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New Mexico Inaugurates Early Childhood Education and Care Department
State is fourth in the country with cabinet-level early childhood agency

Santa Fe - Today, the State of New Mexico officially launched the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). The agency will oversee prenatal-to-five programs, including home visiting and early intervention, family nutrition, early childhood special education, early Head Start and Head Start, and early pre-K and pre-K.

"Today is a milestone -- years of work from dedicated advocates brought us to this point, and now our work begins," said Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham. "With incredibly experienced and diverse leadership, with the unyielding support of the child care community and with buy-in from parents all across the state, the Early Childhood Education and Care Department will, I am sure, do no less than transform New Mexico into the greatest state in the nation to be a child and raise a family. What we sow for our children and families the state will reap for decades and indeed generations to come. I am honored to have spearheaded the final push to bring this agency to life, and now I am excited to say: It's time to get to work."

ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky said, "Parents, early childhood advocates, and leaders in state government have been working toward this day for a very long time. Today, we honor their work, and we express our commitment to the children and families of New Mexico: we are here to support you, to deliver the programs and services you need, and to listen closely to your feedback."

Jovanna Archuleta, the nation's first Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Childhood Education and Care, added, "Our state is extraordinarily diverse, and ECECD is committed to partnering in a respectful, collaborative way - including through government-to-government relationships and through consultation with tribal communities across New Mexico."

ECECD was created by Senate Bill 22 - sponsored by Sen. Michael Padilla and Rep. Linda Trujillo - in the 2019 legislative session. The bill was a top priority of the Lujan Grisham administration.

The agency's launch has generated significant press coverage, including:

- Sen. Michael Padilla on the [Save the Children Action Network](#) blog
- Sec. Groginsky interview on [KOB](#)
- Lt. Gov. Morales op-ed in the [Las Cruces Sun-News](#)
- Sec. Groginsky interview on [New Mexico in Focus](#) (interview begins at 12:30)
- Sec. Groginsky op-ed in the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#)

Radio interview on [KSFR](#)