive Director	Vermont Principals Association
Emily Merrill*		Parent
Laurie Metcalfe	Director	Northshire Day School
Christel Michaud	Director of Licensing	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Becky Millard	Private co-chair PPD, Director	Northern Lights at Community College of Vermont
Dr. Ashley Miller*	Pediatrician	South Royalton Health Center
Josh Miller	Executive Director	Janet S. Munt Family Room Parent Child Center
Reeva Murphy	Former Deputy Commissioner	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Chelsea Myers	Associate Executive Director	Vermont Superintendents Association
Jay Nicols	Executive Director	Vermont Principals Association
Nancy Noel	Director of Child Care Services	Southwestern Vermont Health Care
Kaitlin Northey	UVM EC Research Representative	University of Vermont
Laura Pentenreider	HRSA Maternal depression grant manager	Vermont Department of Health, Division of Maternal & Child Health
Nancy Powers	Program Director	Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA)
Anne Rada	Child Care Benefits Administrator	Child Development Division
Betsy Rathbun-Gunn	Early Childhood Education Administrator	United Counseling Service Bennington College
Thato Ratsebe	Associate Director	Association of Africans Living in Vermont
Sonja Raymond	Owner	Apple Tree Learning Center (also former Executive Director, Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children)
Aly Richards*	Chief Executive Officer	Let's Grow Kids
Lynne Robbins	Early Childhood and Afterschool Systems Specialist	Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families
Jim Salsgiver	Dorset School Board Member	VSBA Director
Kendal Smith	Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs	Governor's Office
Lauren Smith	Help Me Grow Coordinator	Vermont Department of Health, Division of Maternal & Child Health
Ilisa Stalberg*	Maternal & Child Health Director	Vermont Department of Health, Division of Maternal & Child Health
Christy Swenson*	Head Start Program Director	Capstone Community Action
Margaret Tarmey	Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Coordinator	Vermont Department of Health, Division of Maternal & Child Health
James Trimarchi	Director of Child Care Services	Southwestern Vermont Health Care
Lindsey Trombley	Executive Director	Orange County Parent Child Center

Name	Role	Organization
Hilary Watson	Public co-chair F&C (Family Engagement Coordinator)	Interagency Coordinating Council for Vermont
Becca Webb*	Act 166 Coordinator/Special Education	Barre Unified Union School District
Rep. Kate Webb	State Representative	House of Representatives – Education
Cheryle Wilcox*	Interagency Planning Director	Vermont Department of Mental Health
Rep. Theresa Wood	State Representative	House of Representatives – Human Services

*-Member of the State Advisory Council