

# Welcome

Tuesday, April 7, 2026



NEW MEXICO

**Early Childhood**  
Education & Care Department

**Thank you for your attention!**

# Language Instructions

*Inglés > Español*

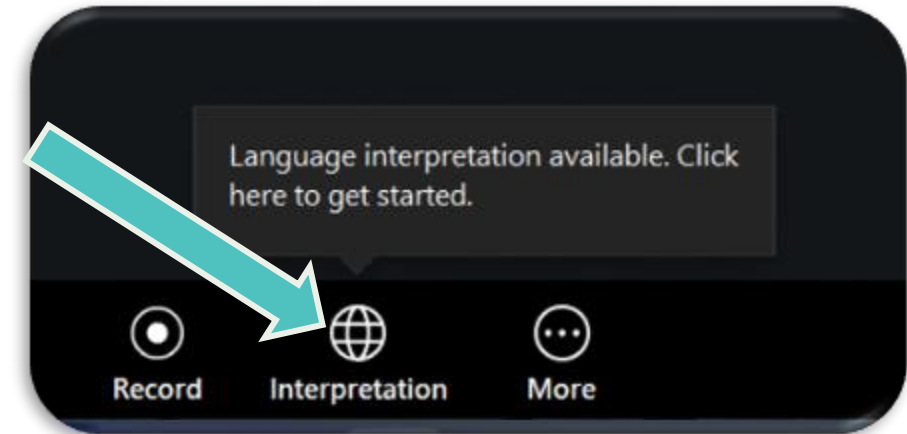
# Instrucciones de Interpretación

# Step 1: Language Instructions

## *Paso 1: Instrucciones de Interpretación*

### Locate the Interpretation Symbol

1. Look for the **Interpretation** (globe) icon in the bottom toolbar.
2. If you don't see it, tap **More** (...).
3. On mobile, **swipe left** on the bottom toolbar to find **Interpretation**.



### Localize el símbolo de interpretación

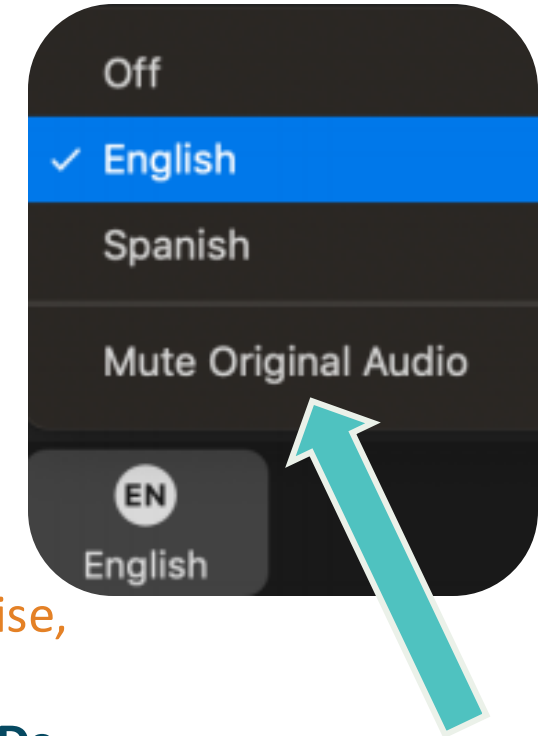
1. Busque el ícono de **Interpretación** (globo) en la barra inferior.
2. Si no lo ve, toque **Más** (...) y seleccione "Interpretation"
3. En celular, **deslice hacia la izquierda** en la barra inferior para encontrar **Interpretación**.



