

FOCUS Redesign

- Goal 1: School Readiness
 - ◆ ECECD will create and implement equitable, culturally responsive policies, programs, and services that will ensure all children have the skills and knowledge needed to enter kindergarten ready to succeed
- Objective 1.3
 - ◆ Early care and education services for children are supported through a redesigned FOCUS program that incorporates outcome-based measures of quality and supports diversity, equity and inclusion



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Key Updates

- Engaged community agencies and coalitions to host focus groups to gather feedback
- Convened a core leadership team comprised of regional technical assistance thought partners and consultants, ECECD executive leadership, quality and licensing staff
- Created committees comprised of ECECD key leadership and community stakeholders to carry out the work



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Key Updates

- Aligned the FOCUS Redesign guiding principles with the pillars in Floreecer

| Floreecer Pillars | FOCUS Redesign Guiding Principles |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Equity | Culturally responsive and available in multiple languages |
| Partner Engagement | Reflects what research tells us and what we have heard from community input Buy-in from parents, early educators, program leadership, and state |
| Early Childhood Program Supports | Standards are meaningful and clear and achievable with supports Emphasis on improvement Ongoing PD and training requirements built in |
| Systems of Accountability | Accountability at all levels and coordinated across systems Recognized tools for measuring quality are a part of the system Creates greater alignment across systems |

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Committee Updates

- Met with other states who have redesigned their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems
- Analyzed licensing data regarding areas of noncompliance among 5-Star centers
- Researched the indicators in a quality improvement and rating system that improve child outcomes



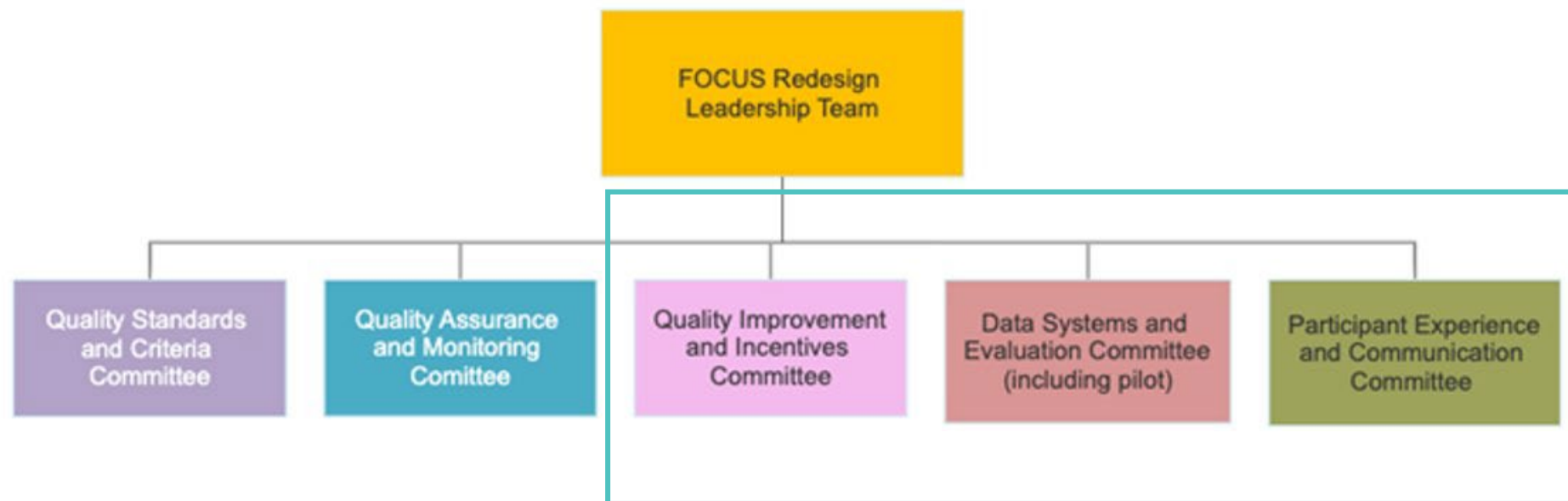
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Future Committees



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- What the research tells us:

- ◆ Ratios are important and meaningful to parents
 - According to Child Care Resource & Referral, parents ask about three things when searching for child care: cost, location, and ratios.
- ◆ Lower child to adult ratios and group sizes are known to:
 - improve quality at the classroom level
 - Improve teacher job satisfaction and retention
 - connect to higher quality teacher–child interactions

- Where New Mexico is:

| | Licensing Ratios | Maximum Group Size | FOCUS 5 Star Ratios |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Infants/Toddlers</i> | 1 to 6 | 12 | 1 to 4 |
| 2 yrs | 1 to 10 | 20 | 1 to 6 |
| 3 yrs | 1 to 12 | 24 | 1 to 9 |
| 4 yrs | 1 to 12 | 24 | 1 to 10 |
| 5 yrs | 1 to 15 | 30 | 1 to 10 |
| 6 years and older | 1 to 15 | 30 | 1 to 10 |

- ◆ FOCUS max group sizes are currently recommendations
- ◆ New Mexico and Georgia are the only states that have a 1:6 ratio for infants
- ◆ All other states have a 1:5 ratio or lower for infants



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- What the research tells us:

- ◆ Children who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experience (ACES) need greater individualized attention and stability in terms of caregiving
- ◆ Stable caregivers are important for children who have experienced trauma so they are not re-traumatized by the separation from a loving caregiver.
- ◆ Quality teacher-child interactions improve:
 - child outcomes
 - school readiness
 - language and literacy skills
 - social-emotional skills
 - Peer relationships
 - behavioral regulation
 - educators' knowledge of social and emotional development
- ◆ Quality teacher-child interactions reduce:
 - staff stress levels
 - child risk of expulsion

- Where New Mexico is:

- ◆ 25% of New Mexico's children have experienced two or more ACES
- ◆ New Mexico has the highest rate of ACES in the United States
- ◆ FOCUS currently does not measure quality interactions



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- What the research tells us:
 - ◆ The highest quality indicator of early childhood education quality is education, specifically a degree with credited coursework in ECE
 - ◆ Of the focus group participants:
 - 47% of Directors/Administrators cited the benefit of ECE credited coursework and degrees/formal training for improving quality in the ECE field
 - 50% of Teacher/Educator cited the benefit of ECE credited coursework and degrees/formal training for improving quality in the ECE field
 - ◆ Programs with higher proportions of teachers holding a bachelor's degree scored higher on an assessment of quality interactions
- Where New Mexico is:
 - ◆ 28% of New Mexico Child Care Center directors hold an associate degree or higher in early childhood
 - ◆ 17% of New Mexico Child Care Center assistant directors hold an associate degree or higher in early childhood
 - ◆ 11% of New Mexico lead and assistant educators hold an associate degree or higher in early childhood
 - ◆ 15% of New Mexico licensed home providers hold an associate degree or higher in early childhood
 - ◆ New Mexico does not currently have a system that captures professional growth and development



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