

earlylearning NEW MEXICO

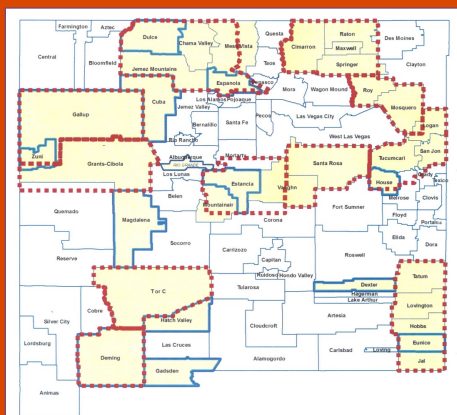
2016



RTT–ELC: Enhancing Outcomes through Early Childhood Investment Zones (ECIZ)





The Early Childhood Investment Zones (ECIZ) initiative is a community-based strategy that focuses on New Mexico's highest risk communities. The goal of ECIZ is to strengthen the ability within these identified communities to improve young child outcomes and school readiness.

Through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant, a taskforce from the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH), Public Education Department (PED), and Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD) used epidemiological data to prioritize geographical areas based on poor birth outcomes, domestic violence, child abuse, school performance, teen pregnancy, juvenile arrests, unemployment, and poverty. The outcomes are illustrated in the ECIZ Map below.



Early Childhood Investment Zones

ECIZ touch every region and every border of New Mexico, and range from frontier to urban population centers covering 11 counties and 35 school districts — 13 priority districts based on academic risk index.

-  11 priority counties
-  35 school districts in priority counties
-  13 priority school districts
-  Other school districts

RTT–ELC: Building a Strong Foundation for New Mexico

Through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT–ELC) grant, New Mexico is creating an environment that allows young children to build a strong foundation for learning by:

Raising Quality: Ensuring a highly qualified and skilled workforce to best support children's optimal development; and Implementing FOCUS, a rating system that allows parents to identify high quality programs.

Promoting Accountability: Developing a system that integrates data from across programs serving young children to measure child outcomes over time and to enable planning for early learning investments.

Supporting Schools in Meeting Each Child's Needs: Through the Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT), assessing school readiness to understand individual child needs at the beginning of school and provide early interventions for positive learning outcomes.

Investing in Communities: Identifying where children are at the greatest risk and prioritizing services to meet needs in designated areas.





Issues identified as priorities in ECIZ

- Teen pregnancy prevention
- Support for parenting and pregnant teens to graduate high school



- Parenting skills training, especially to parents in at-risk families
- Substance abuse treatment
- Community-wide prevention initiatives to support social emotional learning
- Intervention and treatment resources for infant mental health needs
- Access to primary/prenatal and well-baby care
- Kindergarten readiness, early literacy

GOAL

Address community-identified early childhood services and needs aimed at improving quality for the well-being of all young children and their families.

OBJECTIVES

Key strategic objectives that are guiding the first phase of investment in 13 ECIZ communities include:

- Engage early childhood stakeholders and service providers in the community to build an effective and sustainable early childhood coalition, strengthening collaborative leadership practices in order to improve the local continuum of family support services.
- Develop and begin implementation of both long-term and short-term action plans that are owned by the early childhood coalition, addressing weaknesses or gaps identified through a strong data-informed planning process.
- Promote a family-friendly common language for early childhood quality as an accessible introduction to goals for FOCUS and New Mexico's larger commitment to quality services for all children and their families.



APPROACH

New Mexico's Office of Child Development is developing its approach to community ECIZ capacity building and planning through collaboration with two highly experienced community engagement organizations, Coop Consulting, Inc. and the University of New Mexico's Family Development Program.

Work is underway to partner with local community members to develop sustainable early childhood coalitions and provide training to statewide partners for early childhood leadership, high quality early learning and social-emotional informed practices.

With contract support from both the federal Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) and RTT-ELC grants, the initial 13 investment zone communities include: Deming, Tularosa, South Valley Albuquerque, Gallup, Gadsden, Hobbs, Espanola, Santa Rosa, Raton, Magdalena, Cuba, Grants, and Estancia.

"You can really see the alignment among the statewide outreach efforts: Full Participation, the Pyramid training, and Mind in the Making – each one supports the other."

Magdalena Coalition Member

For more information, visit www.earlylearningnm.org or email Kathy.Ytuarte2@state.nm.us