# Steps 2 and 3: Choose From the Menu

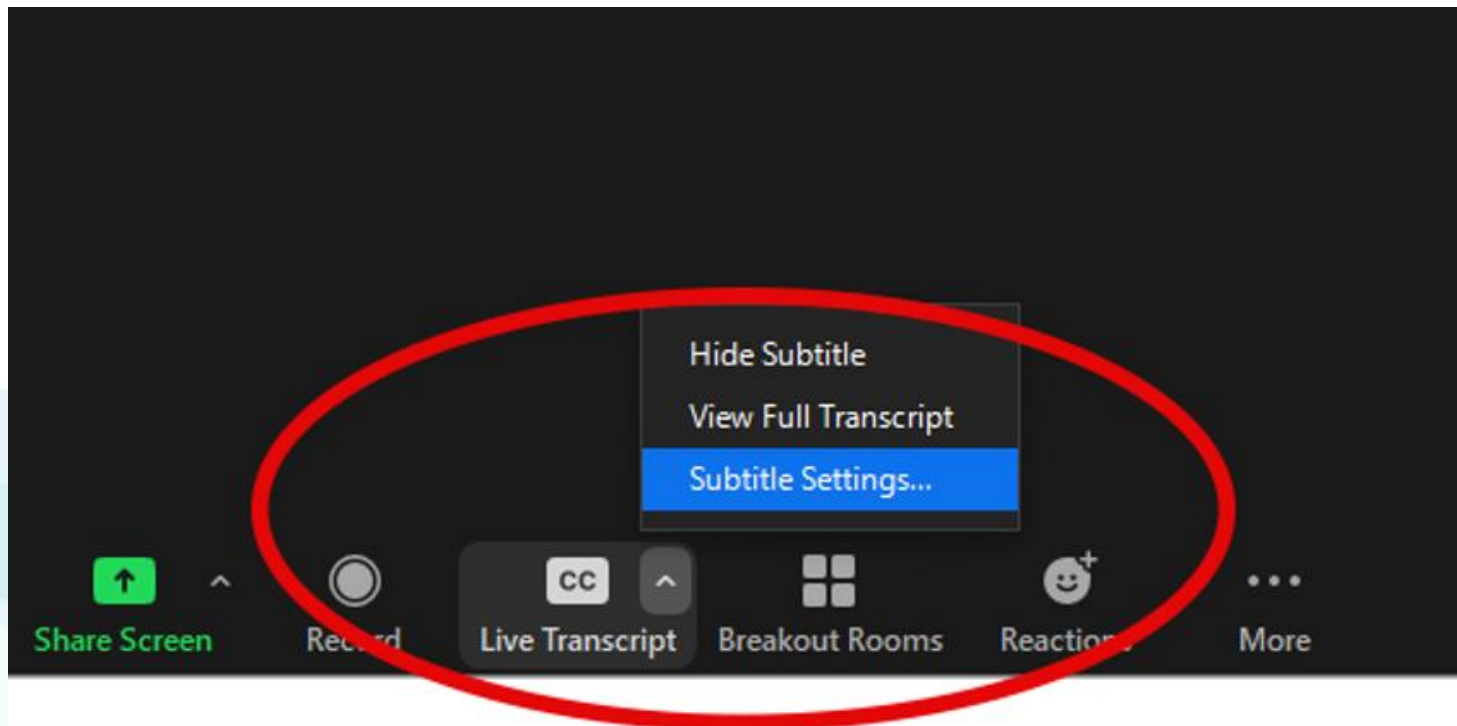
## Pasos 2 y 3: Elija del menú

- You'll then see a menu; click "Spanish" OR "English"
  - **Vas a ver el menú; clic "Spanish"**
- If you would prefer to hear ONLY Spanish, also click "Mute Original Audio." Otherwise, you will hear the Spanish loud and clear and the English quietly.
  - **Si usted prefiere escuchar SOLO Español, también clic "Mute Original Audio" De lo contrario, oirás el español alto y claro y el inglés en voz baja.**
- You will now hear the Spanish interpretation.
  - **Usted escuchara ahora la interpretación en Español.**
- If you choose "English" you will automatically hear only English.
  - **Si eliges "English", automáticamente escucharás sólo inglés.**



# Enable Closed Captions

- See the Show Captions or CC button in the toolbar.
- Click it and choose Show Captions to turn them on (or Hide Captions to turn off).
- You can click the small arrow next to CC/Captions to adjust caption size.



