

Early Childhood Integrated Data System: Strategic Implementation Plan, 2020-2023

Background

In 2018, the Early Learning Board (ELB) and Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) completed a multi-stakeholder planning process that generated the **Hawai'i Early Childhood State Plan, 2019-2024**. The State Plan set out a vision, five-year goals, key strategies, and priorities to create a stronger future for our keiki, their families, and the entire state. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Office of Child Care, through the Hawai'i Department of Human Services (DHS), awarded EOEL a Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five (PDG B-5) to develop in-depth, actionable strategic plans that are rooted in the State Plan. EOEL used the PDG B-5 Grant to convene work groups and develop seven Strategic Implementation Plans; each one serves as a "living" document meant to change over time as opportunities emerge, lessons are learned, and challenges are met with innovation.

The Hawai'i Early Childhood State Plan 2019-2024, full Strategic Implementation Plans, Needs Assessments, and background information can be found at: <https://earlylearning.hawaii.gov/resources/hawaii-state-early-childhood-strategic-implementation-plans/>

Early Childhood Integrated Data System: Rationale

The Access to More Resources for Children and Families (AMR) Work Group articulated an overarching Objective essential to the long-term success of all efforts to affect systemic change in the early childhood sector; namely, the creation of an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS). The PDG B-5 grant to EOEL included funding for an extensive needs assessment, attesting to Hawai'i's profound need for improved data collection and analysis to generate well-informed policies, target resources effectively, and document impact over time. If such a database existed, Hawai'i's early childhood sector would be actively drawing on it to set out and pursue an agenda for transforming early care and education statewide.

Context

For a number of years, Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education actively facilitated the Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC), convening a very diverse group of early childhood sector stakeholders to discuss and prioritize research and evaluation needs and questions (see <http://hawaiidxp.org/research/questions>), as well as to develop Hawai'i's own early childhood integrated data system. In this context, Hawai'i P-20 engaged in a proof-of-concept effort linking Department of Health Early Intervention Section records to Department of Education records to produce longitudinal outcomes. Hawai'i P-20 was also designated as the manager of the Hawai'i Data eXchange Partnership (DXP)¹ which collectively governs Hawai'i's P-20 Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS).²

While ECDC made progress on prioritizing policy and research questions, no statewide plan of action was generated to develop an ECIDS. During the development of Strategic Implementation Plans (June-December 2019), a series of informal conversations occurred among AMR Work Group members, consultants, and EOEL staff members with leaders representing organizations, including Hawai'i P-20, which might serve as an appropriate host for the ECIDS. Unfortunately, based on information gathered, without sufficient, sustained funding, and an assurance of engagement from key state agencies, no immediate host for the ECIDS could be identified and forward progress has stalled. Many have concluded that legislative action is required to establish both the mandate and the necessary funding.

Building the infrastructure of an ECIDS in Hawai'i must address the:

- Barriers generated by differing legal opinions of laws governing data sharing that have effectively blocked the development of interagency agreements to share data and assess critical outcomes.
- Lack of understanding and trust among state agencies on the role of DXP data governance and associated processes that protect individual records, privacy, and security to safeguard records and individuals' rights.
- Concerns about what kinds of data need to be shared in order to inform policy and practice.
- Securing of subject matter experts to explain data elements, formats, and business rules governing the data to be shared.

After significant deliberation, the AMR Work Group referred this Objective and planning endeavor to the ELB and EOEL because they represent the locus for systemic change through the collaborative efforts of the partners they convene. Both ELB and EOEL accepted responsibility for moving this Strategic Implementation Plan forward. While no Strategic Implementation Plan was developed for an ECIDS during the 2019 planning efforts, some ideas and structure emerged that can be used by the ELB and EOEL as a foundation for developing the plan in 2020.

¹ The Hawai'i Data eXchange Partnership is a partnership of State of Hawai'i agencies that have agreed to share and use data to inform positive change and to support continuous improvement of programs and services at all levels of statewide education and workforce training.

² The SLDS is codified in Hawai'i Revised Statutes § 27-7.

Needs Assessment Summary

	2020	Recommendations
Early Childhood Sector Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate awareness of the need to share data at a system level in order to better understand the needs of children, their families, and the impact of early care and education programs and services on child outcomes • “Swimming” in early childhood data siloed within multiple state agencies, among private providers, and in the philanthropic sector • Lack analytical capacity to transform data into insights on priorities and gaps in program services and the allocation of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish the “brick and mortar” issues of an integrated data system from the analytical capacity requirements
Critical Gaps in Information on Children Birth to Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unduplicated individual- and system-level information on children in early childhood programs and services, including early intervention, family support, and/or financial support • Systematic tracking of early care and education programs that are conducting developmental screenings in relation to developmental milestones, and mechanisms for a warm hand-off for children/families who require support services • Universal indicators of early care and education program quality are not available as previous pilots of a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) were not adopted. Current quality assessments rely on programs’ national accreditation, public prekindergarten, or Head Start standards as indicators of high-quality services • Systematic tracking at kindergarten entry of children who have been served by a high-quality early care and education program does not exist, and neither are there procedures in place for following the outcomes they have achieved, especially for those children identified as vulnerable or at high risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reintroduce a universal kindergarten entry assessment to secure individualized information on children’s needs, as well as system-level indicators on how well children are being prepared for kindergarten • Institute a QRIS that establishes universal indicators of program quality • Develop a dashboard of measurable indicators on child need and program reach in the domains of Family and Economic Stability, Health and Wellbeing, and School Readiness, including mechanisms to update the indicators on a regular basis and share the information within the early childhood sector • Resume collaborative efforts to establish an integrated data system, building on the data governance charter previously completed

Key Priorities for Collective Action:

Establish a system to gather, analyze, and share data on program quality and child outcomes to support programs with their efforts toward continuous improvement and to inform effective policymaking. (BB5, B, drawn from the Hawai‘i Early Childhood State Plan, 2019-2024)

Pilot a decentralized model of data-sharing to answer early childhood policy-related questions, and link to existing P-20 longitudinal data system for cross-sector data-sharing on key early childhood milestones and indicators. (BB5, iii, drawn from the Hawai‘i Early Childhood State Plan, 2019-2024)

Objective 1: Secure a viable home for Hawai‘i’s Early Childhood Integrated Data System.

SAMPLE Actions

1. Explore viable models like the Hawai‘i Health Information Exchange and Data Exchange Partnership for application in the early childhood sector.
2. Assess the need for a legislative mandate and funding to establish and maintain an early childhood integrated data system, and if such need is found, generate and implement plans to secure the mandate and funding.

This is a summary of the Early Childhood Integrated Data System: Strategic Implementation Plan, 2020-2023.