

State Early Childhood Systems: Governance Considerations
Highlights from Interviews with Other States (May 2014)

	Connecticut: Office of Early Childhood	Pennsylvania: Office of Child Development and Early Learning	Maryland: Division of Early Childhood Development	Michigan: Office of Great Start
Structure	Stand-alone state agency, which started with planning in 2012, creation by executive order in 2013 and legislation in 2014. Department of Education provides certain administrative functions (fiscal, legal, human resources, and IT)	“Bridge” structure, where sub-cabinet level agency sits under two cabinet level agencies (Education and Public Welfare), and director is deputy in both. Started with study, followed by consolidation within the Public Welfare agency during 2003-05, and legislation to create bridge structure in 2006.	First state to consolidate EC programs under Department of Education, with director as assistant state superintendent. Legislature created the division in 2005, and consolidation took 14 months to complete.	Consolidated agency under the Dept. of Education, with director a deputy superintendent. Governor created office by executive order in 2011, with focus on four outcome areas for children birth to eight years old.
Size/scope	4 new positions created Comprehensive scope, including the 5 major EC programs (home visiting, Birth to Three, child care, Pre-K, Head Start Collaboration)	1 new position created Comprehensive scope, including the five major EC programs	New assistant state superintendent and other new personnel costs of ~\$200,000 Includes child care, Pre-K (excluding special ed), and Head Start Collaboration.	3 new positions created Comprehensive scope, including the major EC programs, except for home visiting
Impetus for creation	Strong interest at multiple levels – Governor (former mayor who started local pre-k), foundations, legislators, local school readiness councils	Bipartisan leadership across two administrations of different parties, Early Childhood Advisory Council, advocates, providers, business leaders.	Triggered in part by child care advocates who opposed cuts made by Dept. of Human Resources and sought transfer to Dept. of Education.	Creation of office was part of Governor’s broader education initiative, with support from state business council and a public-private investment corporation.

Cross-cutting issues and considerations

- Positive impact of elevating early childhood within state government and ability to think in an overarching way across EC programs
- Tangible progress from making EC initiatives a priority (e.g. child care issues in MD; Pre-K expansion in MI: QRIS in CT & MI; better data and research in PA)
- Importance of leadership at multiple levels, with governor’s support key to implementing new or consolidated agency
- Importance of system integration to avoid same program silos, but under new umbrella
- Transition planning crucial in terms of including state employees and other stakeholders in process and having a realistic timetable for implementation