



Early Childhood Education of the Future: State Leaders Vision of an Ideal System

**Racing Toward Solutions: NASLEE 2024 Roundtable
October 7, 2024**

AGENDA

Introductions

Goals for the Session

Bainum Foundation's WeVisionEarlyEd

State Leaders Provide Input on Three Key Questions on Their Vision for the Future of Early Childhood Education

Key Themes Emerging from NASLEE Member's Perspectives

Next Steps for NASLEE and our Partners

Goals for the Session

- Deepen understanding by members of the project's purpose– Bainum's goal is to envision a state system of ECE that avoids the typical barriers and pitfalls of the current policy reality.
- Gather NASLEE members' feedback on how state early education leaders' expertise and perspectives can be reflected in Bainum's WeVisionEarlyEd project.
- We will also discuss what's next for NASLEE and how we continue to get other NASLEE members' insights.
- The future of the project for NASLEE will be shaped by member input and so we value all of your perspectives!



WeVision EarlyEd

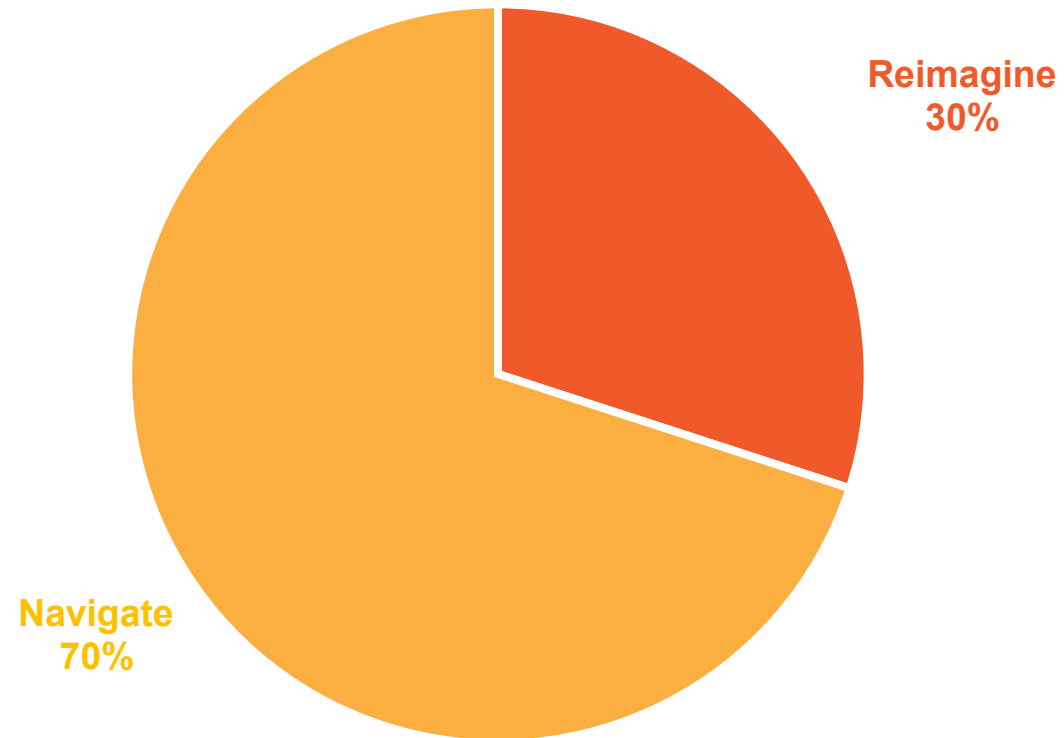
- Defining the Child Care Ideal
- Making the Ideal Real