# Agenda

- Welcome and Spanish Interpretation Instructions – Jaime Bencomo, Deputy Communications Director
- Updates and Announcements – Deputy Secretary, Kendal Chavez
- New Mexico Early Learning Standards (ELS) Overview and Implementation – Dr. Stephanie Olmore, ELS Project Lead for CU Denver
- New Mexico Early Childhood Workforce Upcoming Research 2026 – Wanzi Muruvi, Associate Director Research & Policy, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California, Berkeley and Jessica Miguel, Senior Research Scientist, UNM Cradle to Career Policy Institute
- Wage Scale and Career Ladder Implementation Update – Dr. Hailey Heinz, Policy, Research, Quality, Initiative (PRQI) Director

# Updates and Announcements

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Deputy Secretary Kendal Chavez



# The New Mexico Children's Cabinet

*The purpose of the Children's Cabinet is to increase collaboration and family engagement across 18 state departments.*

- Signed into law in 2005 by Governor Bill Richardson (The Children's Cabinet Act, SB 435), chaired by the Governor and co-chaired by the Lieutenant Governor
- Statute dictates that the Cabinet meets six times a year and produces an annual report about efforts and outcomes for children statewide, particularly vulnerable populations.
- Established to bring state agencies together to: reduce adverse childhood experiences (ACEs); break down silos and share best practices; share and leverage data to develop policies that benefit children and families.
- Under Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, the Cabinet has advanced many initiatives, including the development of Family Resource Centers, establishment of Universal Child Care, and implementation of postpartum Medicaid.

# Celebrating Our Key Accomplishments



## Reduced Adverse Childhood Experiences

In 2024, children with two or more ACEs decreased to 23 percent, down from 27.3 percent in 2021.



81 percent of young children in New Mexico are “flourishing.”



48 percent of New Mexico kindergarteners are **on-track in all five developmental domains**—in line with the national cohort.



In 2024, median family income in New Mexico grew faster than in any other state.

# 2025 Children's Cabinet Report

Scan the QR code to view the [Childrens-Cabinet-Annual-Report-2025.pdf](#)



**Introduction**

Created by the Children's Cabinet Act of 2005, the New Mexico Children's Cabinet was established to reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and advance an equitable system of service delivery for all New Mexico children. The Cabinet is administrative to the Office of the Governor and its responsibilities include: a budget inventory of funds allocated to children and families, collaboration on behalf of this population, and the release of a report that details these efforts. Chaired by the Governor, vice chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, and comprised of 18 state member agencies, it is one of 31 state-level cabinets across the country devoted to improving outcomes for children and families. As required by statute, the Cabinet meets six times per year and releases an annual report categorized by five outcome areas: Educated, Healthy, Involved, Safe, and Supported.

Under the Lujan Grisham administration, the Children's Cabinet has advanced efforts to support families through diverse, interwoven efforts. These efforts impact every child in New Mexico regardless of location or socioeconomic status. This report shares the Cabinet's progress organized by the five outcome areas designated by law.

Recognizing that the first three years of life are the most critical for healthy development, the Children's Cabinet published the **Thriving Families Prevention Plan** in January 2024, which identifies strategies to reduce ACEs for New Mexico's youngest children (ages 0-5) that align with the Thriving Families Plan will be indicated in bold throughout the report.

**2025 MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

**Family Income Growth**  
In 2024, median family income in New Mexico grew faster than in any other state in Mexico first for both year-to-year growth and longterm gains.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey

**Child Resilience**  
Approximately 81 percent of children 0-5 in New Mexico are reported as demonstrating curiosity, resilience, and positive social-emotional development in 2024.  
Source: National Survey of Children's Health, New Mexico (2021)

**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**  
Children with two or more ACEs decreased to 23 percent in 2024, down from 25 percent in 2021.  
Source: New Mexico EDI Snapshot 2024 (PED/UCLA)

**Kindergarten Readiness**  
Forty-eight percent of NM kindergarteners are on track in all five domains: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language development, communication skills and general knowledge. Over 70 percent of kindergarteners are on track in all five domains—in alignment with national kindergarten cohort.  
Source: New Mexico Early Development Instrument 2024 Snapshot, ECECD

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**APPENDIX A  
CHILDREN'S  
CABINET  
MEMBERSHIP**

**Chair**  
Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham,  
Office of the Governor (OOG)

**Co-chair**  
Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales,  
Lieutenant Governor's Office (LGO)

**Member Agencies**

- Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTS&D)
- Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)
- Corrections Department (CD)
- Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)
- Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)
- Department of Health (NMDOH)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS)
- Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC)
- Early Childhood Education and Care (ECECD)
- Economic Development Department (EDD)
- Health Care Authority (HCA)
- Higher Education Department (HED)
- Indian Affairs Department (IAD)
- Office of African American Affairs (OAAA)
- Public Education Department (PED)
- Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD)

