



**TRANSITION  
ADVISORY  
GROUP**

**Special Education Subgroup  
Meeting 6  
September 8, 2021**

# Agenda

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Review notes from last meeting
- ECTA presentation
- Roles and responsibilities of entities moving forward
  - *Note a slight shift from published agenda*

\* This meeting will be recorded via Zoom. Please prepare to mute your microphone if you are not actively speaking.

# **Introduction**

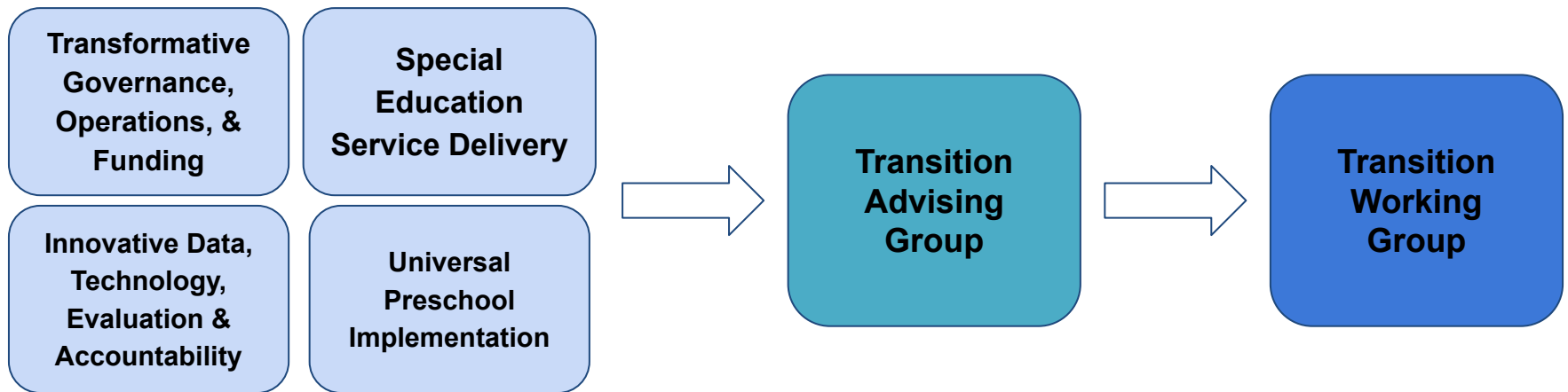
# Background

**HB21-1304** was passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor in June 2021. The law requires:

- The creation of a new unified Colorado Department of Early Childhood on July 1, 2022.
  - *To create the new department, the bill requires a transition plan, written by the Transition Working Group (TWG), be submitted by November 1, 2021. The ECLC is to approve the transition plan within 14 days after receiving the plan from the Office of the Governor.*
- A planning process for Colorado's new universal, voluntary preschool program, which will be overseen by the new unified Department of Early Childhood. This new Colorado Department of Early Childhood will also be charged with the implementation of this program, beginning July 2023.

