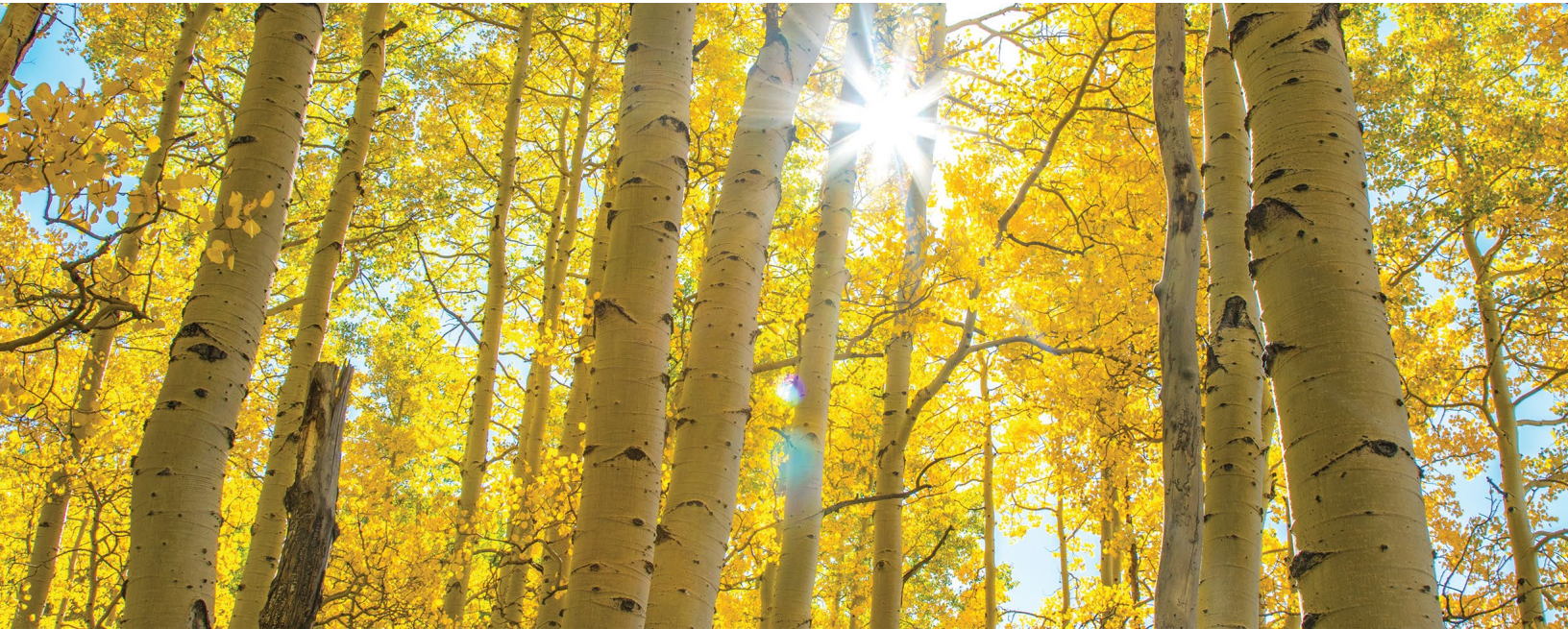




EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL  
LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



@ECCLACOLORADO

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I am excited to share the 2020 Annual Report for the Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance (ECCLA). As the new Executive Director, I am thrilled to be stepping into this role with an organization that has demonstrated resilience through changing times. Our leadership has contributed to growing programs and providing resources to strengthen Colorado's early childhood system. Together, we have provided a collective voice for Early Childhood Councils from across Colorado.

Much of the work of 2020 focused on supporting the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ECCLA and Early Childhood Councils, in partnership with Family Resource Centers, mobilized to deliver Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supplies of diapers, wipes, and formula into communities across the state. ECCLA and Early Childhood Councils worked with partners at the Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood to ensure child care programs had necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies to operate safely during the initial months of the pandemic. This spirit of collaboration continued as ECCLA partnered with Mile High United Way, Healthy Child Care Colorado, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children, and the Women's Foundation of Colorado to deliver responsive grants to child care providers as part of the Keep the Lights On Fund.

ECCLA continues to work to support the broader early childhood system. Through the Family Child Care Home Facilities Improvement Initiative, ECCLA awarded 45 family child care homes with grants to improve and maintain their programs. Sixty percent of programs were in areas considered to be child care deserts. Through the generous support of the Buell Foundation and Daniels Fund, ECCLA is excited to see this initiative continue in 2021. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® COLORADO Scholarship Program continued despite the many challenges facing early childhood professionals during the year.

