



Maine
Children's
Growth
Council

The Voice for Early Childhood

2010 Report

Submitted to the
Joint Committee on Health and Human Services
of the 124th Legislature

February 4, 2010

Pursuant to MRS Title 5, Chapter 621



MEMBERS

Alan Cobo-Lewis	Lori Freid Moses
Becky Brown	Patti Woolley
Brenda Harvey	Penni Theriault
Dana Connors	Peter Lindsay
Debra Hannigan	Rep. Meredith Strang Burgess
Eloise Vitelli	Rep. Seth Berry
Heidi Hart	Rosa Redonnet
Jan Clarkin	Sarah Forster
Jane Weil	Sen. Joseph Perry
Jim Clair	Sen. Peter Mills
Jonathan Leach	Stephen Meister
Judy Reidt Parker	Susan Gendron
Karen Heck	Susan Mackey Andrews
First Lady Karen Baldacci	Todd Brackett
Kathy Colfer	William P. Braun
Laurie LaChance	

www.maine-eccs.org

Staff: Sheryl Peavey, Director, Early Childhood Initiative, Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Maine's future prosperity and quality of life are important to every Mainer. Our economic success is linked to a productive workforce and safe, welcoming, growing communities. What is not widely understood, however, is how much Maine's economy is influenced by the health and development of our youngest children, who, in a matter of years, will be our workforce.

The early years are a critical time when the architecture of the brain is being built. Like building a new house, we make sure the foundation is strong so it can support all the work to come. That's how it is for brain development- a strong or fragile foundation will set the stage for all the development, learning and behavior that follow. We all know that getting things right the first time is easier and less costly than trying to fix them later.

The Maine Children's Growth Council was created by state statute to look at and act upon the critical economic issue of early childhood. Charged to achieve sustainable social and financial investments in the healthy development of Maine's young children and their families, the Children's Growth Council is working with a diverse group of legislators, business leaders, providers, parents, researchers, community leaders and government officials to implement the plan for a unified, statewide early childhood services system. Among the accomplishments in its first year of existence, the members of the Children's Growth Council:

- *adopted Operating Principles grounded in Future Search research,*
- *drafted processes to best facilitate information gathering and dialogue, and*
- *formed working committees.*

In addition, the Council:

- *secured private funding for business leader summits and federal funds for Council staffing,*
- *developed a data report on early childhood indicators,*
- *obtained technical assistance from a prominent national foundation for public private partnership development,*
- *ensured passage of statutory language to modify membership and make its work more visible to the public,*
- *met the requirements of LD 1069 for a study group on higher ed and early childhood education, and*
- *contributed to the Early Childhood special issue of the Maine Policy Review.*

As the Children's Growth Council embarks on its second year, its work becomes even more critical. Planned or already underway will be the distribution of the data report, development of a fiscal mapping document to link funding and expenses to child outcomes, enhancements to workforce and professional development, and the creation of a public private partnership that embraces such innovations as Quality for ME (Maine's Early Care and Education Quality Rating System) and Educare.



INTRODUCTION

Statutory Reference

MRS Title 5, Chapter 621: Children's Growth Council [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).] Amended by PUBLIC Law, Chapter 392 as Emergency; Signed on 2009-06-15; First Regular Session - 124th Maine Legislature

Purpose

As a group charged to coordinate state, local and community partners, the Children's Growth Council seeks to achieve sustainable social and financial investment in the healthy development of Maine's young children and their families. Its duties include reviewing and addressing recommendations of legislative studies, advisory committees and the Children's Cabinet and implementing the long-term plan for a unified, statewide early childhood services system, Invest Early in Maine.

The Growth Council met for the first time in December 2008 with diverse membership appointed by the Governor, the Senate President and the Speaker of the House. (See Appendix B for a list of Children's Growth Council members). Many of the members were newly introduced to the complexity and intricacies of the early childhood system at that meeting, learning how interwoven are child care, family supports, parent education, child well-being, infant mental health, preschool, PreK, community supports and state policies. More importantly, the Children's Growth Council members understood how each part of the system contributed to a positive child outcome, and how the healthy development of infants, toddlers and young children in turn contributes to a flourishing state economy. The more daunting task ahead was to share that understanding with their colleagues and policymakers and change how we do business in Maine.

To accomplish its action-oriented charges, the Council first generated operating principles to guide its deliberative processes. It adopted a logic model to visually depict its intended goals and then put into place a committee structure to make the work manageable and achievable.



