

# Early Childhood Council of Boulder County

## ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Our *vision* is to ensure that all young children  
birth to five in Boulder County are ready  
to succeed in school and life.

Our *mission* is to expand and improve  
the comprehensive system  
of quality early childhood services  
for families in Boulder County.



## Letter to the Community...

After many years of hard work, most of which can be attributed to many individuals other than myself, the public is beginning to understand just how critically important high quality early learning is to our community. How do I know this? When I began my work in early care and education, I spent the majority of my time educating folks about the high return-on-investment which early learning generates, both to the individual as well as to the community at large. Rigorous, longitudinal analysis by the Nobel prize-winning economist James Heckman found a return of seven dollars for every one dollar of public investment in high quality early learning programs. This is certainly NOT news to those of us who work in the field. But, what I have found over the past year or so is that I no longer have to 'make the case' for early learning, that the public is beginning to understand! Facts matter. For example, out of 29 industrial nations, the U.S. devotes less public spending to early learning as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP or the value of all goods and services produced in the U.S. over a year) than 24 of our competitors. Slovenia, Mexico, Chile and Argentina devote proportionally more public spending to early learning than we do. And the U.S. is 28<sup>th</sup> among developed nations in our enrollment of four-year-olds in early learning.

As a result of this missed opportunity to invest in our youngest children, the U.S. is falling far behind in our ability to generate a well-educated work force. Thus we are losing economic ground in innovation and the production of cutting edge technology and services. CEOs, military professionals, law enforcement officials, faith-based leaders, philanthropists as well as a bipartisan mix of governors are all promoting major investments in expanding high quality early childhood experiences.

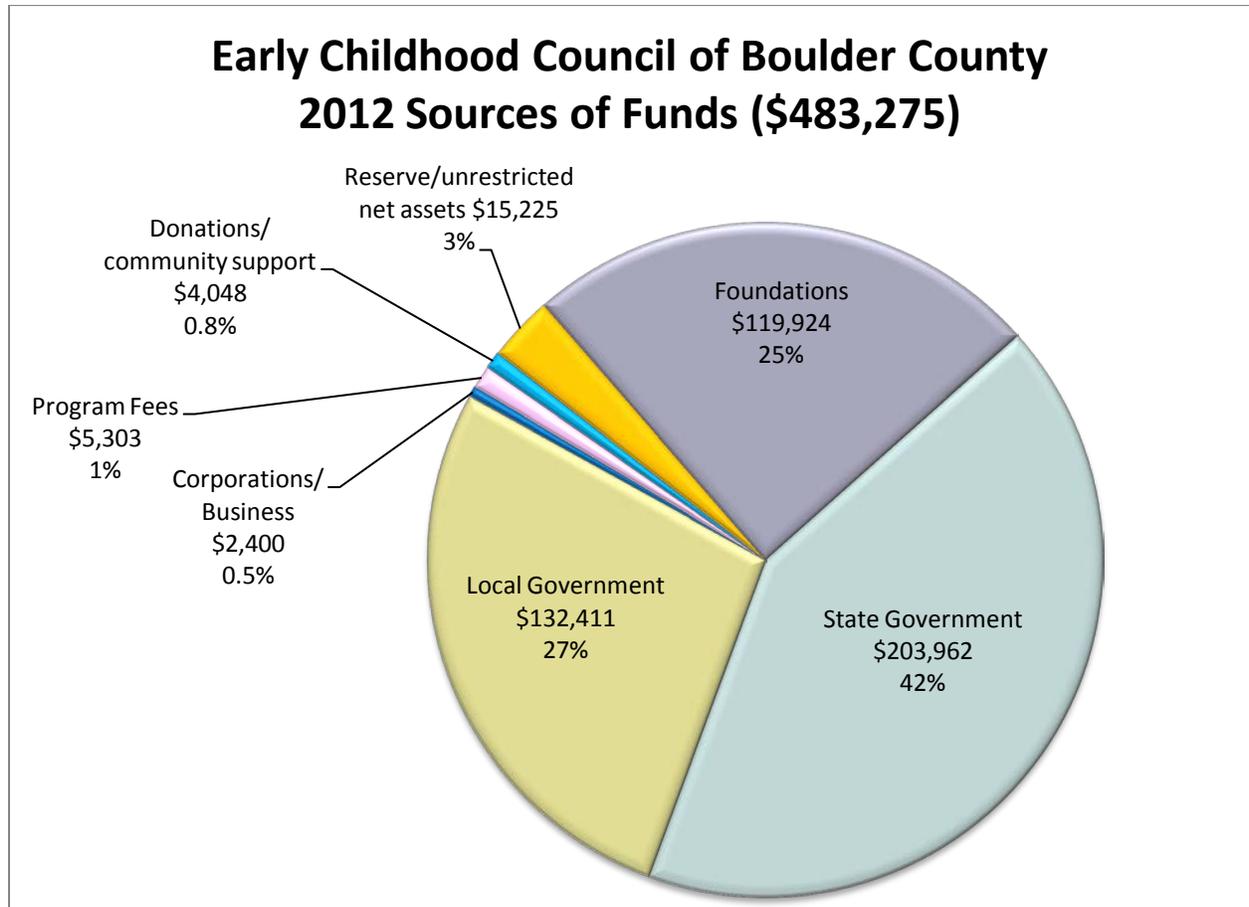
Finally, the public is beginning to understand this message. Boulder County is especially lucky to have local officials and policy-makers who have long understood the value of investing in young children. The Boulder County Commissioners as well as the City Councils of Boulder and Longmont continue to make investment in high quality early childhood programs and services a priority even during challenging economic times. ECCBC applauds their continued commitment to young families across Boulder County.