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# New Mexico Early Learning Standards

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Dr. Stephanie Olmore,  
ELS Project Lead for CU Denver



# New Mexico Early Learning Standards

Overview and Implementation Plan

Dr. Stephanie Olmore  
CU Denver

Community Call – April 7, 2026



# ELS Domains

*Five interconnected domains describe what children know and are learning across key areas of development.*

## Approaches to Learning

Creative expression, curiosity, problem-solving executive functioning

## Communication, Language & Literacy

Listening, communicating, foundational literacy, reading, and writing

## Physical Development & Health

Daily routines, fine and large motor skills, sensory integration

## Relationships & Social Emotional Development

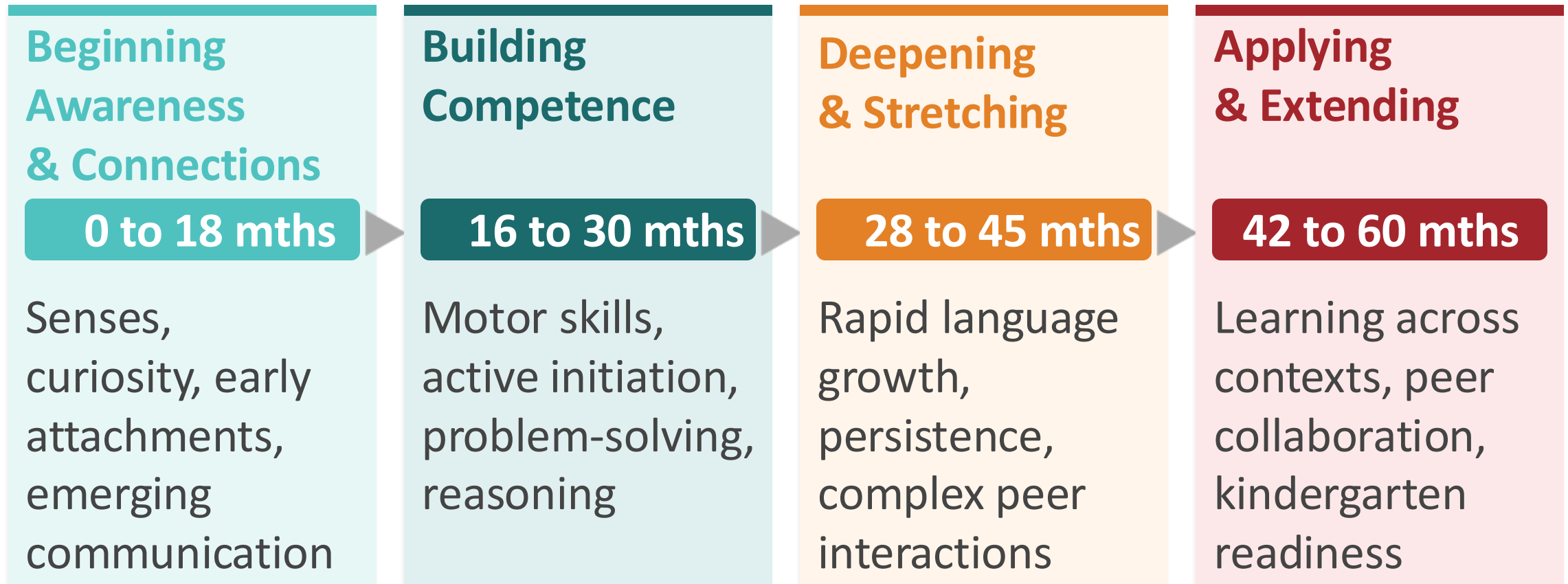
Self-regulation, identity, belonging, relationships with adults and children

## Thinking, Reasoning & Knowledge

Mathematical thinking, science, technology, and engineering

# Developmental Progressions

*Four overlapping progression bands replace rigid age categories, reflecting how learning naturally unfolds.*



*Note: Age ranges overlap intentionally, reflecting natural variation in children's development.*

# Key Updates to the ELS

## ■ Standards, Not Guidelines

Renamed to align with program quality and professional preparation standards across the NM early childhood system.