The challenges of 2020 have resulted in a new light being shined upon early childhood. New opportunities at both the state and federal levels are emerging. This is an exciting time for ECCLA to reflect on how it serves to strengthen the early childhood system with a renewed focus on access, quality, and equity. ECCLA looks to 2021 as a time of revitalization and is ready to stand with our partners across the state to ensure that children in Colorado are healthy, valued, and thriving.

Sincerely,



Maegan Lokteff, PhD  
Executive Director

## ABOUT US



### MISSION:

ECCLA improves the quality, capacity, and equity of services and supports for Colorado's young children and their families through a statewide network of Early Childhood Councils and key stakeholders. We meet this mission through local and statewide collaboration and leadership, program and policy alignment, and scaling innovation.



### VISION:

Colorado's Early Childhood Councils are successful in building and strengthening a robust and sustainable early childhood system that meets local needs. Investments in early childhood services will be a social priority, and the collective impact of our work will be long-term, demonstrable, and valued.



### WHO WE ARE:

ECCLA is a collective impact leader with strong relationships among all of Colorado's 34 Early Childhood Councils who serve 63 of 64 counties. We are a collective voice and statewide hub which leverages the expertise and network of Early Childhood Councils to advance shared outcomes for young children, families, and the early childhood workforce.

As the membership association for Early Childhood Councils, we provide technical assistance and capacity building, leverage policy and advocacy, scale innovation, improve workforce supports for early childhood professionals, advance collective impact, and facilitate partnerships. In collaboration with Early Childhood Councils, our efforts enable us to effectively align, leverage, scale, and lead solutions that contribute to building and supporting Colorado's robust early childhood system.

## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### PANDEMIC SUPPORT THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCILS

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted everyone during 2020. Despite the challenges, ECCLA sought to maintain the vital connections between the statewide network of Early Childhood Councils. In March, in-person support and learning shifted to a virtual platform. Our monthly technical assistance calls increased to weekly, as Early Childhood Councils sought to effectively address new challenges experienced by families, child care providers, and communities.

ECCLA served as a connector between state partners and Early Childhood Councils to ensure effective and responsive supports were provided to communities during the crisis. While this work was coordinated among state partners, Early Childhood Councils were responsible for the on-the-ground implementation. Together, they distributed necessary cleaning supplies to 1,200 licensed child care programs and personal protective equipment (PPE) to nearly 33,000 early childhood professionals. Early Childhood Councils in partnership with Family Resource Centers distributed to local families 23,260 packages of diapers, 53,167 packages of wipes, and 8,200 cases of baby formula provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In collaboration with the Emergency Child Care Collaborative, Early Childhood Councils helped to connect essential workers to child care options.



### RESPONSIVE GRANTS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS TO "KEEP THE LIGHTS ON"

The "Keep the Lights On" Fund was established as a collaborative effort to provide direct financial investments to child care providers for COVID-19 related expenses (e.g., staff, rent, cleaning supplies, etc.). ECCLA, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children, Healthy Child Care Colorado, Mile High United Way, and The Women's Foundation of Colorado provided nearly \$500,000 in responsive grants to 125 family child care homes and child care centers/school-age programs.

Across two funding rounds, ECCLA led efforts to provide responsive grants to family child care homes. Home-based learning environments became highly desirable because they offered smaller group sizes. The grants helped to provide immediate financial support to keep learning environments open, clean, and safe.



## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### BROAD EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE SUPPORTS

The COVID-19 pandemic shined a light upon the workforce behind the workforce – our state’s child care providers and early childhood educators. ECCLA was poised to provide continued support to the early childhood workforce through the T.E.A.CH. Early Childhood® COLORADO Scholarship Program and Family Child Care Home Facilities Improvement Initiative (FCCHI).

T.E.A.C.H. is a national, evidence-based strategy that creates access to higher education for the early childhood workforce through comprehensive scholarships. FCCHI is intended to help family child care homes start-up, expand, or maintain consistent operations, increase capacity, and reduce the number of closing their doors. Together, these programs spearhead by ECCLA, provided \$315,000 in supports for Colorado’s early childhood workforce.