We welcome you and the organizations you are involved with to join ECCBC (the Board, the Advisory Council and our organizational partners) in continuing to advocate for an affordable, high quality comprehensive system of early childhood programs and services for all families with young children across Boulder County.

Warm regards,

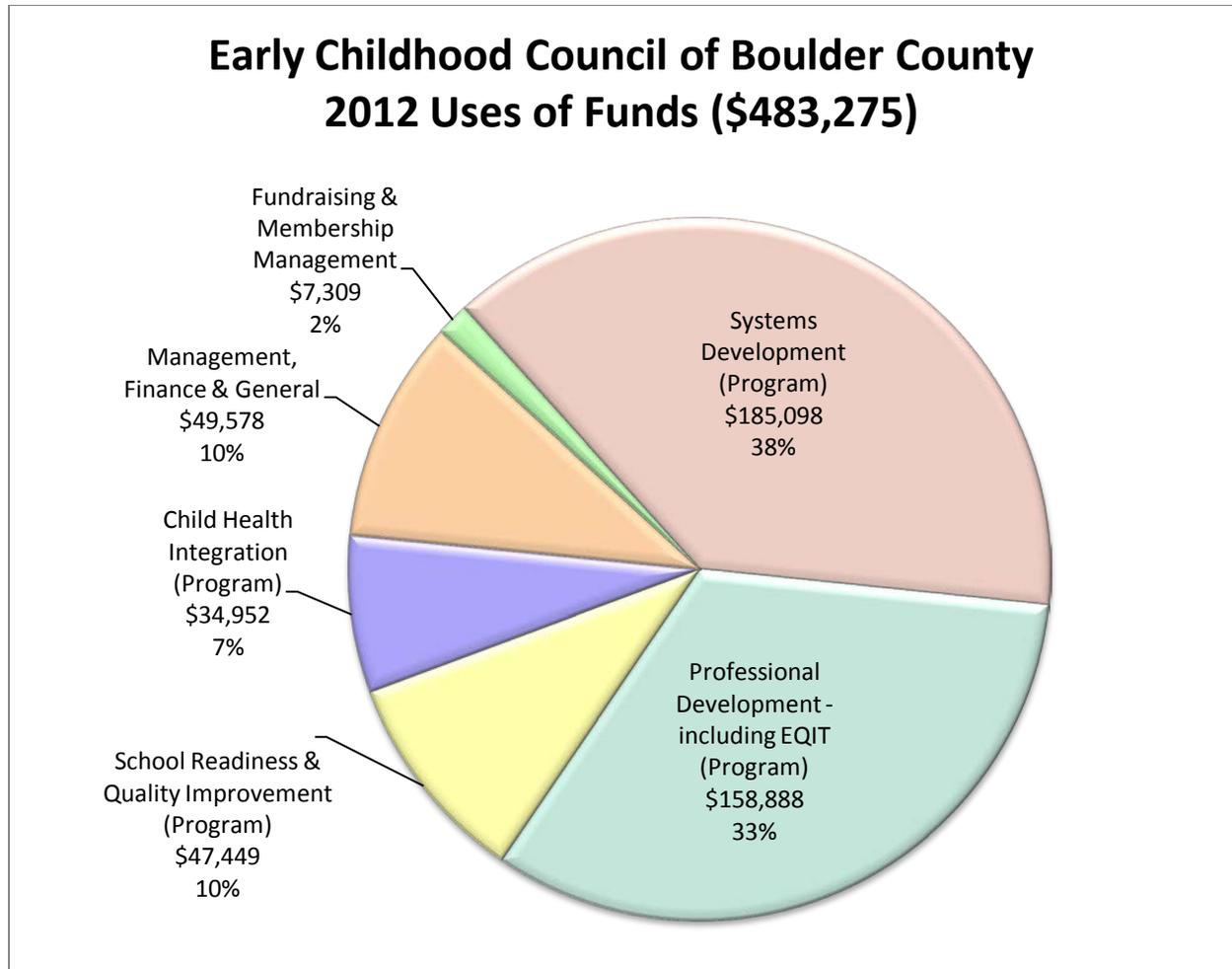


## Sources of Funds – \$483,275



The majority of the council revenue in 2012 was sourced from state federal flow-through funds (42%). Local government, including Boulder County and the City of Boulder, provided 27% of council revenues. Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation provided 14% of overall council funds. Support from other local foundations including The Wolf Family Foundation, The Rose Community Foundation and the Colorado Trust provided an additional 11% of funds. A Colorado Department Human Services/ Department of Education funding collaboration and local government revenues supported the Executive Director and Programs Director staff positions and the systems development program work. Colorado Department of Human Services and Foothills United Way revenues supported School Readiness and Quality Improvement initiatives that collaborated with community partners to deliver services to children and families in the community. ECCBC's professional development program, including a staff position, was supported by the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation and Boulder County Department of Housing and Human Services. Additional funding from the Colorado Department of Education and a \$50 per person training fee supported the Expanding Quality Infant Toddler (EQIT) trainings. The Colorado Trust funded the Child Health Integration Project, 2012 being the final year of the project. Community support from contributions by members of the Board of Directors supported additional systems development activities.

## Uses of Funds – \$483,275



Direct Services (professional development and quality improvement) to the child care community of Boulder County accounted for 43% or \$206,337 of the 2012 budget funds. \$158,888 or 33% of the total budget was spent on supporting the professional development needs of licensed child care providers in Boulder County through career path