OPERATING PRINCIPLES

When working on systems change, we can accomplish more by framing our dialogue around agreements. Research on group dynamics and sociology has proven that rehashing issues we disagree on is much less likely to help us move forward and forge new partnerships. The Future Search principles (Janoff, Weisbord, 2005) adopted by the Children's Growth Council in March 2009 generally suggest that groups:

1. Have the whole system in the room: if you want plans that are both visionary and practical, you need to have the "whole system in the room," meaning people with authority, resources, experience, information and need.
2. Explore global context: if you want action plans based on genuine dialogue and commitment, you must give people a chance to explore the whole before seeking to fix any part--that is, to have everybody talking about the same world, on that includes all of their realities.
3. Focus on common ground: put common ground and desirable futures front and center, while treating problems and conflicts as information, not action items.
4. Self-manage: people manage their own work and take responsibility for acting on what they learn. People discover that they do in fact have the means to change their own lives, and if they don't do it, no one else will.

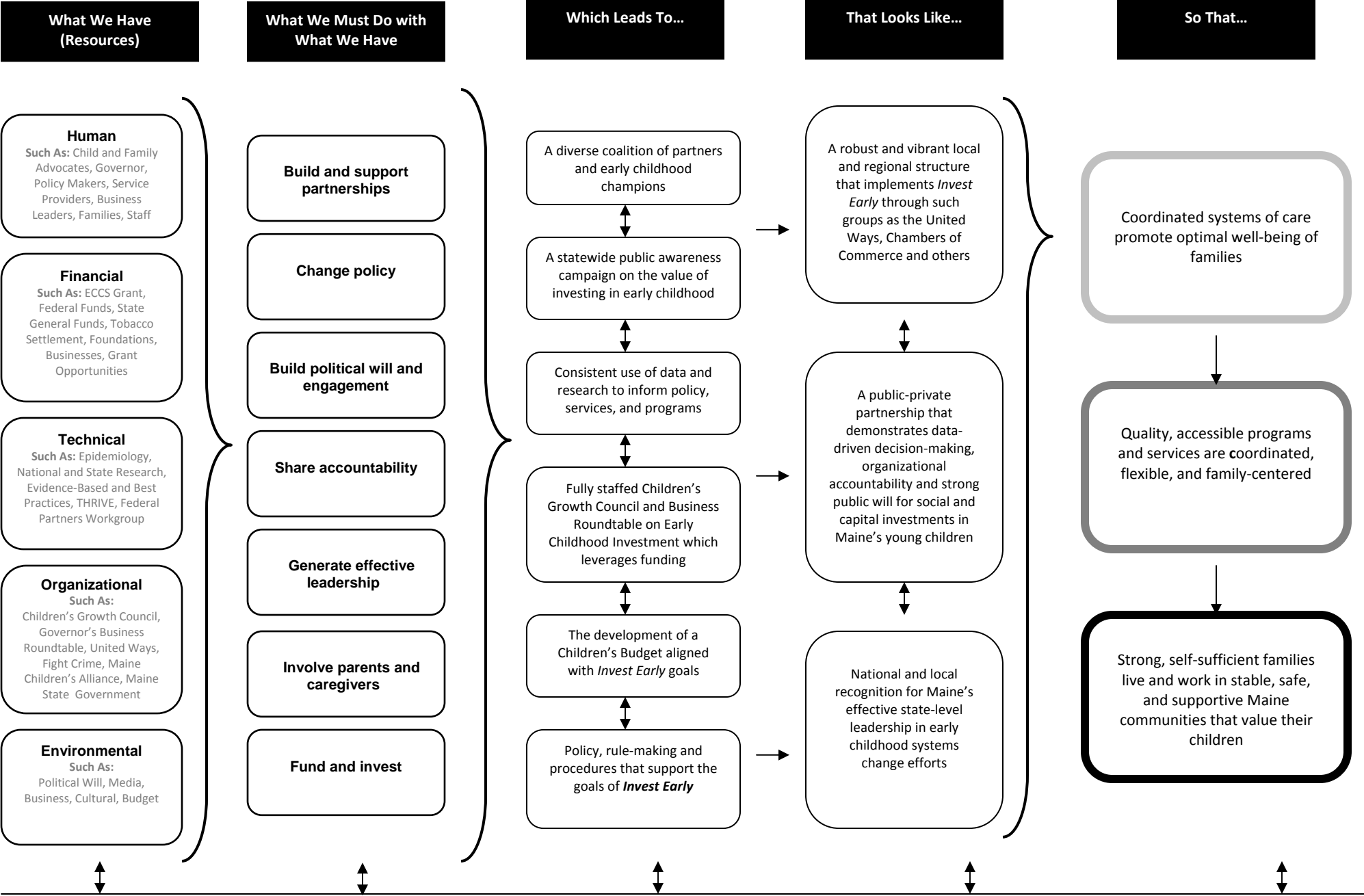


LOGIC MODEL

Maintaining focus while analyzing, discussing and changing a complex system necessitated a logic model, or road map, for the Council members. The following page depicts the logic model adopted by the Council in March 2009. This illustration shows that when we take our human, financial, technical, organizational, and environmental resources, put them to use in focused ways, it leads to some immediate and intermediate changes in partnerships, awareness, use of data and policy-making. As these things are accomplished, it is the Council's belief that we can have for Maine:

- Coordinated systems of care promoting optimal well-being of families
- Quality, accessible programs and services that are coordinated, flexible and family-centered, and
- Strong, self-sufficient families that live and work in stable, safe and supportive Maine communities that value their children.

Maine Early Childhood Initiative Logic Model





STRUCTURE

The Children's Growth Council was charged in statute to perform specific duties intended to improve the social and financial investments in Maine's young children and their families. The structure of the Council now reflects an organization whose function is to ensure ongoing accountability of the system in conjunction with the legislative and executive branches of government, municipal and community leaders, parents, youth and providers.

The Children's Growth Council has adopted a committee structure that engages the expertise and commitment of individuals and furthers the mission of the Children's Growth Council. It is expected that each member of the Council participates in at least one committee; each committee has co-chairs, at least one of which is a Council member; each committee reports regularly to the Council; and, committee and Council meetings are open to the public.

