

- I. In developing an Early Childhood (“EC”) program, what were the initial goals? Do you feel those goals are being/have been met?**
  - a. Goal was to build comprehensive program in which all services relevant to early childhood care and education could be housed
    - i. Bring under one agency so everyone understands strategic focus and goal of the agency is to prioritize quality childcare and education
    - ii. Prior to EC agency, it was difficult to get everyone invested and on same page; often some agencies felt early childhood initiatives were “not a part of the mission”
  - b. Dept of Health Resources (“DHR”) and Dept of Education (“DOE”) to streamline EC programs and align with childcare issues
    - i. Program inception was significantly facilitated by strong stakeholder support: childcare advocates, unions, educators, etc., all lobbied for
    - ii. Most personnel taken from Dept of Social Services (“DSS”)
  - c. Major issues tackled: school readiness, improvement of learning opportunities, childcare licensing, home visiting, research/referrals
- II. Costs of organizing this program?**
  - a. Fiscal impact: initial costs for department/program (~\$5m) with additional costs for office space/capital improvements (~\$1m)
  - b. When DSS transferred personnel to EC, used federal dollars to cover cost of personnel—state saved significantly by shifting costs from state to federal (this of course required preauthorization by fed govt)
    - i. Net gain in transfer was ~\$3.5m for state saved
  - c. Long term: biggest gain came from having more streamlined way for fed dollars to be spent: weed out duplicative projects and redundant contracts
    - i. Reallocated funds to areas with greater strategic plan
    - ii. First 3 years = greatest gains in cost savings
  - d. Home visits paid for by Medicaid funds and typically goes through DHR
- III. What is the structure of this program? Who provides oversight?**
  - a. 2005: legislation passed to develop this division: managed childcare licensing and quality improvements, home visits, referrals
    - i. Created as “Division of Early Childhood Development” under DOE
    - ii. Built assessments to measure success
    - iii. Any regulation to nonpublic school/EC sector gets approved by State Superintendent (written into law), so major responsibility delegated to State Superintendent by way of Board of Education
    - iv. By Maryland Constitution, DOE reports to Board of Ed, not Governor
      1. EC is only division within DOE with its own budget hearing, therefore maintains strong oversight over its own budget
      2. This allows for greater autonomy in making program decisions
    - v. Children’s Mental Health also incorporated into this new division
  - b. 2006: Governor signed executive order mandating that all childcare subsidies would also be housed by Division
  - c. Created Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils: way to integrate local initiatives and keep coordination for some services at local level
    - i. Took over writing of grants and would monitor on behalf of BOE
- IV. Were there any policy bodies that were redundant and required disbanding?**
  - a. Legislation delegated most authority to Board of Ed
  - b. Much of consolidation came down to contracts, not necessarily agencies
  - c. Administrated Advisory Council had to be consolidated

- d. Overall, state agencies very eager to come together to build new division – all child-serving agencies were involved
  - i. Prior to organization, organizations like DSS did not believe childcare was part of their mission, so happy to help allocate child services to new division that could better serve children
    - 1. Fight later came regarding funding, but not overarching goals

**V. What got left out? What do you wish was included that is not yet?**

- a. Pre-K special education housed in Division of Special Education
  - i. However, since State Superintendent in charge of both divisions, he can make change in future
- b. Medicaid Part C not yet shifted to EC, but in the works
- c. Although child subsidies moved over to EC, eligibility determinations for applications still with local DSS departments (in process of reforming – eligibility determination will transition to DOE within next year)

**VI. What would you have done differently?**

- a. Personnel dimension: 200 employees required to “jump ship” from DSS and pledge allegiance to new agency – suffered great deal of turnover
  - i. Without workforce that strongly believes in mission, greater potential for mismanagement, turnover, and negative outcomes
- b. Give yourself enough time: it took at least one year from legislation to get program running, and this did not even take capital improvements/creating office space into account
- c. Meet with as many executives/department heads as you can to get them on board, if not already—if leadership across agencies are supportive, process is much easier

**VII. Were there any states you looked towards in building your model?**

- a. Some consultation with California, but their program too complex to mimic
- b. Minnesota was a good resource (leg. passed in 2001), but disbanded their program 4 years later—allowed Maryland to see both sides
- c. Washington state, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Georgia all created their own Dept for EC, but made more sense for Maryland to subdivide within DOE

**VIII. Lessons learned:**

- a. Get as many stakeholders on board ahead of time as possible. This will help not only with smooth transition, but will insulate from bigger budgetary battles
  - i. Agencies against may work system to their advantage (e.g. DSS kept budgeting for a year until exec order forced them to transition)
  - ii. This was despite DSS support for EC program; they simply did not want to hand over funding
- b. To the extent you can, keep key personnel in place – much of stability in organizing new program came from maintaining leadership and not having too many major upsets or transitioning executive personnel
- c. Maryland’s decision to build Division, rather than Dept:
  - i. Added strain in building entire dept in addition to consolidation of services, rather than building division within existing department
  - ii. Much of the anticipated services within EC program already aligned well with K-12 goals; avoided additional overlap
  - iii. Improves collaboration and transparency because all under same roof; no added hurdles by crossing separate departments