support and access to high quality training opportunities. \$47,449 was spent on quality improvement services for child care providers and the children in their care. Quality improvement activities included Qualistar rating support, resources for new materials, parent resources, child health screenings and social emotional skill development for preschoolers. Systems planning funds (\$185,098) provided staff, contractors and resources to promote and develop the foundations of the early childhood system in Boulder County, namely: serving as the county-wide convener of the early childhood Advisory Council as well as other county early childhood partnerships; developing multi-partner funding strategies; policy research, development and dissemination; building public awareness of early childhood; and addressing accountability and quality within the early childhood system.

# 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

## BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM

In November 2012, the ECCBC Board of Directors held its annual strategic planning retreat. In addition to the ECCBC Board members, several invited guests also attended including: Jennifer Landrum (the Colorado Children's Campaign), Tim Wolf (The Wolf Family Foundation), and Karen Rahn (Director of Human Services, City of Boulder). The following are the three focus areas that the group determined as the foundation for the next three years of ECCBC work:

Focus on **Birth to Three**: As the school districts continue to expand programs for four and five year olds, the ECCBC Board has decided to focus our efforts on the B-3 population, given the alarming paucity of resources available to this group (which number about 13,200 in Boulder County). The Board is awaiting the update of the ECCBC Framework by the Advisory Council (due Nov 2013) before delineating specific programs for increased emphasis.

Continuing focus on **at-risk children**: According to the 2011 ECCBC Indicators Report, an estimated one in five children under age 5 in Boulder County, or 18.2%, lived below the poverty line. This is almost double the rate of 9.5% in 2000. Every year, a cohort of these children arrive at kindergarten *not* ready to learn. More has to be done to ensure that these vulnerable children succeed in school and in life.

