

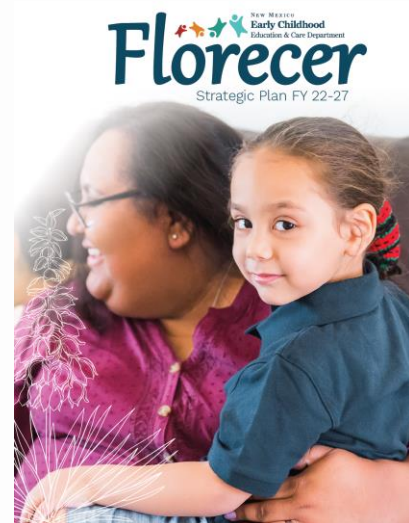


Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ECECD releases strategic plan for building a world-class early childhood system

SANTA FE – Today, the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) released its five-year strategic plan outlining the ambitious goals and activities that will continue to build a world-class system of early childhood programs and services tailored to the diverse needs of New Mexico children and families. The plan builds on early agency accomplishments under the leadership of Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham in improving early childhood workforce compensation and supports, overseeing the largest investment in early childhood infrastructure in state history, and expanding child care assistance to provide free child care for most New Mexico families. Development of the plan began in early 2022 and was completed over the course of six months in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.



“Developing a world-class, affordable, and accessible child care system for every New Mexican has been a priority of this administration since Day One,” said Gov. Lujan Grisham. “Since 2019, New Mexico has made incredible progress, establishing itself as a national leader in early education and care. This plan lays out the path to continued improvements to meet the needs of families.”

“As we developed this plan, our focus was on building a cohesive, equitable, and responsive prenatal-to-five system that supports families, strengthens communities, and enhances child health, development, and well-being,” said ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. “We understand what an incredible opportunity we have before us here in New Mexico. By building a system that supports children and

families in these critical early years, we will see generations of New Mexicans flourish and thrive.”

ECECD’s 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, entitled *Florecer*, the Spanish word for ‘flourish,’ has six goals:

- **School readiness** - ECECD will create and implement culturally responsive policies, programs, and services that ensure all children have the skills and knowledge needed to enter kindergarten ready to succeed.
- **Family and community engagement** - ECECD commits to effective, transparent, and trust-based engagement with New Mexico’s diverse families and communities to increase family leadership and voice in decision-making and program and service design.
- **Government-to-Government** - ECECD will expand and deepen government-to-government relationships and agreements with all Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations with a focus on consultation, culture, language, data sharing, and facility improvements to improve outcomes for Native American families and young children.
- **Early Childhood Ecosystem Alignment** - ECECD will foster coordination and collaboration within and among the early childhood, health, and child welfare sectors to create a holistic, family centered, culturally responsive, and integrated early childhood ecosystem that supports families, reduces child abuse and neglect, and improves school readiness.
- **Organizational Excellence** - ECECD will have efficient and effective fiscal, human resource, and constituent service systems and information technology infrastructure to meet critical job functions and duties of the department and ensure high quality customer service for all New Mexicans.
- **Actionable Data** - ECECD will collect and share relevant, reliable, and actionable data to inform policy decisions, empower partners to improve, and enhance community understanding of the importance of the prenatal to age five period of development.

The projected impact of the ambitious goals laid out in the strategic plan include:

- 5,000 additional children enrolled in high-quality NM PreK, bringing the total to 20,000 children
- 20,000 more families receive affordable high-quality early care and education, bringing the total number of children served to 47,000
- 33 counties in New Mexico supported by an active and engaged local early childhood coalition
- 5 regional equity councils are established
- 23 Tribes, Pueblos and Nations have improved early childhood facilities supported by a dedicated funding source and technical assistance
- 80 percent of families and babies with Plans of Care will be supported
- 2,000 additional infants and toddlers will have access to high-quality, inclusive child care – totaling over 5,500 infant and toddlers served
- 500 indigenous early childhood educators are supported in achieving higher credentials
- 5,000 additional families engage in evidence-based home visiting, bringing the total to more than 12,000 families served

**A digital copy of the strategic plan is available on the ECECD website at:
nmeccd.org/report-and-plans**

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