## ■ Clear Distinction from Assessment

ELS describe developmental progressions, not measurement. They are not an assessment, a curriculum, or a checklist.

## ■ Seamless Birth-to-Five Framework

Replaces two separate documents (Birth through Kindergarten and Preschool Essential Indicators with Rubrics) with one unified set of standards.

## ■ Progression-Based Structure

Four developmental progression bands replace rigid age categories, recognizing that children develop at different rates.

## ■ Culturally Grounded

Reflects NM's diverse cultures, geography, and communities. Developed with partner engagement across the state's early childhood system.

## ■ Expanded Audience

Designed for all adults supporting young children: educators, home visitors, development specialists, coaches, administrators, and families.

# Theory of Action

## New Mexico Early Learning Standards

**Foundational Premise:** The ELS are a developmental framework describing what children know and can do. They are not an assessment, a curriculum, or a checklist.

### Lever 1 Implementation Guidance

**IF** ECECD makes ELS accessible through user-friendly materials (e.g., website, videos)... ↓

**THEN** practitioners and families know about the ELS, understand their purpose, and have a shared entry point for engagement.

### Lever 2 Professional Learning

**IF** ECECD develops PD modules through UNM ECSC partnership... ↓

**THEN** practitioners can understand how ELS progressions apply in their settings.

### Lever 3 Instructional Alignment

**IF** ECECD develops alignment rubrics, assessment guidance, and instructional supports informed by ELS... ↓

**THEN** practitioners connect ELS to curriculum and assessment, and design experiences that support growth.

### Lever 4 System Integration

**IF** ECECD places ELS references in PreK Standards, FOCUS, UCC regulations, and PD requirements... ↓

**THEN** ELS developmental expectations become embedded in accountability structures, creating durable system-level integration.

**OUTCOME** Practitioners across NM's mixed delivery system develop shared understanding of child development, use ELS to inform their interactions and instruction, and support consistent developmental expectations for all young children.

**Critical Conditions:** ELS publication • ECECD policy decisions • UNM ECSC partnership • Tribal community-led engagement • Multilingual accessibility

# What This Means for You

*The ELS are designed for all adults who support young children's learning and development.*

## Educators and Caregivers

Use the ELS as a framework for thinking about how children learn and develop, not a script. Let them inform your planning while staying responsive to children's culture, interests, and development.

## Administrators and Coaches

Support the ELS as a foundation, not a ceiling. Encourage practitioners to use developmental progressions to inform intentional planning while honoring professional judgment and the power of play.

## Home Visitors and Development Specialists

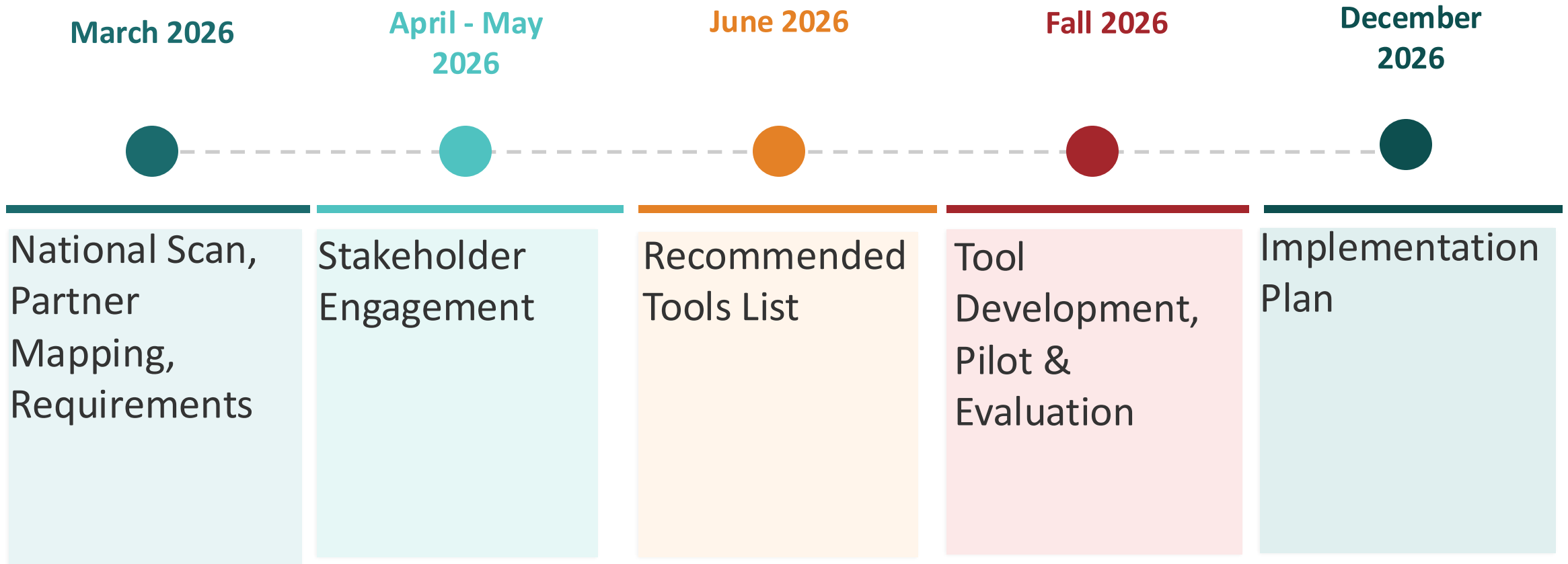
Use the ELS as a bridge connecting your specialized work with the broader community of adults supporting each child. The standards provide a common language for collaboration across services and settings.