# Subgroup Structure

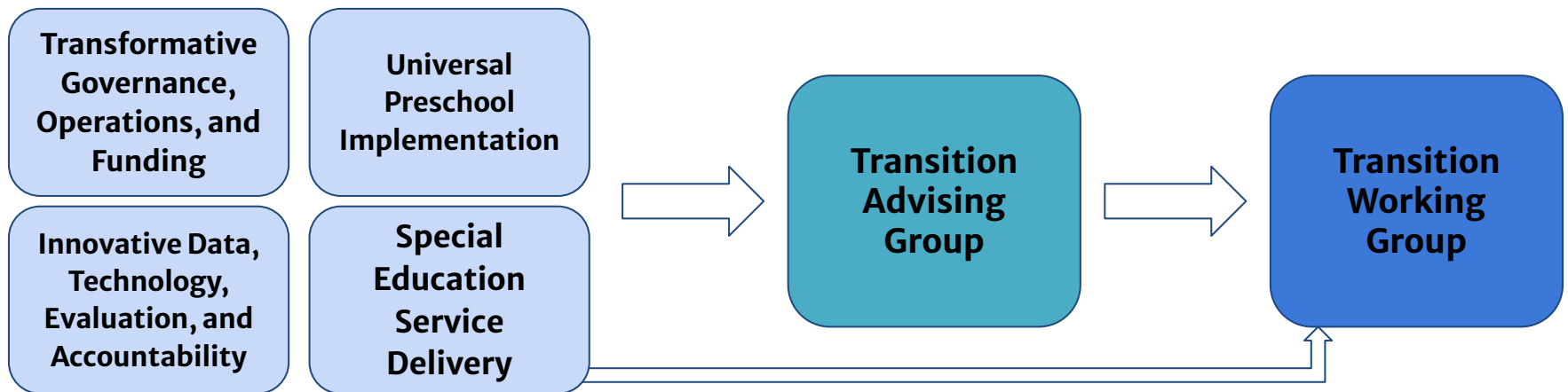
The ECLC Transition Advisory Group is convening subgroups to offer insights that will guide the creation of a transition plan to the new unified department of early childhood. Each group will offer recommendations from their perspectives or in their areas of expertise.



Stipends may be available for parents and members of the early childhood workforce to participate fully in the meetings - please reach out to [Kristina.Heyl@state.co.us](mailto:Kristina.Heyl@state.co.us) for more information.

# SUBGROUP STRUCTURE

The ECLC Transition Advisory Group is convening subgroups to offer insights that will guide the creation of a transition plan to the new unified department of early childhood. Each group will offer recommendations from their perspectives or in their areas of expertise.



Stipends may be available for parents and members of the early childhood workforce to participate fully in the meetings - please reach out to [Kristina.Heyl@state.co.us](mailto:Kristina.Heyl@state.co.us) for more information.

# Listening Sessions

In addition to the TAG and its subgroups, the ECLC is also convening the following interactive user-centered listening sessions to ensure that the new department will meet the needs of those who are involved in and/or experience Colorado's current early childhood system.

- Children and Family Experience - Upcoming on 8/24/2021
- Provider Experience - **Completed** on 08/03/2021
- Workforce Experience - Upcoming on 09/21/202

These listening sessions will offer critical insight into the user experience of existing programs and systems. They will be working in tandem with the subgroups to offer insight to the TAG.

*\* Additional information will be available soon!*

# Other Ways to Engage

Stakeholder engagement is a critical component to this process. To offer updated information and gather feedback the ECLC will be managing the following resources for the public:

## Updates

- Monthly Transition Plan [Newsletter](#)
- Monthly Town Halls
- Transition [Website](#)

## Opportunities to provide input

- Feedback [Form](#)
- Statewide Listening Tour (to be scheduled\*\*)

Additionally, a human centered design project will be conducted with design sessions and prototype creations for what the future system should look like.

*\*For more information or to participate, please reach out to Rebecca Peterson, Gary Community Investments - [rpeterson@garycommunity.org](mailto:rpeterson@garycommunity.org)*



# Stakeholder Feedback

The ECLC is committed to ensuring that feedback can be provided in a variety of ways. A feedback form has been created on the ECLC website and will be available throughout the process.

- [Share Feedback Here!](#)

You will receive a link to the feedback that has been received ahead of each meeting as part of the pre-read materials. Please take a few minutes to review and consider the feedback being shared ahead of each meeting.

- [View the Feedback that Has Been Shared Here!](#)

