

FY27 Early Childhood Education Endowment Spending Plan Framework

Aligned to the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel Recommendations

The Early Childhood Education Endowment, established under C.G.S. 10-512, provides Connecticut with a historic opportunity to implement the vision established through the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care: building a comprehensive, sustainable birth-to-five early childhood system that expands access, improves affordability, strengthens quality, and supports the early childhood workforce.

The FY27 Endowment Spending Plan advances this vision through targeted investments across five interconnected policy goals. The Endowment funding works in conjunction with General Fund state dollars, and federal and state grants allowing OEC to leverage and coordinate multiple funding streams in support of this vision. While expanding access remains a priority, long-term system transformation requires simultaneous investments in workforce stability, quality improvement, facilities capacity, community infrastructure, technology, and data systems. Together, these investments strengthen Connecticut's mixed-delivery system and create the foundation necessary to better support children, families, providers, and communities. strengthens quality, and supports the early childhood workforce.

* Indicates the investment is supported by multiple funding streams

+ Indicates the investment is available to the whole field

Policy Goal	Endowment Investments	How Investments Advance the Goal / Why It Matters
1. Expand Access, Affordability, and Family Choice Through a Mixed-Delivery Early Childhood System	Early Start CT expansion* ESCT Rate increases* Smart Start expansion* Smart Start capital improvement funds*	Families need access to affordable, high-quality early childhood options that meet their needs, and providers need sustainable funding models to deliver those services. These investments expand the availability of early childhood programs across Connecticut's mixed-delivery system while strengthening provider stability through rates that better reflect the cost of care.
2. Build and Sustain a Strong Early Childhood Workforce	Health insurance supports + Program Operations Grants + Scholarships** Apprenticeship programs** ESCT Rate increases*	A stable and qualified workforce is the foundation of a high-quality early childhood system. The Blue Ribbon Panel identified workforce recruitment, retention, compensation, benefits, and career pathways as critical barriers to expanding access. These investments support educators while strengthening the programs and classrooms that families rely on.
3. Strengthen Program Quality, Inclusion, and Supports for All Children	Quality improvement initiatives** Inclusion/Special Needs supports** Licensing supports + Early Start CT program supports +	Expanding access must be paired with investments that ensure all children receive safe, inclusive, high-quality early learning experiences. These investments help programs continuously improve, support children with diverse developmental needs, and provide the technical assistance necessary to meet quality expectations.
4. Build the Infrastructure Needed for a Sustainable Statewide Early Childhood System	Data evaluation and implementation ** Staffing* IT/Data systems* One Point of Entry Portal** Facilities technical assistance +	Sustainable growth requires the underlying infrastructure to support expansion. The Blue Ribbon Panel emphasized that Connecticut must strengthen its systems, data, facilities capacity, and administrative structures to effectively manage investments, measure progress, and support long-term system growth.
5. Create a Coordinated, Community-Driven System Responsive to Families and Providers	Local Governance Partners** Communications/Marketing** Family/provider engagement supports**	Families, providers, and communities need a system that is easier to understand and navigate. These investments strengthen connections between statewide policy and local implementation, ensure decisions are informed by community needs, and improve awareness of available early childhood resources.