## Families

The ELS help guide what children may learn, but every child grows in their own way. These standards are one resource among many for understanding your child's growth and development.

*The ELS will be available for download in English and Spanish in mid-April 2026. No action is required before Fall 2026.*

# ELS Implementation Project Timeline



ELS Available for Download: Mid-April 2026 (English & Spanish) | Formal Implementation: Fall 2026

# Your Voice in This Work

*We're building implementation tools with you, not just for you.*

## Share your perspective.

A brief survey will be available this month to help us understand what tools would be most useful in your setting.

## Join the conversation.

Focus groups and engagement sessions will be scheduled across partner communities to gather input on how the ELS can best support your work.

## Help us test what we build.

Pilot opportunities will be available in Fall 2026 for partners interested in trying draft tools and providing feedback.

*Details and sign-up information will be shared through ECECD communications as each opportunity opens. **Questions? Ideas?***

**[Stephanie.Olmore@ucdenver.edu](mailto:Stephanie.Olmore@ucdenver.edu)**



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## **New Mexico Early Childhood Workforce Upcoming Research 2026**

# New Mexico Early Childhood Workforce Upcoming Research 2026

New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department  
*in collaboration with*

Cradle to Career Policy Institute, University of New Mexico  
Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, UC Berkeley



# About the Projects

**Our partnerships are collaborating on projects to better understand how state policies are achieving goals for New Mexico's early childhood workforce:**

1. **Early Childhood Workforce Policy Impact Study (UNM CCPI)**
  - To understand whether NM's investments in the child care system are improving, (a) compensation and working conditions for child care professionals, (b) recruitment and retention in the sector, and (c) access to quality child care for families.
  
2. **Infant Toddler Pay Parity Evaluation Project (CSCCE)**
  - To study the implementation of the Infant/Toddler Pay Parity Program.
  - To examine the impacts of the program on workforce well-being and retention, work environments and statewide trends in infant/toddler care capacity and stability.

# Opportunities to Participate

- Center Directors
- Home-based Child Care Owner & Directors
- Child Care Classroom Educators



# Center Directors & Home-Based Child Care Owner/Directors

## 1. Survey

### When

- **March to May 2026**
- Repeats in Spring 2027 and Spring 2028

### Who

- **All center directors and home-based providers who care for children under age 5** (Target: 500 participants)

### How

- Electronic survey links sent from CSCCE directly to directors and providers by email or text

### Compensation

- \$30 per completed survey
- Option to participate in a later focus group, with compensation of \$100 per person

## 2. Interviews

### When

- **April-June 2026**

### Who

- **Child care center directors and Home-based child care providers** (Target: 80 participants)