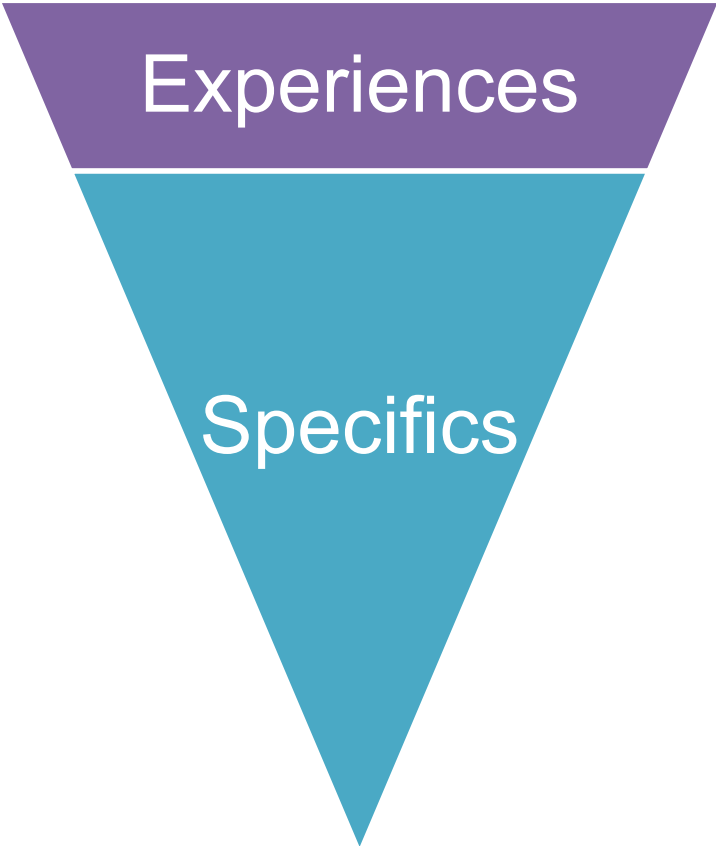
**The Special Education Service Delivery Subgroup will generate ideas for the administration of special education services within the new preschool program.**

This group will discuss the following topics identified in the HB21-1304:

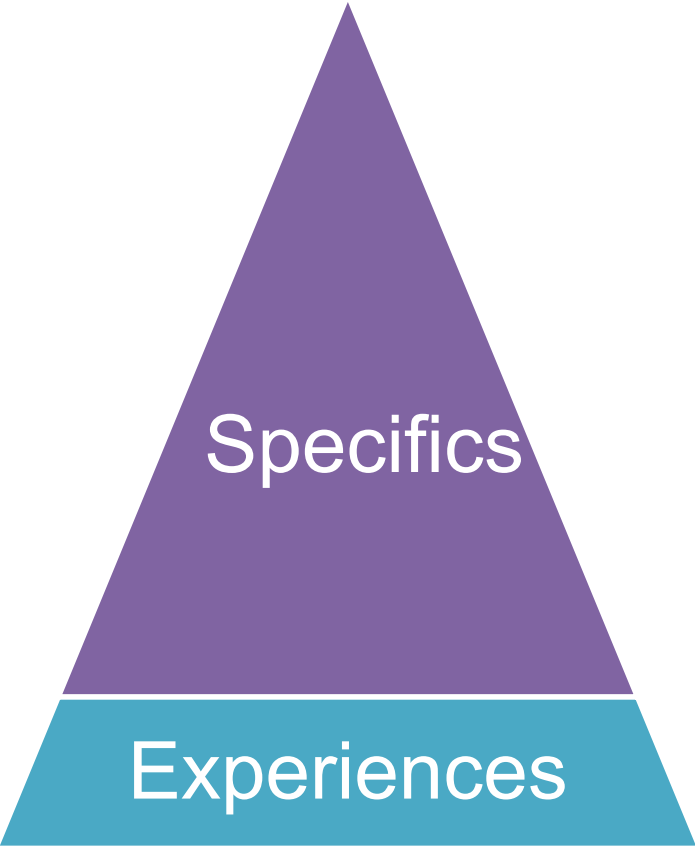
<b>Legislative Topics</b>
Identification of components of an interagency agreement/strategies to define DEC, CDE, LEA, and provider roles/responsibilities
Alignment of Universal Preschool with federal requirements for identifying and serving children with special needs (Parts B & C)
Alignment of Universal Preschool with IDEA
Accountability and oversight of community-based preschool programs
How preschool special education will be delivered and how CBOs will be held accountable for that delivery
How Universal Preschool will be integrated with existing special education requirements
How Universal Preschool will reduce duplicative oversight/regulation of programs implementing special education services

# Structure of Meetings

OPTION 1



OPTION 2



# Meeting Norms

- Come prepared.
- Mute yourself when not speaking.
- Stay engaged (e.g., actively participate in breakout rooms).
- Be mindful of how much “air time” each member receives.\*
- Always assume good intent.
- All ideas are valued.

