Contact: Matt Bieber
Communications Director
Early Childhood Education and Care Department
matt.bieber@state.nm.us

June 12, 2020

Early Childhood Education and Care Department Announces Advisory Council

SANTA FE – Today, the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) announced the formation of its Advisory Council.

"When Gov. Lujan Grisham and the Legislature created ECECD last year, they wisely chose to enlist the help of New Mexicans from communities across the state," said ECECD Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. "As we work to build a department that responds quickly and effectively to the needs of children and families, these diverse voices and perspectives will be incredibly valuable."

"Parents, early childhood professionals, and other community stakeholders spent years advocating for the creation of a state agency dedicated to early childhood. Now, many of those same voices will help shape how ECECD's success is measured and the long-term sustainability of the agency – and we're thankful for their service," said Mariana Padilla, Director of the Children's Cabinet.

Background

The Advisory Council fulfills a requirement established in SB 22, the 2019 legislation that created the Early Childhood Education and Care Department. Members were chosen from a pool of over 300 applicants by an independent panel composed of participants from New Mexico's Public Education Department (PED), Higher Education Department (HED), and ECECD. In making its selections, the panel followed a rubric of applicant requirements outlined in SB 22, prioritizing members who reflect geographic, cultural, linguistic, gender, ethnic, and racial diversity and experience in a range of early childhood and higher education settings.

Members of the Council include:

1. Alma Martell / Organizer, OLE / Albuquerque
2. Amber Cadena / Educator, Chins / Alamogordo
3. Amber Wallin / Deputy Director, NM Voices for Children / Albuquerque
4. Amelia Black / ECE Faculty, Dine College / Crownpoint
5. Anita Rios / Facilitator, Community Partnership for Children / Albuquerque
6. Anna Marie Garcia / Vice President of Early Childhood Education, LANL Foundation / Espanola
7. Barbara Tedrow / Owner, Smiling Faces Child Care Center / Farmington
8. Candace Keams Benally / Principal and PreK Administrator, Central Schools / Shiprock
9. Catron Allred / Director, Central NM Community College / Albuquerque
10. Coda Omness / Department Chair CTE, ENMU-Ruidoso / Ruidoso
11. Crystal Tapia / Executive Director and Owner, Noah's Ark Children's Academy & Early Childhood Solutions / Albuquerque
12. Dana Bell / Interim Director, Cradle to Career Policy Institute UNM / Albuquerque
13. Diana Hammond / Pre-K Coordinator and Special Education Teacher, Ruidoso Municipal Schools / Ruidoso
14. Doris Salazar / Lead Pre-K Teacher, Desert Montessori / Santa Fe
15. Elsa Begueria / Superintendent, Lake Arthur Municipal Schools / Lake Arthur
16. Elizabeth Beers / Director of Community-Based Programs, Presbyterian Healthcare Services, Socorro General Hospital / Socorro
17. Elizabeth Torrison / Early Intervention Executive Director, NAPPR Inc. / Albuquerque
18. Elsa Rojas / Lead Nursery Teacher, Partnership for Community Action / Albuquerque

19. Francine Cachucha / Program Director, Jicarilla Child & Family Education Center / Dulce
20. Franz Joachim / General Manager & CEO, New Mexico PBS and KNME-TV / Albuquerque
21. Gil Vigil / Executive Director, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council / Tesuque Pueblo
22. Hope Morales / Executive Director, Teach Plus / Roswell
23. Joan Baker / Executive Director, BEFORE / Albuquerque
24. Julie Lucero / Executive Director of Special Education, Santa Fe Public Schools / Santa Fe
25. Kelly Dineyazhe Hunter / Assistant Professor, Navajo Technical University / Crownpoint
26. Lori Martinez / Executive Director, Ngage New Mexico / Las Cruces
27. Maria Elena Salazar / Lecturer III, UNM Early Childhood Education Degree Programs / Albuquerque
28. Mark Sparenberg / IT and QA Coordinator, Child & Family Services Inc. of Lea County / Hobbs
29. Melanie Skinner / Principal and NMPreK Coordinator, Brown Early Childhood Center / Portales
30. Michael Armendariz / Director, Tresco Children Services / Las Cruces
31. Noemi Langley / Center Coordinator and Family Advocate, Child & Family Services Inc. of Lea County / Hobbs
32. Nora Hernandez Cordova / Equal Justice Paralegal Fellow, New Mexico Immigrant Law Center / Albuquerque
33. Ruth Ann Ortiz / Board of Directors President, New Mexico Association for Infant Mental Health / Las Cruces
34. Sally Green / Preschool Supervisor, Roswell Independent School District / Roswell
35. Taylor J. Etchemendy / UNM Taos Mentor Network Coordinator and Director of INSPIRE Bilingual Early Learning Center / Taos
36. Terry Anderson / Executive Director and Project Coordinator, Community Partnership for Children / Silver City
37. Trisha Moquino / Founding Executive Director and Guide, Keres Children's Learning Center / Cochiti Pueblo
38. Representative Rebecca Dow / Truth or Consequences
39. Kelly Klundt, Legislative Finance Committee
40. Secretary Debbie Romero, Department of Finance and Administration (Meribeth Densmore, Representative)

The Council will also include two professional facilitators, and will meet four times this year before submitting a series of recommendations to the Governor