### How

- Respond to email or text request from UNM CCPI research team

### Compensation

- \$40 for a 30-45 minute interview

# Center Teachers & Assistants

## Survey

### When

- **March to June 2026**
- Repeats in Spring of 2027 & Spring of 2028

### Who

- **All Center-based Classroom Lead & Assistant teachers** (Target: 500 participants)

### How

- Electronic survey links sent by UNM CCPI directly by email or text

### Compensation

- Drawing for a \$100 gift card for every 25 people who complete survey



## Contact Information

For the center director and home child care owner survey:

- Email: [ana.vasconcelos@berkeley.edu](mailto:ana.vasconcelos@berkeley.edu)
- Text: 203-516-7235

For the center-based lead and assistant teachers survey:

- Email: [belld@unm.edu](mailto:belld@unm.edu)



# Wage Scale and Career Ladder Implementation Update

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Dr. Hailey Heinz, PRQI Director



# Progress to Date

- **Wage Scale and Career Lattice Framework**
  - ✓ Developed with cross-sector partners
  - ✓ Refined with Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Council
  - ✓ Published final report: [Wage Scale and Career Lattice Framework and Implementation Recommendations](#)



# Current Status

ECECD is leading a working group focused on four key implementation areas:

- **Establish** the administrative structures needed to flow funding to early childhood professionals according to the wage scale
- **Identify** feasible approaches to track and monitor wages and credentials using the Professional Development Information System (PDIS)
- **Generate** policies and procedures for measuring and crediting professional competencies gained through experience and education
- **Institute** a phased and targeted approach to full wage scale implementation

# Timeline and Process

- **March 6:** A kickoff meeting was held for the Wage Scale and Career Ladder Implementation Working Group. This is a small, cross-sector group representing the executive and legislative branches, higher education, advocacy, and early childhood care and education providers.
- **March-July:** Meet to achieve the objectives of each implementation area.
  - ✓ Full group will meet monthly (hybrid)
  - ✓ Smaller groups focused on key implementation areas will meet between monthly meetings (virtually)
  - ✓ The process will result in a detailed workplan for implementation of the wage and career ladder
- **August-October:** Adoption and execution of the implementation plan, using legislative appropriations.

# Implementation Work Group Membership

- **Catron Allred** – Early Childhood Center of Excellence, Santa Fe Community College
- **Rebecca Baran-Rees** – Growing Up NM
- **Rosa Barraza** – New Mexico Early Care and Learning Association
- **Alicia Borrego** – NM Association for the Education of Young Children
- **Jesse Chenven** – Central New Mexico Community College (CNM)
- **Jessa Cowdrey** – Common Spirit St. Joseph’s Children, Home Visiting Association
- **Kelly Dineyazhe-Hunter** – Navajo Technical University
- **Claire Dudley Chavez** – The Office of Speaker Javier Martinez
- **Patricia Grovey** – Head Start Association of NM
- **Valeria Holloway** – Save the Children Action Network
- **Nick Kennedy** – CNM Ingenuity
- **Kelly Klundt** – Legislative Finance Committee
- **Cindy Martinez** – Western New Mexico University
- **Chelsea Morris** – University of New Mexico
- **Angela Redondo** – New Mexico Highlands University
- **April Spaulding** – Abrazos Family Support Services
- **Barbara Tedrow** – NM Early Childhood Association
- **Cristin Weldon** – Aprendamos Family of Services
- **Lizzet Vargas** – Partnership for Community Action
- **Olga Grace**– OLÉ
- **Angela Garcia** – Full Circle

# *Stay Connected* with the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department



**NMECECD.org**



**800-832-1321**



**PO Drawer 5619  
Santa Fe, NM  
87502-5619**

ECECD's bi-weekly newsletter delivers agency announcements, resource, training opportunities, and upcoming events straight to your inbox. Join our monthly Community Call (held the first Tuesday of each month) for updates and engagement.

Sign up at [nmececd.org/newsroom](https://nmececd.org/newsroom).



**@NewMexicoECECD**



NEW MEXICO

**Early Childhood**

Education & Care Department

# Next Community Call

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

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## Questions?

*Email:* [ececd.communications@state.nm.us](mailto:ececd.communications@state.nm.us)

*Website:* [nmececd.org](http://nmececd.org)

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**Thank you for your attention!**



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