Emphasis on an early childhood **mixed delivery model**: As both school districts continue to expand services for 4 and 5 year olds, there is an increasing negative effect on the childcare providers, including both nonprofit and for profit centers as well as licensed family childcare homes. ECCBC is committed to assisting these entities to remain fiscally healthy in order to ensure the full range of parent childcare options. A successful business model is built upon 'cost shifting' between the more profitable 4 and 5 year olds (since the teacher to child ratio is higher and therefore less costly) and the more resource-intense care for infants and toddlers. So-as more 4 and 5 year olds move into district preschools, licensed centers and homes are losing revenues needed to support the more costly infant/toddler market.

Currently, licensed infant toddler slots are limited and are estimated to cost \$14,000 per year for full time infant care. There are fewer than 625 licensed infant slots in Boulder County. With an annual birth rate of 3300, it is not hard to figure out that many parents are unable to find infant care within a licensed center or home. Their options include having one parent stay home (thereby reducing family income) or opting for unlicensed, unregulated family, friend or neighbor care. Even though an infant maybe physically safe and well-cared for in such a setting, research suggests that these caregivers (albeit loving) lack the professional knowledge to provide a growth-oriented, stimulating environment. The challenges are complex.

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT ORGANIZATION

For the past ten years, as a statutory Early Childhood Council mandated to design, secure funding for and implement a comprehensive system of early childhood services, ECCBC has been leading the Boulder County effort to positively impact the school readiness of the approximately 22,000 county children age 0-5. ECCBC embodies the process referred to as collective impact, “the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem.” (J. Kania, *Collective Impact*, The Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2011). Kania discusses five determinants of a collective impact organization:

1) **Backbone support organization:** “...dedicated staff separate from the participating organizations who can plan, manage and support the initiative through on-going facilitation, technology and communication support, data collection and reporting, and handling the myriad logistical and administrative details needed for the initiative to run smoothly.” The ECCBC Executive Director (Bobbie Watson) spends 100% of her time managing the early childhood systems building initiative by: 1) leading the 35 member ECCBC Advisory Council in collaboration with the Advisory Council Co-Chairs; 2) acting as staff to the ECCBC Board and 3) attending both county as well as state level partnerships and task forces to ensure that ECCBC ‘is in step’ with both local as well as state initiatives. As a free standing 501c3, ECCBC is independent of all other partners within the collective impact.

2) **Common agenda:** “Collective Impact requires all participants to have a shared vision for change, one that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.” The ECCBC Early Childhood Framework for Boulder County (based upon the state’s early childhood framework) was developed in July 2010 by the ECCBC Advisory Council. Many hours of debate and conversation led to the development of this early childhood common agenda. An update is due early in FY 2014.

3) **Shared measurement:** “Agreement on a common agenda is illusory without agreement on the ways success will be measured.” The ECCBC Advisory Council chose 29 mutually agreed upon indicators, covering all four (4) domains of early childhood. ECCBC produces a biennial *Indicators Report* that tracks goals and indicators as agreed upon in the Framework.

4) **Continuous communication:** The ECCBC Board and Advisory Council meet monthly with 2 Board members appointed to the Advisory Council. In addition, the Advisory Council Co-chairs attend the Board Annual Retreat in the fall of each year. The Board looks to the Advisory Council for all programs and services, as well as policy, recommendations.

5) **Mutually reinforcing activities:** “There must be a uniformity of effort. Stakeholders must agree upon strategies that support the work across disciplines and domains in order to serve the common agenda.” In the Framework, all of the strategies have been developed (and agreed upon) by the entire 35 member Advisory Council. These are vetted, outcomes-based, ‘best practices’ that have a proven track record.

ECCBC, and its partners, are at the “tipping point” in the development of a collective impact strategy. The ECCBC Board will be focused in the next few years on locating innovative funders, developing sustainable funding, and working with its partners to build a quality comprehensive early childhood system for Boulder County.