**“What we cannot imagine cannot
come into being.”**

bell hooks

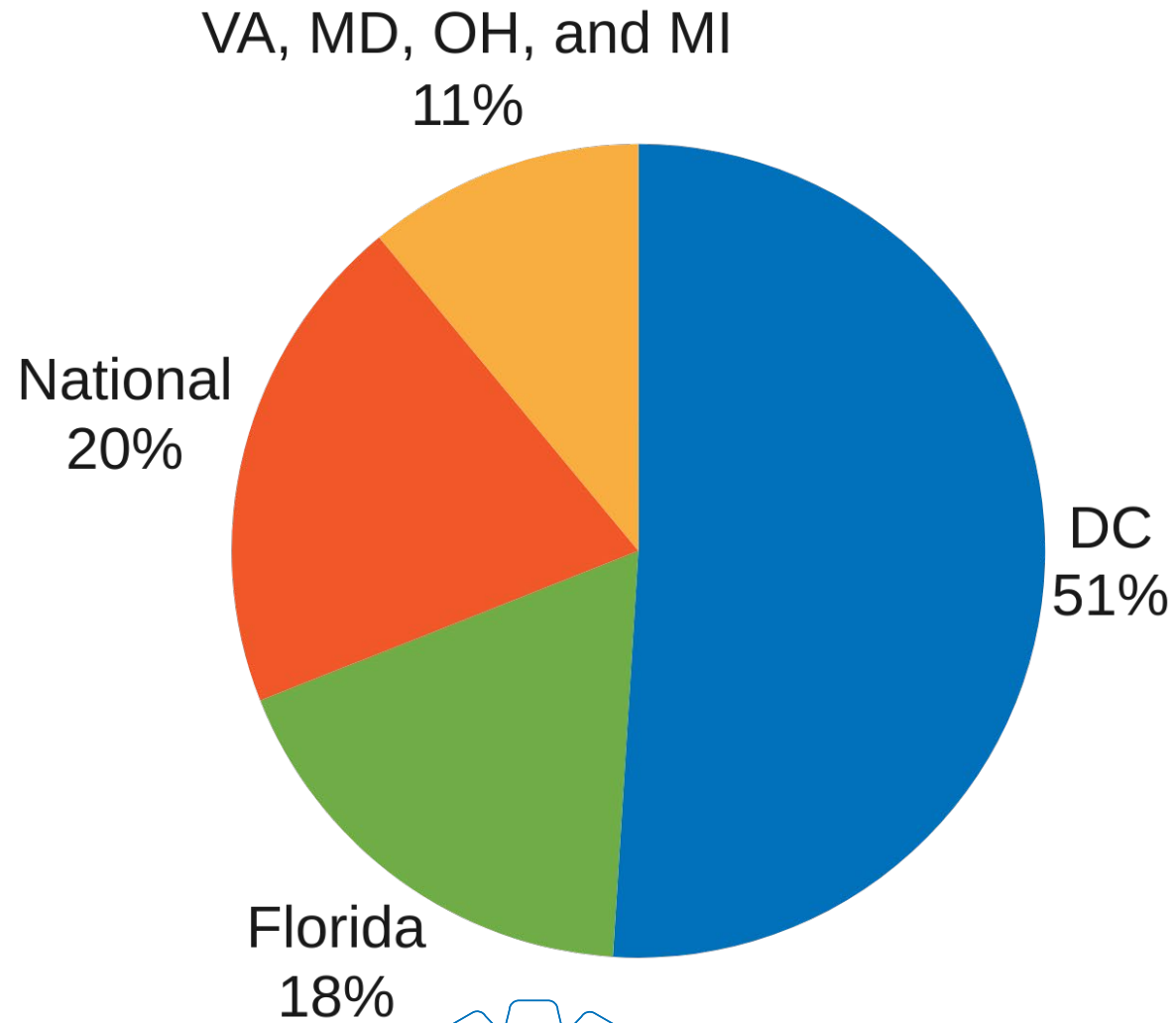
Navigate and Reimagine



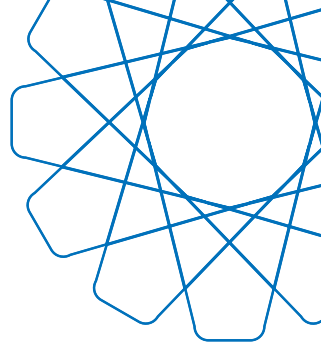
Our Balcony View



Our Balcony View



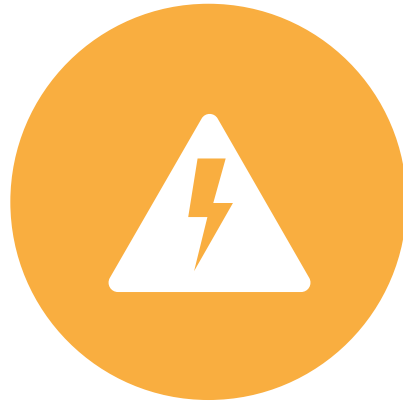
We See Pain and Progress



We See Pain



Unstable



Hard and Harmful
Choices



Lack of Resources

We See Progress



Increase Public
Awareness



Increase Focus on
Solutions

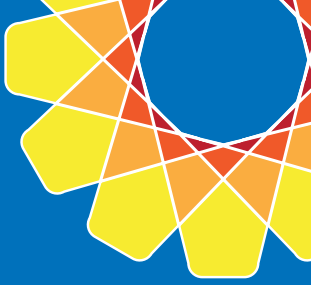
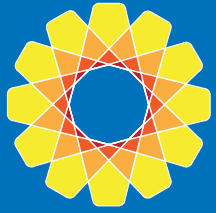


Increase Public and
Private Investments



“Stop loving the problem.”

Trista Harris



WeVision EarlyEd:

1. Defining the Ideal
2. Making the Ideal Real



Three Main Components



Data from "Proximity Experts"*

Current Experiences
Ideal Experiences

1

Core Mindset Shifts

Core Mindset Shifts
Needed to Make the
Ideal Real

2



Ideal Solutions Now

Make the Ideal Real
Right Now

3

**Families, educators and administrators responsible for supporting and meeting the needs of young children, birth through age 5.*






Defining the Ideal



Two Sources of Data

1

2



If you could design the District's ideal child care system, what would it look like?

Join our Innovation Community!

We want to take a closer look at the early childhood education (or "child care") system in the District of Columbia so we can make it even more effective and equitable.

We know that the best people to reimagine a better system are those currently experiencing it – YOU.

YOU are the people who know the system best. You are the families who want quality early childhood education for your young children and the educators and administrators who make it happen.

Over the next five months, our grassroots innovation group will meet monthly to look at all aspects of the child care/early childhood education system: quality, affordability, availability and regulations. We want to get clearer about what's right – and unfair – with the current system... and most importantly, how we can work together to make it better.

Ideal Solution: Create a Benefits Package to Recruit and Retain
Early childhood education programs should attract and retain competent and diverse professionals who are meeting the needs of children and families. These professionals must be supported to do their jobs well.

INSTRUCTIONS
Here is a sample benefits package.
Which two (2) categories of benefits matter the most to you?
Pick two (2) magnets in the color that matches your role in the field.
Place your magnets on the board to select the two (2) categories of benefits that matter most to you right now.

Category A: Compensation
Same salary as a teacher
Performance bonuses
Full medical, dental and vision
Retirement plan

Category B: Growth and Wellness
Professional Growth
Scholarships for degrees and credentials
Trainings and conferences
Career counseling
Personal Wellness
Gym membership
Mental health counselor
Mental health days

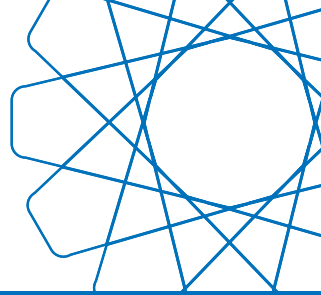
Category C: Life Support
Housing assistance
Low-cost transportation
Child care for staff

Ideal Solution: Build Your Dream Team
Early childhood education is complex work. This requires a team of competent, caring and supported professionals working together to plan and implement intentional experiences for each and every child.

Think about your current team. If you could add two (2) additional staff members to increase the quality of services you provide, who would you add?
Pick two (2) magnets in the color that matches your role in the field.
Place your magnets on the board to select the two (2) additional staff you want to add to your team.

More full-time teacher assistant teachers
Special education coordinators
Mental health
Family engagement specialist
Grants and development staff
Quality improvement

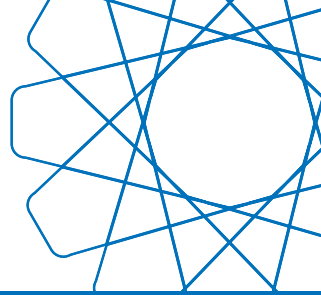
Current vs. Ideal



Families and early childhood professionals all have similar journeys and aspirations



The Current Pain Points



- Math doesn't add up →
- Inconsistent quality →
- Fragmented information →
- Tradeoffs and risks →
- Lack of work/life balance →
- Mistrust →
- Confinement with limited options →

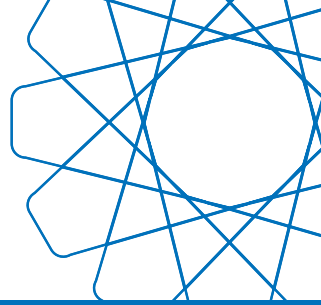


Difficulty making child-centered and quality-centered

- ← Time and resource scarcity
- ← Constant regulatory changes
- ← Top-down regulations
- ← Too many hats/roles
- ← Difficulty making child-centered and quality-centered decisions
- ← Fragmented and inequitable
- ← Advocacy only for self



The Ideal Elements



- Child-centered →
- Quality-centered →
- The math adds up →
- Appropriate resources →
- Simple and streamlined processes →
- Connect to public schools →
- Viable choices →
- Collaboration →
- Easy access to information →



Primary focus on child-centered and quality-centered decisions

- ← Quality driving regulations
- ← Fair
- ← Decentralized regulations
- ← Seat at the table
- ← Fewer hats
- ← Constructed by the people in the system
- ← Unified language/shared vocabulary
- ← Advocacy for self and others
- ← Adult well-being



Clear and Funded Child Care Options



Early Childhood Education Program:
Center-Based



Early Childhood Education Program:
Home-Based



Early Childhood Education Program:
School-Based



Trusted Caregiver
(e.g., Family, Nanny, Au Pair, Community Member, etc.)



Meets baseline quality standards for early childhood education and receives comparable funding



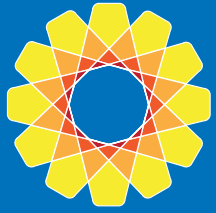
Meets baseline quality standards defined by the family and receives some financial relief



WeVision EarlyEd

Navigate and Reimagine





www.wevisionearlyed.org





World Café Facilitated by State Early Education Leaders

- **Carol Burk, Nebraska**
- **Nicole Madore, Maine**
- **Ami Brooks, Alabama**



*The future is not some place we are going to **but one we are creating.** The paths are not to be found but made, and **the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination.***

John Schaar, Political Scientist



Key Questions to Inform NASLEE's Vision for the Future of Early Childhood Education

If you could envision the ideal early childhood system, inclusive of all children birth to age 5, and all educator types and settings— what would it need it look like in YOUR state?

What would need to change to realize your ideal vision of an ECE system, B-5? Rank the following- 1-most pressing; 4- least important- and discuss why and how?

- *How is funding allocated and distributed?*
- *How decisions are made, collaboratively?*
- *How policies are simplified and streamlined?*
- *How quality standards for all settings are set and monitored?*

What influence and opportunities do you, as a State Early Education Leader, have to influence change in the early education system? Do you believe big, bold change is possible and needed to transform the system? What steps/actions could be taken in the short and midterm to achieve long-term goals?



Flow of the World Cafe

-
- You will rotate to each of the 3 tables to respond to each question.
 - You will have 15 minutes at each table.
 - You can write your thoughts on the flip charts or use sticky notes to add your ideas.

 - This is meant to be a collective of State Early Education Leaders' thoughts, ideas, and perspectives.
 - All ideas are important!
 - Have fun!

An Awareness
of
What Is

Creative
Tension

A Vision
of
What Could Be

Next Steps for NASLEE

Anytime a change occurs in the future, it starts as a vision in someone's mind. The person draws other people into that vision, and when enough people are drawn to share that vision, it explodes into activity. (Teacher from Michigan)