Communications/Public Outreach: Karen Heck To pursue opportunities for the Children's Growth Council to lend its support to events, conferences, public hearings with a consistent message that promotes the healthy growth and development of young children

Legislative/Policy: Rep. Berry, Rep. Strang Burgess, Sen. Mills To review at each state legislative session the potential bills, resolves or other that may have an impact on the strategies for investment as outlined in Invest Early in Maine. Where appropriate, this includes recommending that the Council take a public position for, against, or neither for nor against legislation, or to propose legislation to advance the goals in Invest Early in Maine.

Data/Investments Report: Judy Reidt Parker To develop and monitor a set of indicators that demonstrate short and long-term outcomes for children and families based on the investments in systems.

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Finance: Jim Clair, Karen Heck, Judy Reidt Parker To develop a public private partnership to sustain Maine's comprehensive early childhood system and hold accountable the myriad levels of that system.

LD 1069 Working Group: Alan Cobo Lewis, Susan Gendron To make recommendations for administrative or legislative action concerning the connections between higher education and early childhood education, such as the ways in which the higher education system can support the development of the early childhood education system, the ways the early childhood education system can help strengthen the higher education system, and the support needed to make this reciprocal relationship sustainable.

Early Care and Education: Allyson Dean, Lori Freid Moses To ensure that all Maine children, including children with special needs, have access to quality, affordable, accessible and inclusive early care and education and to ensure that Maine will have a stable, qualified high quality early childhood workforce.

Family: Jan Clarkin, Pam LaHaye To ensure that Maine families have access to a comprehensive array of family-centered, collaborative prevention services, including Home Visiting, Family Literacy, Parenting Education, and child abuse prevention. To ensure that Maine supports family-friendly practices that enable families of young children to secure their basic needs.

Health: Jane Weil, Sue Mackey Andrews, Ellie Goldberg To support the development/enhancement of a family-centered health system that supports attachment, focuses on prevention and early intervention, and seeks to ensure health-literate consumers.

Community: Peter Lindsay, Sheriff Todd Brackett To partner with communities and municipalities so that they include early childhood in their regional planning and to engage business and community leaders in supporting greater investments in early childhood.



PRIORITIZING AND IMPLEMENTING GOALS

By encouraging the groups to prioritize using the following methodology, the Council committees are able to better focus their energies on specific activities to advance the systems change we seek, without feeling overwhelmed by the volume of goals currently outlined in Invest Early. Each updated Edition of Invest Early in Maine would then reflect these priorities with clear objectives.