## Programs & Services – Professional Development

Professional development career path initiatives awarded \$49,034 in financial incentives for undertaking college level coursework to 109 child care providers in Boulder County. Twenty-nine individuals received recognition for achieving an Early Childhood Credential. Since 2004 over \$202,000 has been distributed in incentives for ongoing college level education to Boulder County child care providers through the ECCBC Financial Incentive program. Monthly Training Calendars with news and information continued to be provided in 2012 to over 300 licensed child care providers in Boulder County. Overall, ECCBC provided approximately 240 clock hours of ongoing professional development in 2012. Sponsored trainings included Eco Healthy Child Care training and the Mary Culkin Lecture Series. The Expanding Quality Infant Toddler caregiving training program maintained growth in 2012 to provide four (4) EQIT cohort trainings, including 6-8 hours of coaching for each trainee. The program trains providers in best practices in infant toddler care through EQIT 48 hour curriculum and one-to-one coaching. The Boulder County EQIT team of four (4) dedicated early childhood experts worked with 107 child care providers in Boulder County in 2012. These activities provided an additional 3,840 contact hours of training and produced 99 graduates.

## Programs & Services – School Readiness

2012 was the final year of participation for the third School Readiness Quality Improvement Project cohort of child care providers. Five child care centers (4 Longmont, 1 Boulder) received annual Qualistar rating and intensive quality improvement support. Over 200 children in 23 classrooms across the sites received child health promotions service from Boulder County Public Health including vision, hearing, dental and developmental screenings, referrals and follow-up. All preschool classroom teachers received social skills training services from Mental Health Partners Inc. through the project. Four sites maintained a 3 star rating in their final ratings and one site achieved a 4 star rating in 2012. While 2012 was the final year of participation in the School Readiness Quality Improvement Project for ECCBC, key local partners elected to maintain the collaboration and the ECCBC School Readiness Quality Partnership convened in June 2012 with the goal of securing new funds for continuous quality improvement activities in Boulder County.

## Programs & Services – Child Health Integration

2012 was the final year of the Colorado Trust funded Child Health Integration Project. ECCBC convened critical health partners such as Dental Aid, Boulder County Healthy Kids initiative and Child Find in both school districts. A project coordinator was hired and the Boulder County Dental Coalition was established to serve young children and pregnant women in Boulder County. The Coalition has established a steering committee, work plan and is actively seeking additional funds to support this important work.

## ECCBC ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

**Donna Arnold**, Boulder Valley School District

**Jordana Ash**, Mental Health Center Serving Boulder and Broomfield Counties

**Karen Carr**, Boulder Valley School District

**Annette Crawford**, Child Care Recruitment & Training, City of Boulder

**Peter Dawson MD**, People's Clinic

**Kim Decker**, Parent Representative

**Lisa Dion**, Play Therapy Institute of Colorado

**Cynthia Divino**, Boulder Institute for Psychotherapy and Research

**Matt Eldred**, The Acorn School for Early Childhood Development

**Judy Fry**, Child Care Resource & Referral, City of Boulder

**Janet Gutman**, St Vrain Valley School District

**Maria Harper**, Boulder County Head Start

**Tikki Heublein & Denys Vigil**, Center for Responsible Education

**Joan Holtz**, Imagine!

**Jim Koch**, Colorado Department of Human Services

**Will Kropp**, Parenting Place

**Joan Martin**, Early Childhood Specialist

**Sue McCord PhD**, University of Colorado – retired

**April Menzies PhD**, Front Range Community College

**Linda Miron**, Boulder Valley School District

**Susan Moore PhD**, University of Colorado

**Amy Oglivie**, Wild Plum Center for Young Children and Families

**Sarah Scully**, Boulder County Public Health

**Katherine Schwartz**, Congregation Har Hashem

**Marcia Seegers**, Front Range Community College

**Jennifer Selbitschka**, Boulder Journey School

**Kit Thompson**, Boulder County Department of Housing & Human Services

**Claudia Tomass**, Lafayette Public Library

**Marsa Williams**, Aspen Family Services

**Karen Zeid**, Parent Representative

## 2012 Board of Directors

### *Officers*

#### **Mack Clark, President**

Retired Deputy Superintendent  
Boulder Valley School District

#### **Barbara Pingrey, Vice President**

President & CEO  
Foothills United Way

#### **Steve Callander, Secretary/Treasurer**

Executive Director, Boulder Day Nursery Association

### *Members*

#### **Richard Garcia**

Executive Director  
Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition

#### **Robert Palaich**

Partner  
Augenblick, Palaich & Associates

#### **Mary Wolf**

Community Member  
The Wolf Family Foundation

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Early Childhood Council of Boulder County

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Council Staff: Bobbie Watson, Executive Director; Danielle Butler, Programs Director