### NAVIGATING CHANGE, TRANSITION, AND OPPORTUNITY

During the changing times of 2020, ECCLA experienced a leadership transition. While navigating this transition, staff remained dedicated to the mission, accelerated organizational growth, and maintained strong relationships. A new Executive Director was welcomed to the team in November. In 2021, the ECCLA Board of Directors and staff are engaging an intentional strategic planning process that honors the history of ECCLA as a grassroots, membership-driven organization and prepares the organization for future growth.

With many opportunities coming to the early childhood field, the results of strategic planning will strengthen the direction of ECCLA to support Colorado’s early childhood system. ECCLA is committed to standing with early childhood professionals, programs, and stakeholders across the state to ensure a strong and comprehensive early childhood system. This exciting opportunity builds upon the organization’s momentum and the bright future ahead.

## OUR STATEWIDE IMPACT



**All 34 Early Childhood Councils** in 63 of 64 Colorado counties were supported by ECCLA with an operating budget of \$952,157.

Through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® COLORADO Scholarship Program and Family Child Care Home Facilitates Improvement Initiative ECCLA **provided \$315,000 in supports for Colorado's early childhood workforce.**



**68 scholarship recipients** were supported through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® COLORADO Scholarship Program which included tuition assistance, books, travel stipend, and career counseling.

**45 licensed family child care homes** were provided grants for facilities improvement. Overall, the grants impacted **328 children across 28 counties** in Colorado, resulting in a **47% increase in capacity** among those awarded. **60% of awards** were provided to programs in **child care deserts.**



ECCLA, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children, Healthy Child Care Colorado, Mile High United Way, and The Women's Foundation of Colorado provided nearly **\$500,000 to 125 family child care homes and child care centers/school-aged programs** in grants through the "Keep the Lights On" Fund – a collaborative effort to provide direct financial investments to child care providers for COVID-19 related expenses.

## MEMBER VOICES



*“ECCLA provides access to a network of professionals who are tackling the same work within their communities. They provide amazing opportunities for dialogue around issues central to moving the work of early childhood forward. ECCLA links Early Childhood Councils with statewide partners that enhance our local work, offer advocacy, and allow us to align and learn from one another.”*

Kelly Hurtado, Joint Initiatives for Youth & Families, Alliance for Kids (El Paso County)



*“ECCLA has given us a voice and platform to ensure that our rural “voice and the needs” of families are heard and met at the state level. ECCLA provides me with a support system that has been instrumental in continuing the work of our Early Childhood Council in Custer County. I look forward to many more years of collaboration.”*

Stacy Terrill, Custer County Kids Council



*“ECCLA has played a major role in supporting our Early Childhood Council. In return, we can build and sustain programs that local children and families benefit from in our three counties. ECCLA provides leadership in supporting not only our three counties in southeastern Colorado but with all the Early Childhood Councils across the state.”*

Judy Rusher, Early Childhood Council of Bent, Otero & Crowley Counties



*“Without ECCLA we would not be able to stay on top of all the changes that have happened with state funding and programs. ECCLA brings all Early Childhood Councils together and we are one group instead of 34 separate entities. Even though we are in the rural northeastern plains, we can stay up to date with everything that is happening across the state.”*

Claudia Strait, Early Childhood Council of Yuma, Washington, and Kit Carson



## STAFF, BOARD, AND SUPPORTERS

### STAFF

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Maegan Lokteff, PhD, Executive Director  
Heather Hanna, Deputy Director  
Hendrik Kopperl, Director of Finance and Operations  
Shannon Hall, Director of Workforce Supports  
Sarah Goldman-Foster, Community Engagement Coordinator

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Stacy Petty, President  
Director, Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council

Danielle Butler, Vice President  
Executive Director, Early Childhood Council of Boulder County

Sandy Gregory, Treasurer  
Director, Douglas County Early Childhood Council

Betsy Overton, Secretary  
Executive Director, Connections 4 Kids, Moffat and Rio Blanco Early Childhood Council

David Hammond  
Retired Partner, Davis, Graham and Stubbs

Sheri Hannah-Ruh,  
Director, Weld County's Early Childhood Council

### MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDERS

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Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation  
The Piton Foundation at Gary Community Investments  
Denver Preschool Program  
Rose Community Foundation  
Daniels Fund  
The Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado  
Mile High United Way  
National Wildlife Federation  
Connie Burwell White & William W. White Foundation  
Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Conference  
ECCLA Members: Early Childhood Councils

### CORPORATE SPONSORS

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Brookes Publishing  
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Thank you to our staff, board members, partners, and Early Childhood Councils for a successful year advancing Colorado's early childhood system!

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