Process

1. Review the Strategies for Investment in *Invest Early in Maine*
2. Determine, based on known current statewide or local activity addressing this issue, if MCGC involvement is/should be:
 - LEADERSHIP: a critical systems or policy issue that should be addressed by the MCGC because it currently lacks leadership or because current efforts are not well coordinated or because there is an urgent policy issue at stake
 - PARTICIPATION: an important issue that is already being addressed by groups outside of or by partners of the MCGC, that should have (or has) active involvement by members of the MCGC
 - MONITORING: an important issue that is already being addressed by others, and may have a strong base of support and only occasionally requires or requests endorsement by the MCGC. This should be an issue already identified by the MCGC as a priority in Invest Early, but sequentially does not need immediate attention in order to further the broader systems change
3. Identify an individual member to be the person responsible for each of the strategies.



PRIORITY ACTIVITIES for 2010-11

The Committees have identified the following priority activities for the next 12-18 months:

Communications/Public Outreach: Karen Heck

- Working with the Council to take advantage of opportunities to educate legislators, the administration, the business community, and the public about the benefits of investing early in young children's quality education and care. Messaging will be developed based on the Frameworks training received during 2009, which is continuing with a two year Nellie Mae grant for that specific purpose.

Legislative/Policy: Rep. Berry, Rep. Strang Burgess, Sen. Mills

- Serving to advise the Council and individual committees as needed, regarding pending legislation, the state budget, and other legislative or policy priorities of the Council.

Data/Investments Report: Judy Reidt Parker

- Presentation of data report to Legislature, Children's Cabinet, Governor's Office, public
- Development of fiscal mapping to begin the link between child outcomes and state spending

Finance: Jim Clair, Karen Heck, Judy Reidt Parker

- Using technical assistance from the National Ounce of Prevention Center, will be developing the public/private partnership recommended by the Business Roundtable on Early Childhood Investment to the Governor in its 2009 report.

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- Continue webinar presentations featuring national colleagues with various public private partnership models to help inform working group and general public
- Advise the development of federal grant proposals (incl. ARRA, CCDF, Head Start, MCHB, DOE)

LD 1069 Working Group: Alan Cobo Lewis, Susan Gendron

- Presentation of the Findings and Recommendations of the Working Group to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Early Care and Education: Allyson Dean, Lori Freid Moses

- Develop statewide survey of Families to understand concretely what the needs are (Goal 3.A.1. Capacity and Access)
- Study the costs of moving up the steps of the quality rating system as well as maintaining the highest step on the quality rating system. (Goal 3.A.3)
- Develop a way to track statewide initiatives (i.e., Inclusive Opportunities, Technical Assistance and Training grants awarded to the state) (Goal 3.A.3)

Family: Jan Clarkin, Pam LaHaye

- Assemble a parent advisory group to develop a white paper on the state of and future of parent education in Maine. This includes an inventory of the parent education offerings throughout Maine and assessment of needed infrastructure.
- Expand the Strengthening Maine Families Initiative using Resource Development Centers, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Councils, and the statewide early care and education Training/Technical Assistance network.

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- Develop a plan for the expansion of “Maine Families” Home Visiting Program, capitalizing on potential additional funding, including new federal prevention priorities.

Health: Jane Weil, Sue Mackey Andrews, Ellie Goldberg

- Provide leadership for children’s optimal oral and dental health
- Address domestic violence in families and the impact on child development through training, collaboration and outreach
- Promote use of the interdepartmental Pervasive Developmental Disorders report and recommendations that assess/address the strengths and barriers to accessing early, appropriate, and timely developmental screening, vision, hearing and health/physical screenings

Community: Peter Lindsay, Sheriff Todd Brackett

- Encourage municipalities to include early childhood in their regional planning and to engage business and community leaders in supporting greater investments in early childhood.



Appendix A: Maine Revised Statute Title 5, Chapter 621: MAINE CHILDREN'S GROWTH COUNCIL

Part 30. INVESTMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN

5 §24001. MAINE CHILDREN'S GROWTH COUNCIL

1. Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Council" means the Maine Children's Growth Council established in subsection 2. [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

B. "Young children" means children from birth through 5 years of age. [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

2. Establishment. The Maine Children's Growth Council, as established in section 12004-J, subsection 16, is created to develop, maintain and evaluate a plan for sustainable social and financial investment in healthy development of the State's young children and their families.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

3. Membership. The council consists of the members listed in this subsection who must have a strong interest in early childhood and early care and education and must be influential in their communities:

A. Two members of the Senate, one from each of the 2 political parties having the greatest number of members in the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

B. Two members of the House of Representatives, one from each of the 2 political parties having the greatest number of members in the House, appointed by the Speaker of the House; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

