

Project: WYOMING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM EVALUATION

Location: State of Wyoming

Client Address: Office of the Governor in conjunction with
Wyoming Department of Workforce Services
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Year Completed: 2007

Project Scope: The Wyoming Early Childhood Development Council desired to complete a strategic statewide plan for early childhood development, and establish a more coordinated and integrated delivery system in Wyoming. These objectives led the Early Childhood Development Council to request the Governor Freudenthal to retain the services of Pedersen Planning Consultants (PPC) to evaluate the State of Wyoming's early childhood development systems. The evaluation was also to evaluate and discover potential opportunities for reducing fragmentation and improving coordination among various programs that comprised the early childhood development system.



PPC's evaluation of the present early childhood development system was drawn largely from insights of professional program administrators and supervisors working in the system. Their insights were obtained through interviews with representatives of various early childhood development programs. PPC also facilitated a group discussion with representatives of county and community programs of the Head Start Education Association. Information gained from interviews and group discussions were supplemented with PPC's review of relevant statutory authorities in Wyoming Statutes, as well as information published by various public agencies and private organizations.

These evaluations enabled PPC to identify the scope of programs offered by public agencies and various non-profit service providers, their sources of availability of funding, inter-agency coordination efforts, and performance standards used to evaluate the effectiveness of ongoing programs. PPC also determined organizational issues, needs and opportunities associated with the delivery of early childhood development programs by both public agencies and non-profit organizations.

PPC reviewed the organizational approaches used by 20 states to deliver early childhood development programs. This review prompted a discussion of the formation of a children's cabinet in Wyoming, as well as the opportunity to provide greater linkage to local collaborative organizations in each Wyoming county, with members of the Wyoming Early Childhood Development Council to gain their perceptions concerning organizational needs and priorities.

PPC finally introduced three preliminary options for the reorganization of Wyoming's early childhood development programs. PPC further recommended specific strategies that would be needed to establish a new organizational framework at both the state and county level, reorganize the Wyoming Early Childhood Development Council, and establish a pilot project.