



## Leadership Council on Early Years *An Overview*

**Mission:** What's best for our kids is best for our state.

**Vision:** State agencies collaborate to improve the well-being, healthy development, and kindergarten readiness outcomes among all children ages birth to 5 (B-5). They contribute to an equitable B-5 state system that meets the needs of families and prepares Wisconsin children to succeed and thrive.

**Purpose:** As illustrated in Wisconsin's Preschool Development Grant (PDG) application, Wisconsin has a proud history of investing in children and families as a strategy to ensure our state's long-term prosperity. Yet, significant access, opportunity, and achievement gaps persist for too many children, and much more must be done for all children to reach their full potential. A foundational element of Wisconsin's successful PDG application includes the formation of the Governor's **Leadership Council on Early Years (LCEY)**, an effort to make strategic connections across state government agencies to better serve and improve outcomes for all of Wisconsin's children and their families, particularly those who are most vulnerable and underserved.

**Membership:** Cabinet Secretaries, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Executive Directors of the Office of Children's Mental Health and the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board. Department of Children and Families (DCF) Secretary Emilie Amundson will chair the Council, and the Governor, First Lady, and Governor's office staff will participate as available.

**Charge:** Leaders of state agencies will work together to harness collective strengths and resources; make strategic connections; streamline programs and services; and align best practices. The LCEY will develop the vision around, and provide direction for, implementing systems changes at the state level that can have a lasting benefit for children and families, and the state. They will also contribute to the development of a statewide needs assessment and strategic plan grounded in equity and inclusion, and focused on access, affordability, quality and workforce, as part of Wisconsin's B-5 Preschool Development Grant (PDG).

**Timeline and Staffing Needs:**

- February 26, 2020: Kickoff Meeting in Milwaukee.
- 4 meetings in 2020 to focus on inter-agency coordination; help develop and refine needs assessment/strategic plan. Ongoing meetings as needed.
- Secretaries/Agency leaders should attend meetings themselves and identify a point of contact on their executive teams who can help support the work.
- Secretaries/Agency leaders should plan to incorporate strategic visits aligned to the work of the LCEY into their schedule on an ongoing basis. Subgroups/working groups

**Details on First Meeting:** The first meeting will be held at the United Community Center (UCC) in Milwaukee from 3:00 – 4:30pm on Wednesday, February 26th.

DCF is excited to launch the LCEY at the UCC as it exemplifies Governor Evers' motto of "connecting the dots." Since 1970, UCC has served the Hispanic community on the south side of Milwaukee. UCC serves more than 18,000 individuals of all ages each year with a focus on celebrating cultural heritage to promote personal and academic development. UCC's programs include early care and education, college transition programs, adult day center, substance abuse counseling, a community fitness center, and more. UCC also operates two public charter schools.