



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Early Childhood: On the Move in Vermont

January 2014 Update

This update comes to you from the Governor's office, the Vermont Agency of Education, the Vermont Agency of Human Services, and Building Bright Futures.

2014 promises to be a great year for early childhood in Vermont! We are at an exciting and historic juncture. There is widespread evidence of collaborative efforts to build on all the great work that has taken place. Here are some key highlights of work that is underway to ensure that every Vermont child starts off healthy and well cared for with a solid foundation for a lifetime of learning:

- **Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTT-ELC):** Vermont is one of six states recently awarded a [RTT-ELC grant](#). Vermont will receive \$36,931,076 over the next four years. These funds will focus on sustainability—ensuring that the foundation and walls of our early childhood “house” are solid and can support the rest of the structure. Within the next few weeks, the Governor’s office will convene a team to oversee hiring of RTT-ELC positions and initial implementation of the work envisioned in the grant.
- **Statewide Early Childhood Action Plan:** The Action Plan will map out how we will make progress over the next two years towards the six goals in Vermont’s new Early Childhood [Framework](#). Action Plan development is well under way, with 9 regional meetings, an online comment period and 3 conference calls planned (all are open to the public). Additional meetings with specific constituency groups are also scheduled. The Action Planning Committee will then meet twice during February to decide which strategies to prioritize in the Action Plan, based on the input gathered during December and January. Beginning in March, Building Bright Futures will continue to refine the Action Plan, with a final two-year Action Plan in place by June 30th.
- **Universal Pre-K:** There is significant support inside and outside the legislature for a bill that would establish universal, voluntary access to high-quality early education for Vermont’s three and four year olds. Passage of this legislation would be an early indicator of progress towards ensuring quality opportunities for all Vermont’s children

(Goal #3 of the Framework). For more information, visit the Vermont Early Childhood Alliance's [website](#). For information on existing support for public preschool partnerships, see the Agency of Education's [website](#) on Act 62.

- **Shared Leadership:** The Governor's office, the Vermont Agency of Education, the Vermont Agency of Human Services and Building Bright Futures (Vermont's Early Childhood Advisory Council) are committed to working together to provide coordinated leadership in building a more innovative, comprehensive and connected network of early childhood community resources for Vermont's young children and their families. This commitment will be formalized in a written agreement, which is currently being drafted.

These and other efforts built on existing resources and initiatives. They represent a combined short-term and long-term approach to creating an early childhood system that helps realize the promise of every Vermont child. Vermont's Early Childhood Framework is our collective long-term road map. The accompanying Action Plan will lay out the specific routes we will take over the medium term. The RTT ELC grant lays out immediate steps that state government and its partners will take to build a sturdy early childhood house for all Vermont's young children.

For More Information

- For more information about the emerging **Early Childhood Action Plan**, go to <http://governor.vermont.gov/blog-early-childhood-action-planning-committee>. If you have additional questions about the Action Plan, contact Action Plan Developer Kim Friedman at kfriedman@svcable.net or 802-348-9879.
- For more information about the **Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant**, <http://governor.vermont.gov/race-to-the-top>. If you have additional questions about the grant, contact Aly Richards, Director of Special Projects & Intergovernmental Affairs in Governor Shumlin's office, at Alyson.Richards@state.vt.us or (802) 828-6403.