\* Which of these are you?

1 – parent, family member of a young child

2 – work directly with young children and families

3 – support individuals who raise or support young children and families

4 – create or manage systems that support child-/family-serving organizations

Please make sure to give space/voice to 1s and 2s in your groups

# Expectations

## Every meeting you should expect the following:

- Via e-mail:
  - Agenda for meeting
  - Suggested pre-reading
  - Online – ECLC transition subgroup webpages
  
- In meeting:
  - Subgroup Updates
  - Focused discussion around a specific part of the transition plan
  - Closing/next steps

# **Review Previous Meeting**

# MEETING 2 REPORTING

Meeting Date: July 28, 2021

What are the current experiences of providers serving children receiving special education services in the early childhood education system? What supports exist? What is working? How should it improve?

Provider Experiences	Current Supports	Opportunities for Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges with identification, some providers don't have experience working with children who have special needs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not all children are referred for evaluations in timely manner</li> <li>Generally speaking evaluations and identification occurs seamlessly once referrals are made</li> </ul> </li> <li>Limited trainings and capacity (equipment and providers) for family child care home providers</li> <li>Inadequate supply of qualified service providers and specialized personnel to service IEPs, and/or existing service providers' caseloads are too large and they are stretched thin               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children not always getting the intensity of services they need</li> </ul> </li> <li>State and federal funds aren't enough to provide required special education services</li> <li>Parents/caregivers struggle knowing who to talk to about concerns they have about children's potential special needs</li> <li>Child Find isn't always the best answer for mental health referrals, children's social-emotional and mental health needs still need to be considered even if they aren't necessarily tied to an academic need</li> <li>Responsibility to provide services in the public setting regardless of funds and space that may not be available in the private sector</li> <li>Balancing classroom compositions for inclusion can be a challenge but by providing services in the classroom it is easier for the provider and higher quality for all children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public funding is available to support children who qualify for special education (Per pupil funds for gen. ed. as well as \$ from ECEA and IDEA)</li> <li>Inclusivity in public preschools</li> <li>Children are able to get special education assessments completed through local Child Find and services are available</li> <li>Transition between preschool and kindergarten is more seamless now because special education is currently in public school settings</li> <li>Ratios are lower for special needs classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure teachers and educators know what it means and looks like to have an inclusive classroom               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child care professionals (teachers, paraprofessionals, school staff, specialists) trained on working with children with special needs using evidence-based inclusive practices</li> </ul> </li> <li>Focus on mental health in special education               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for teachers and providers for children with mental health needs</li> <li>Address behavioral health needs and recognize them as important like special education needs</li> <li>Early childhood mental health specialists are embedded into ALL preschool programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>Increase equitable access for families through parent choice – opportunities for full-day and year-round care and access to specialized services without location being a barrier</li> <li>Create standards and expectations for parent communication and services beyond the required minimum</li> <li>Increase funding to meet the costs of special education               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure funding can be blended and braided seamlessly to support school district and community-based programs so they can offer early care and education that meet the needs of working families and ensure children with IEPs receive the supports they are entitled to</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Review the regulations for IDEA Part B to understand legal obligations to set a common understanding.

## Key Takeaways:

CDE staff presented an overview of the history and key components of IDEA and Part B, Section 619

### ***Learnings About Part B of IDEA:***

- Legal concept of free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and its provision in the least restrictive environment (LRE)
- Responsibilities of the state education agency (SEA)
- Majority of funding falls on local school districts (65%)

### ***Learnings about Section 619:*** Colorado's System of Preschool Special Education

- Designated 619 coordinator in every SEA (resides in P-3 office at CDE in Colorado)
- Child Find must identify children suspected of needing special education services
- Children identified and placed with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) after Fall Pupil Count or December 1 Special Ed Count do not generate funds but must be served (~3,600/year)
- The majority (~90%) of preschoolers receiving CDE-funded special education receive services in public school settings (2019-2020 data)