C. The Governor or the Governor's designee and the Attorney General or the Attorney General's designee; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

D. Three parents, at least one of whom has a young child, one each appointed by the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

E. Two persons with experience in public funding and philanthropy, appointed by the President of the Senate; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

F. One person representing child abuse and neglect prevention, appointed by the Speaker of the House; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

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G. One person representing postsecondary education, appointed by the Governor; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

H. Eight persons representing statewide, membership or constituent organizations that advance the well-being of young children and their families, nominated by their organizations and appointed by the Governor, of whom:

(1) Three must represent statewide organizations or associations involved in early care and education programs, child care centers, Head Start programs, family child care providers, resource development centers, programs for school-age children, child development services, physicians and child advocacy;

(2) One must represent a law enforcement organization involved with children;

(3) One must represent an organization that works on community organization and mobilization;

(4) One must represent public health;

(5) One must represent the Maine Economic Growth Council; and

(6) One must represent a labor organization; [2009, c. 392, §1 (AMD).]

I. One person representing a statewide association of business and industry and one person representing a business roundtable on early childhood investment, appointed by the Governor; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

J. Up to 8 members of the public, appointed by the Governor; [2009, c. 392, §1 (AMD).]

K. Three ex-officio nonvoting members: the Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee, a Department of Health and Human Services employee who works with early childhood programs including Head Start and a person representing the office within the Department of Health and Human Services that is the fiscal agent for the federal grant program for comprehensive early childhood initiatives; and [2009, c. 392, §1 (AMD).]

L. The director of the Head Start collaboration project within the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Care and Head Start. [2009, c. 392, §1 (NEW).]

[2009, c. 392, §1 (AMD) .]

4. Terms of appointment. Except for ex-officio members, members of the council are appointed for terms of 3 years. Members who are Legislators are appointed for the duration of the legislative terms in which they were appointed. Members who are not Legislators may serve beyond their designated terms until their successors are appointed.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

5. Cochairs. The Governor shall appoint cochairs for the council.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

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6. Quorum; meetings. Thirteen members of the council constitute a quorum. The council may meet as often as necessary but shall meet at least 6 times a year. A meeting may be called by a cochair or by any 5 members.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

7. Compensation. Members of the council serve without compensation for their services, except that parents appointed under subsection 3, paragraph D who are not reimbursed by another organization may receive mileage reimbursement and a per diem to cover related costs such as child care, and Legislators are entitled to receive the legislative per diem, as defined in Title 3, section 2, and reimbursement for travel and other necessary expenses for attendance at authorized meetings of the council.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

8. Staffing; funding. The council may hire staff as necessary for its work and as resources permit. The council may accept grant funding and other funding as may be available for the work of the council. The Department of Health and Human Services shall act as fiscal agent for the council.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

9. Logo. The council may develop, adopt and publicize a logo or slogan to identify its work.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

SECTION HISTORY

2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW). 2009, c. 392, §1 (AMD).

5 §24002. DUTIES

1. Duties. The duties of the council include, but are not limited to:

A. Reviewing and addressing recommendations of legislative studies and advisory committees regarding young children and the Children's Cabinet; [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

B. Adopting and updating a long-term plan for investment in the healthy development of young children that will achieve sustainable social and financial investment in the healthy development of young children and their families.

(1) In adopting and updating the plan the council shall consult and coordinate with members of the public, the Children's Cabinet, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services and advocates, community agencies and providers of early care and education and services to children and their families; monitor and evaluate progress in accomplishing the plan's vision, goals and performance indicators and best practice research; and consider the changing economic and demographic conditions and the effect of investments on economic growth and productivity.



(2) The plan must include strategies:

(a) To create and sustain a unified, statewide early childhood services system that provides essential resources for children, shares common standards for quality, respects the diversity and uniqueness of young children and their families, reflects a commitment to sustainable growth, includes family representation, recognizes the importance of child care in sustaining employment for parents and recognizes the value of new forms of cooperation among government, business and society in achieving the goals of the plan; and

(b) For overall investment and prioritization of early childhood and education programs, services and initiatives and to address workforce education and training issues, utilization of community partners across the state and investments in technology and infrastructure; and [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

C. Reporting by January 15, 2010 and every 2 years thereafter to the Department of Health and Human Services, the Governor, the Children's Cabinet and the Legislature on the activities and accomplishments of the council and its long-term plan for investment in the healthy development of young children, and issuing such other reports as the council determines to be appropriate. [2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).]

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

SECTION HISTORY

2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).

