

Interagency Resource Management Committee
Meeting Minutes
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Monthly Meeting
Monday, June 22, 2026
Office of Lt. Governor Kyle Evans Gay
Carvel State Building, 10th floor/ Hybrid Meeting
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

IRMC June 22, 2026: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_XCDi6immR3mr5i46iZDGBw

Committee Members Present:

Lieutenant Governor Kyle Evans Gay, State of Delaware
Department of Education Secretary Cindy Marten, State of Delaware
Department of Health and Social Services Secretary Christen Linke Young
Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services Lisa Scheiffert, State of Delaware
Department of Services for Children, Youth, & Their Families Secretary Steven Yeatman, State of Delaware
Office of Budget and Management Deputy Director Ann Visalli, State of Delaware
Delaware Early Childhood Council Chair Madeleine Bayard, State of Delaware
Senator Elizabeth Lockman, Delaware State Senate
Caitlin Gleason, Department of Education
Controller General Ruth Ann Miller

Facilitators: Nasha Patel, Watershed Advisors

Staff from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor:

- Sarah Stowens, Chief of Staff
- Mark Brainard Jr., Director of Policy
- Pelumi Adesina, Office Manager

Overview

The Interagency Reform Management Committee (IRMC) held its June meeting to review the governance landscape analysis and initial recommendations for **building an early education system that can scale to meet public needs**. Lieutenant Governor Kyle Evans Gay presented findings from a comprehensive landscape analysis conducted over the past three months, which identified key challenges including fragmented services across agencies, lack of visibility into program outcomes, and difficulty navigating the system for families and providers. The analysis recommended creating an elevated early childhood education division within the Department of

Education as the preferred governance model, building on Delaware's strong relationships while establishing more sustainable structural coordination. Several cabinet secretaries provided feedback emphasizing the importance of clear implementation details, including specific budget authority, decision rights, and avoiding dual accountability within DOE. The discussion highlighted the need to balance system consolidation with maintaining the state's diverse mixed-delivery approach, while also ensuring families experience a more coordinated system.

Delaware Early Childhood Governance Review

The meeting focused on reviewing governance landscape analysis and initial recommendations for improving Delaware's early childhood education systems.. The committee commissioned a landscape analysis using PDG funding to support systems-building work , with plans to continue discussions over the next few months and present a governance recommendation for Delaware.

Delaware Early Education System Analysis

The meeting focused on a landscape analysis of Delaware's early education system.t. The PDG project team conducted extensive research over three months, meeting with stakeholders to understand Delaware early childhood system. Key statistics were shared, including 55,000 children under age 5 in Delaware with 71% of parents in the workforce, and approximately 10,000 children entering publicly funded kindergarten in fall 2025, with 1 in 5 children living in poverty ages 0-5. The discussion emphasized the need for better transparency and data to understand how investments are impacting children's outcomes and whether funds are reaching families with the greatest need.

Delaware Childcare Challenges Analysis

The committee also discussed Delaware's childcare challenges and policy outcomes. Key challenges identified included high student-teacher ratios in early education, low preschool access rates, and poor literacy scores . The landscape analysis revealed that while Delaware has made investments in early education, there is a lack of visibility into their effectiveness due to overlapping functions across agencies and inconsistent quality definitions that create friction for families seeking care.

Delaware Early Childhood Governance Structures

The meeting also discussed governance structures for early childhood education in Delaware. The group reviewed findings from research indicating that while relationships are strong, the current system relies too heavily on personal connections and struggles with accountability and coordination when key stakeholders leave the ecosystem. After analyzing different governance models including standalone agency, cross-agency coordinating office, and elevated offices within the Department of Education, the initial recommendation is to establish an elevated early childhood education division within the Department of Education. Nasha Patel from Watershed

provided details about Maryland's similar model, explaining how it allows for shared budgeting between K-12 and early childhood programs while maintaining coordination across agencies.

Elevated Early Childhood Leadership Within a State Education Agency

The discussion focused on Maryland's experience establishing it as a standalone office within MSDE. Nasha Patel explained that while Maryland successfully consolidated early childhood services into the Department of Education, they initially kept pre-K and child care separate and didn't fully define quality standards or develop strong data systems, which created challenges they are now addressing under new leadership. The conversation highlighted how Maryland is now better positioned to make strategic improvements and move more quickly on system enhancements, including cross-funding initiatives and improving transparency for legislators. The discussion concluded with a connection to Delaware's current opportunity to establish stronger accountability structures and strategic planning across early childhood programs.

Discussion

IRMC members discussed the governance recommendations for Delaware's early childhood system. Key concerns were raised about the clarity and feasibility of proposed changes, particularly regarding funding, costs, and the specific responsibilities that would transfer between agencies. Secretary Cindy Marten emphasized the need to define clear decision rights, budget authority, and outcomes metrics before finalizing any governance structure. Others raised concerns about maintaining service capacity while implementing changes and avoiding the creation of new silos that would separate early childhood services from other family support programs like Medicaid and SNAP.

Lieutenant Governor Gay outlined plans for further engagement over the next three months to develop a more detailed implementation guide. The group agreed to continue discussions after gathering input from stakeholders and legislative partners, with an emphasis on ensuring any changes would help families access services more easily while maintaining the state's mixed delivery system of early childhood providers.

Next Steps

The Lt. Governor discussed next steps for moving forward with the governance recommendation over the next three months. Key actions include distributing feedback forms, conducting one-on-one meetings with stakeholders, and beginning to develop an implementation guide with a phased timeline and defined roles and responsibilities. The team will present initial findings and engage with the B5 Accountability Committee in July. IRMC members will also have the

opportunity to engage with leaders in Maryland and New Mexico to learn about their governance structure and inform Delaware's path forward.

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Public Comment

Jamie Schneider (Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children): urged keeping the workforce central to decisions and ensuring implementation doesn't create barriers for providers.

Adjournment: Lt. Governor Gay thanked all in person and virtual attendees for attending the Interagency Resource Management Committee meeting.