## Ideas/Opportunities for Improvement:

- Have guidelines/expectations for programs that participate in universal preschool
- Provide special education services in mixed delivery; build relationships to provide mixed delivery
  - Mixed delivery system may need to collaborate with LEAs to provide special services
- Utilize community-based preschools to help meet needs
  - School districts need opportunity to address IEPs with different partners
- Keep current dates for initial collection of attendance with the addition of another date so school districts can ask for additional funding as enrollment increases
- Social emotional development should have equal weight with inclusion goals
- Clarity regarding who judges what a general education environment is for a child (quality, rigor, etc.)
- Ensure new system doesn't lose access to local funds that school district has access to
- Survey ECSE providers to discover what they think about providing services in community settings
- Reflect on how we can facilitate continuity of services from child care to/from public schools
- Ensure collaboration between CDE and the new department as this will be essential in accomplishing PD/training, ECMH consultation, and not uprooting children



Review the regulations for IDEA Part C and the transition from Part C to Part B to understand legal obligations to set a common understanding.

## Key Takeaways:

CDHS staff presented an overview of IDEA Part C

### ***Learnings About Part C of IDEA:***

- It's a model that supports families - high percentage of children being able to access services in home or community settings.
- Coverage is varied, rural areas seem to have fewer service providers.
- Local control presents challenges with quality control.
- Low number of children in Colorado identified (6.52%).
- Part C moving from CDE to CDHS for compliance.

### ***Learnings about Transition from Part C to Part B***

- Part C is good at preparing parents to be advocates, lots of regular communications.
- No cost to families.
- The transition process has been reviewed and they believe it works well/parents feel like they are part of a team - When it works, it works well.
- The family partnership is already embedded into Part C.
- It's holistic: looks at the whole child and whole family.

## Ideas/Opportunities for Improvement:

- Navigation across all the early childhood systems: universal connector, "warm hand".
- Look to the Head Start model for integrating special education and UPK.
- Have a plan to know what recruitment, retention, and training of staff will need to look like as expanded ECE access rolls out.
- Use processes for transition with Part C to Part B to support transition process for children entering UPK.
- Increase collaboration with districts and centers to ensure kids can get services in their settings even if not in a school building.
- Use strategies and MOU's created from Part C to Part B if CDE/special education and CDHS remain separate with UPK - the need for communication will be essential.
- Make sure we have enough service providers as this transition happens as we already lack them now.
- Ensure state-level interagency agreement and considerations respond to the diverse community needs.
- Schools must continue to remain a robust and equitable place for ALL students. We do not want to lose the least restrictive environment where all students are learning from each other.
- Educate parents that have kids who will likely qualify for Part B services so they understand when to start preparing to research school/classroom options during "choice" time for their specific school district, irrespective of child's specific age at that time of the year.

## Who, locally, supports seamless delivery of services for families and providers? What is working and what could be improved?

<p><b>Takeaways from LEA &amp; CBO Panel –</b>  <i>Panelists shared how the system has supported them in identifying children for services and/or providing services for children with special needs in their respective roles, what roadblocks they have encountered, and what could be improved in identifying children and/or providing services for children with special needs.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roadblocks across geographical areas; concerns for what transition will look like in rural areas as it will be hard to cover a large geographic area and many districts with a lack of providers and staff.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disparities between CBOs and LEAs in supports they receive.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixed experiences for providers supporting families through the referral/eligibility process:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some parents are eager to identify additional supports for their child, though the discovery can still be difficult and requires grieving.</li> <li>- There can be a stigma associated with disabilities or students who receive special services – messaging needs to change, how can we change it?</li> <li>- Providers must meet families where they are in the process and support from there, and they need additional training to do so.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local communities build systems and resources to meet local needs rather than one-size-fits-all model.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Every community is different, just like every child is unique.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providers need additional training to support families through the referral/eligibility process.</li> </ul>

<p><b>What are our thoughts and considerations for coordination of Part B 619 and Part C of IDEA?</b>  <i>Note: These are broad summaries of subgroup input</i></p>
<p><b>Part B 619:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider keeping Part B 619 at CDE based on current interpretation of federal legislation/rules and to leverage local funding mechanisms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Part C:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider moving Part C to the Department of Early Childhood to align with all other early childhood programs in the Office of Early Childhood that will likely also move.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Coordination:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordination is going to be required within and across agencies and programs. Consider the possibility of a liaison or position that works across both CDE and the new department to support ongoing coordination and communication.</li> </ul>

## Who, locally, supports seamless delivery of services for families and providers? What is working and what could be improved?