5 §24003. RECORDS AND MEETINGS

1. Public records and meetings. The records of the council are public records and meetings of the council are public meetings for the purposes of the State's freedom of access laws.

[2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW) .]

SECTION HISTORY

2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW).

5 §24004. REPEAL

(REPEALED)

SECTION HISTORY

2007, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW). 2009, c. 392, §2 (RP).

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Appendix B: List of Council Members

MEMBERS OF THE MAINE CHILDREN’S GROWTH COUNCIL (12/09)			
Name	Organization	Seat	Email
Alan Cobo-Lewis	University of Maine	Parent of Young Child	alanc@maine.edu
Brenda Harvey	Maine DHHS	DHHS Commissioner	Brenda.harvey@maine.gov
Dana Connors	State Chamber of Commerce	Statewide Association of Business and Industry	Dana.f.connors@mainechamber.org
Debra Hannigan	Maine DOE	Part C Coordinator	Debra.hannigan@maine.gov
Eloise Vitelli	Women, Work, & Community	Economic Growth Council	evitelli@maine.edu
Heidi Hart	Richardson, Whitman, Large & Badger	Parent	hart@rwl.com
Jan Clarkin	Maine Children’s Trust	Child Abuse Prevention	janc@mechildrenstrust.org
Jane Weil	Maine Association for Infant Mental Health	Public Health	jweil@localnet.com
Jim Clair	Goold Health Systems	Business Roundtable on Early Childhood Investment	jclair@ghsinc.com
Judy Reidt Parker	Maine Children’s Alliance	Early Care and Education	JReidtParker@mekids.org
Karen Heck	Bingham Program	Public Funding and Philanthropy	Karen@binghamprogram.org
Karen M. Baldacci	Governor’s Office	Governor/Designee	Karen.m.baldacci@maine.gov
Kathy Colfer	KVCAP	Head Start Directors	kathyc@kvcap.org
Laurie LaChance	Maine Development Foundation	Public	llachance@mdf.org
Lori Freid Moses	Peaks Island Children’s Workshop and Every Child Matters	Child Care Advisory Council	lorifreidmoses@gmail.com
Patti Woolley	Maine DHHS	Head Start Collaboration	Patti.woolley@maine.gov
Penni Theriault	SEIU Kids First	Union	lotssoftots@adelphia.net
Peter Lindsay	United Way of Midcoast Maine	United Ways of Maine	plindsay@uwmc.org
Rep. Meredith Strang Burgess	Legislature	House Member	Meredith@burgessadv.com
Rep. Seth Berry	Legislature	House Member	seth@sethberry.org
Rosa Redonnet	University System	Postsecondary Education	rosar@maine.edu
Sarah Forster	Attorney General’s Office	Attorney General/Designee	Sarah.forster@maine.gov
Sen. Joseph Perry	Legislature	Senate Member	kijiperry@aol.com
Sen. Peter Mills	Legislature	Senate Member	pmills@mainelegal.net
Stephen Meister	Maine DHHS	Title V (Maternal & Child Health)	Stephen.meister@maine.gov
Susan Gendron	Maine DOE	DOE Commissioner	Susan.gendron@maine.gov
Todd Brackett	Lincoln County Sheriff	Law Enforcement	rbartolotta@co.lincoln.me.us
William P. Braun	RSU 19 Superintendent	Public	bbraun@rsu19.org



Appendix C: Meetings of the Children's Growth Council

Since its inception, the Maine Children's Growth Council has met on the following dates in the following locations:

December 8, 2008, Department of Public Safety, Augusta, ME

January 12, 2009, Columbus Hall, St. Paul Center, Augusta, ME

February 9, 2009, Columbus Hall, St. Paul Center, Augusta, ME

March 9, 2009, Columbus Hall, St. Paul Center, Augusta, ME

April 13, 2009, Columbus Hall, St. Paul Center, Augusta, ME

September 14, 2009, Columbus Hall, St. Paul Center, Augusta, ME

October 19, 2009, Columbus Hall, Hill Mansion (formerly St. Paul Center), Augusta, ME

November 9, 2009, Columbus Hall, Hill Mansion, Augusta, ME

December 7, 2009, Columbus Hall, Hill Mansion, Augusta, ME

January 11, 2010, Columbus Hall, Hill Mansion, Augusta, ME

Meeting summaries and handouts are available online at www.maine-eccs.org/crecords.html

All meetings are open to the public, and public participation is encouraged at all meetings.



Department of Health and Human Services

*Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives*

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner