



Mission Statement
Pueblo Early Childhood Council is a diverse, active network that collaborates and advocates to enrich and strengthen the lives of children, families, and the community.

Meeting Minutes

Date:	May 18, 2026
Time:	11:00 AM -11:30 AM
Location:	Hybrid via Zoom (SMC Conference Room on the Third Floor)
Recorded By:	Ryan Montoya

Attendees:	
Madden, Kelly: Kaplan	
Appel, Katrina: CO Blue Sky	Lopez, Emilee: CPLC (<i>Virtual</i>)
Chavez Conteras, Maria: Catholic Charities (<i>Virtual</i>)	Martinez, Miranda: D60 (<i>Virtual</i>)
Duskey, Rhonda: CPLC (<i>Virtual</i>)	Martinez, Raelynn: CPLC (<i>Virtual</i>)
Gallegos-Casanova, Gerald: Health Solutions (<i>Virtual</i>)	Montoya, Ryan: Children First/PECC
Guy, Matt: SECC	Pedro, Berlinda: OJC (<i>Virtual</i>)
Hall, Darla: Children First/PECC (<i>Virtual</i>)	Rogers, Angie: ELV (<i>Virtual</i>)
Jaramillo, JoAnn: Trinity (<i>Virtual</i>)	Samora, Rita: DHS (<i>Virtual</i>)
Johnson, Hunter: Children First/PECC	Shehorn, Angie: Children First/PECC

Agenda

Introductions:	Meeting called to order by Angie at 11:00 am.
Additions to Agenda:	None
Approval of Minutes:	April Approved

New Business

Ellie Madden – Kaplan Early Learning Company

Ellie Madden introduced herself as the new Colorado representative for Kaplan Early Learning Company and shared her background in early childhood and elementary education.

Kaplan Overview

- Kaplan began as a toy store in North Carolina in the 1950s and evolved into a comprehensive early childhood education company.
- Services include:
 - Curriculum
 - Assessments
 - Professional development
 - Classroom design and installation
 - Technology and playground supports

UPK Quality Standards Support

Ellie reviewed ways Kaplan can support new Universal Preschool (UPK) quality standards, including:

- Approved curriculum options
- Assessment tools
- Professional development opportunities

Connect4Learning Curriculum

- Connect4Learning was highlighted as an approved UPK curriculum.
- Developed in part by University of Denver authors with support from the National Science Foundation.
- Focuses on:
 - Project-based learning
 - Literacy
 - Social-emotional development
 - Science and math integration
- Curriculum aligns with Colorado Academic Standards and Early Learning & Development Guidelines.
- Includes supports for English language learners and children with developmental delays.

Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP)

- Developmental assessment tool for children birth through kindergarten.
- Assesses:
 - Gross motor
 - Fine motor
 - Cognitive
 - Language
 - Social-emotional
 - Executive functioning skills
- Available in both general and clinical versions.

Professional Development

Kaplan offers:

Agency Highlights

	• In-person trainings • Virtual trainings • Free EdWeb webinars with continuing education certificates approved for PDIS/CAD. <i>Classroom Design Support</i> • Complimentary classroom design services available for programs redesigning or updating classroom spaces. <i>Questions & Discussion</i> Discussion included: • Training requirements for assessment administration • Access to professional development and EdWeb registration • Questions regarding classroom furniture reuse or buyback opportunities Ellie agreed to provide presentation materials in PDF format following the meeting.
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SECC	<u>Matt Guy – SECC</u> Matt Guy shared updates regarding the conclusion of the SECC project cycle. <i>Project Overview</i> • The project is entering its final phase, ending June 30. • Work stemmed from Launch Together efforts beginning in 2015 focused on: ○ Social-emotional and behavioral health ○ Kindergarten readiness ○ Community collaboration <i>Parent Coalition Work</i> The coalition focused on reducing involuntary removals (suspensions/expulsions) in early childhood settings by: • Advocating for implementation of state law • Partnering with school districts • Supporting family-centered practices <i>Outcomes and Accomplishments</i> • Pueblo District 60 and District 70 implemented improved policies and practices. • Developed the Pueblo County Enrichment Guide for families. • Increased supports and resources for children with additional needs. • Coalition members pursued additional education and leadership opportunities. Matt thanked community members and families for their involvement over the last 10 years.
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UPK	<u>Angie Shehorn – Children First/PECC</u> <i>Universal Preschool Updates</i> • UPK providers will receive approximately a 1% reimbursement increase next year. • Many families are transitioning from partial-day to full-day funded programs. <i>Senate Bill 26-019</i> • Signed by the governor. • Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs) will sunset at the end of June and transition fully under Early Childhood Councils. <i>State Transition of UPK Supports</i> Beginning July 1: • Local staff will no longer have access to the UPK platform. • Families and providers must contact the state directly for support. • Local councils will continue community outreach and recruitment efforts only. Angie shared concerns regarding the loss of local access after three years of community support work.
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Funding Update	<u>Angie Shehorn – Children First/PECC</u> • Children First received a \$100,000 reduction in LCO funding. • Additional grant funding supporting SECC work will not continue. • Due to funding shortages, the organization eliminated one staff position. <u>Staff Announcement</u> Angie announced that Ryan Montoya’s Family Specialist position will end in June due to funding reductions and the loss of UPK support responsibilities. Community members were encouraged to share employment opportunities with Ryan.
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Provider Appreciation Day	<u>Angie Shehorn – Children First/PECC</u> <i>Provider Appreciation Day will be held:</i> • June 25, 2026 • Red carpet theme event <u>Programs were encouraged to:</u> • RSVP • Bring staff • Donate door prizes or partner with the event
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Community Reports	<i>CPLC Head Start Update</i> Raelynn Martinez – CPLC Head Start • Head Start applications remain open for next year. • A Summer Kickoff Event will be held: • June 18 • 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM • Family-friendly activities and community resource tables will be available. • Agencies interested in hosting a resource table were encouraged to contact Raelynn or Emily. • Children First confirmed participation in the event.
	Early Intervention Update <i>Katrina Appel – Colorado Blue Sky</i> • Statewide early intervention eligibility will now require annual redetermination after one year of services. • Change intended to reduce statewide caseload pressures and funding concerns. • Pueblo caseloads remain lower than metro-area regions. • Private insurance billing requirements will not move forward due to administrative complexity.
	Meeting Evaluation Reminder • Attendees were reminded to complete the post-meeting evaluation survey to support continuous quality improvement.

Adjourn
Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM

Next Meeting
July 27, 2026 HYBRID-Virtually via Zoom
In Person Meeting at TLC @ PCC, 1000 Minnequa Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81004 SMC Conference Room on the Third Floor Join Zoom Meeting https://cccs-edu.zoom.us/j/83649820790?pwd=UXeIPStoXkRk2FQBy3m7aPVM4555u.1 Meeting ID: 836 4982 0790 Passcode: 767195
Local Resources Children First Childcare Connections – www.childrenfirstco.org Pueblo County Childhood Resources https://county.pueblo.org/public-health/pueblo-county-childhood-resources
Statewide Resources www.coloradoshines.com (Colorado Shines) https://www.coloradoshinespdis.com/s/login/ (Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System – PDIS) https://earlylearningco.org/ (Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines)

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan Montoya