### Takeaways from LEA & CBO Panel

*Panelists shared how the system has supported them in identifying children for services and/or providing services for children with special needs in their respective roles, what roadblocks they have encountered, and what could be improved in identifying children and/or providing services for children with special needs.*

- Local communities build systems and resources to meet local needs rather than one-size-fits-all model.
  - Every community is different, just like every child is unique.
- Roadblocks across geographical areas; concerns for what transition will look like in rural areas as it will be hard to cover a large geographic area and many districts with a lack of providers and staff.
- Disparities between CBOs and LEAs in supports they receive.
- Mixed experiences for providers supporting families through the referral/eligibility process:
  - Challenging to know which services are available that meet the family needs
  - There can be a stigma associated with disabilities or students who receive special services
  - Providers must meet families where they are in the process and support from there, and they need additional training to do so.
- Providers need additional training to support families through the referral/eligibility process.

### What are our thoughts and considerations for coordination of Part B 619 and Part C of IDEA?

**Part B 619:** CDE is the State Education Agency (SEA) as recognized by OSEP. Part B should remain with CDE based on current interpretation of federal laws and regulation and to leverage local funding mechanisms.

**Part C:** Move to the new Department of Early Childhood to align with all other early childhood programs in the Office of Early Childhood that will also move.

**Coordination:** Coordination is going to be required. Centering the parent and child needs (mixed-delivery settings). Consider liaisons to cross state agencies and programs.

# PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATION REGARDING PART B AND PART C SERVICE DELIVERY

## Preliminary Recommendations to Move Forward:

### **Overall:**

- Continue to work toward a system where special education services are delivered for children birth through age 5 in a mixed delivery system that meaningfully includes community-based settings, at the location of family choice, consistent with Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), that is child centered and responsive to family needs.

### **Part B 619:**

- Authority remains under the purview of Colorado Department of Education, to be reviewed in no more than 3 years

### **Part C:**

- As part of the Office of Early Childhood, Part C Early Intervention moves to the Department of Early Childhood

### **Ongoing Coordination, Alignment and Professional Development**

- Enhanced, coordinated, and aligned state support for programs in a mixed delivery system
- Develop MOUs or inter-agency agreements to ensure ongoing coordination at the state system and local levels (for Part B, 619 and between Part C & Part B)
- Encourage agreements with community-based organizations to provide special education services
- Set a timeline to review / evaluate service delivery, partnerships, and outcomes for kids and families
- Re-evaluate where programs are located, within no more than 3 years of operation of the new department
- Provide professional development for workforce - across the early childhood system
- Collectively work to address divisive culture between and across the B-5 early care and education system, including special education
- Continue to center on families and children's experiences

# **Presentation: National Landscape**



# ecta

Early Childhood  
Technical Assistance Center

# **Breakout Discussion #1**

# <https://tinyurl.com/sesg908>



## SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBGROUP: Meeting 6 (9.8.21)

Directions: Please assign a notetaker for your group to record notes from Breakout Discussion #1:

Group (list your group members)	Takeaways from ECTA Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What questions does this information raise for you? What did you find interesting? What did you learn?</li></ul>
Group 1: CBOs	
Group 2: LEA 1	
Group 3: LEA 2	
Group 4: Statewide 1	
Group 5: Statewide 2	
Group 6: Extra	



# Group Processing Session



## Takeaways from ECTA presentation

- What did you find interesting? What did you learn?
- What questions does this information raise for you?
- Note: there will not be a full group debrief; please highlight any points you feel especially strongly about

### 1. Guide

Makes sure the group stays on course and support meeting norms

### 2. Mapper

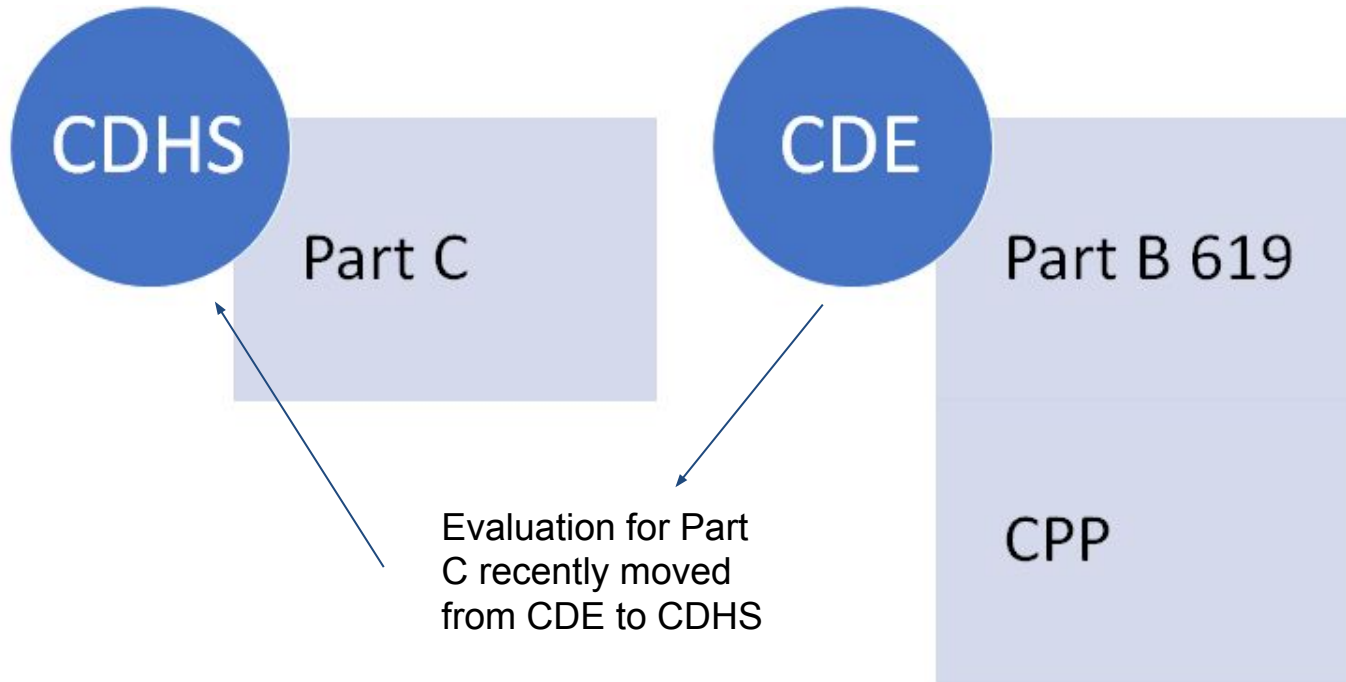
Captures group ideas on the Google doc or GroupMap

# **Breakout Discussion**

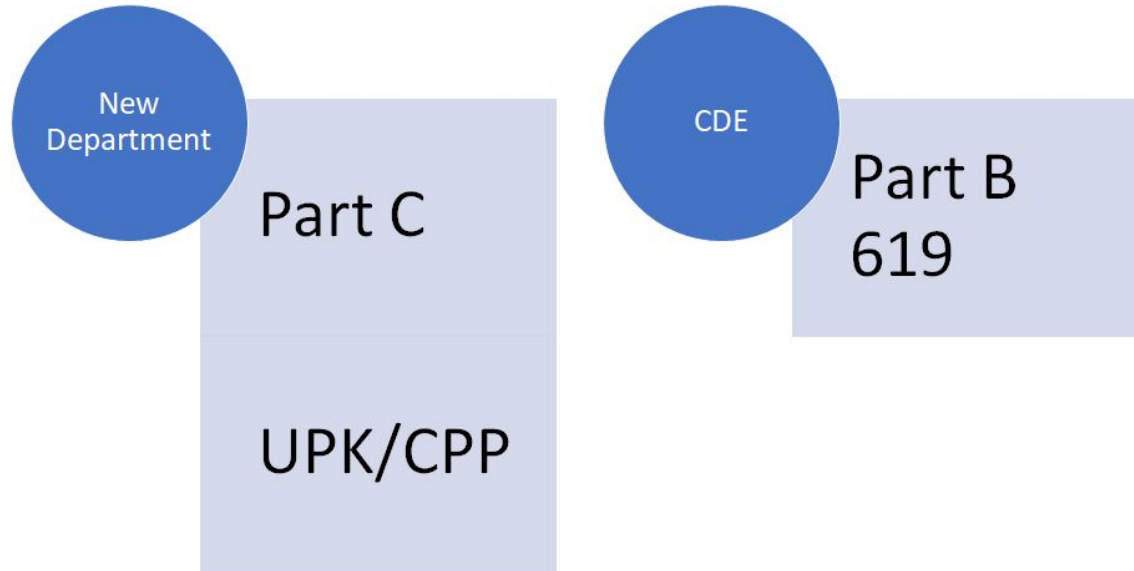
# Roles and responsibilities



# Current State



# Presumed Future State



*Note: we are making recommendations only. Decisions will be made by the TWG and, ultimately, the Legislature.*


<https://tinyurl.com/sesg908>

**Brainstorm** Everyone can add Brainstorming collaboratively

**Department of Early Childhood :**

+


What are our thoughts and considerations for the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Early Childhood in the administration and oversight of special education services in the ECE space?



**CDE :**

+


What are our thoughts and considerations for the roles and responsibilities of CDE in the administration and oversight of special education services in the ECE space?



**Coordination :**

+

What thoughts and considerations are top of mind regarding how the Department of Early Childhood and CDE should work together regarding the administration and oversight of special education services in the ECE space?



## Group Discussion



What are our thoughts and considerations for the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Early Childhood and CDE in the administration and oversight of special education services in the ECE space?

- *Department of Early Childhood*: What are our thoughts and considerations for the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Early Childhood in the administration and oversight of special education services in the ECE space?
- *CDE*: What are our thoughts and considerations for the roles and responsibilities of CDE in the administration and oversight of special education services in the ECE space?
- *Coordination*: What thoughts and considerations are top of mind regarding how the Department of Early Childhood and CDE should work together regarding the administration and oversight of special education services in the ECE space?

### 1. Guide

Makes sure the group stays on course and support meeting norms

### 2. Mapper

Captures group ideas on the Google doc or GroupMap

### 3. Reporter

Shares small group discussion during the whole group debrief

**Closing/  
Next Steps**



Named Sub-Group Members:

- Please use link sent via email to prioritize ideas: use at least one “vote” per column!
- Open until midnight



# Next Steps



If you would like to receive meeting materials, including meeting dates, emails and agendas, please subscribe to the Newsletter and update your subscription profile to include information on this subgroup.



Participants of each subgroup are **highly encouraged to attend all meetings of that group** and should be prepared to review approximately 1 hour of materials prior to the meetings.

## Contact us:

Early Milestones: [meg.franko@eceinsights.com](mailto:meg.franko@eceinsights.com)

CEI: [aspicer@coloradoedinitiative.org](mailto:aspicer@coloradoedinitiative.org)

ECLC: [kristina.hey1@state.co.us](mailto:kristina.hey1@state.co.us)

## Meetings for Special Education Service Delivery

- *Meeting 1, July 21*
- *Meeting 2, July 28*
- *Meeting 3, August 11*
- *Meeting 4, August 18*
- *Meeting 5, September 1*
- Meeting 6, September 8
- Meeting 7, September 29
- Meeting 8, October 6
- Meeting 9, November 3
- Meeting 10, November 10
- Meeting 11, December 8