

Child Care Services Advisory Committee and Early Childhood Services Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 19, 2026

Room 327B, Judicial Wing, State Capitol and virtual via Microsoft Teams

Meeting called to order

- 10:00am CT

Roll call

- Child Care Services Advisory Committee
 - Present: Rep. Macy Bolinske, Rep. Brandy Pyle, Sen. Todd Beard, Sen. Kyle Davison, Debra Beard, Kenzi Brown, Keely Ihry, Verla Jung, Kari Kapp, Lorrie Thoemke, Kaila Wentz
- Early Childhood Services Advisory Board
 - Present: Rhoda Elmi, Kirsten Hopp, Linda Schroeder, Ashlynn Gafford, Tania Zerr
 - Absent: Shelby Short, Catherine Heyd

Results of statewide child care provider feedback meetings and survey

- Lisa Brochard, Lead Technical Assistance Specialist with Child Care Quality and Business Support Center, reviewed providers' input from the online survey, 2 virtual meetings, and 8 in-person meetings that were held across the state in January.
- Providers not only provided feedback on pain points but also offered recommendations. The recommendations can be summed up into 6 areas:
 - Consolidate and simplify rules.
 - Reform training requirements.
 - Update ratios, age bands, and the point system.
 - Reduce barriers to staffing and substitutes.
 - Streamline documentation and portals.
 - Restore supportive licensing practices.
- After Lisa's presentation, the committee discussed the findings including the point system and ratios and training hours. A request was made asking Lisa to research how many different types of licenses exist in other states.

2024 licensing crosswalk

- Dr. Kelli Odden, Professor, Dean and Division Chair of Mayville State University's Education Department, provided a high-level overview of the licensing crosswalk that she completed in 2024 in which she reviewed and compared the laws, rules, and policies for North Dakota's 8 child care provider types.
- Dr. Odden noted that ND has a high number of license types compared to other states.
- After Dr. Odden's presentation, committee discussion occurred. The Department was asked to develop a sample timeline outlining potential law and rule changes and corresponding effective dates. The Department was also asked to reach out to ND League of Cities to conduct a survey and compile a list of city ordinances affecting child care providers.

Department's 69th legislative session child care policy bill

- Carmen Traeholt, HHS Early Childhood Licensing Administrator reviewed the Department's child care proposal from the last legislative session. The proposal was not about increasing regulation or lowering standards; rather it simplifies the structure of the current early childhood framework while maintaining health and safety standards.
- The proposal streamlined the number of child care provider types from 8 to 4: child care center, family child care, self-declaration and in-home provider.
- To improve clarity for child care providers, updated administrative rules would be written in plain language.
- Changes to administrative rule follow the administrative rule change process and are reviewed by the Early Childhood Services Advisory Board and include a public comment period.
- After Carmen's presentation, the committee continued their discussion regarding streamlining license types. Overall, the discussion reflected general support for reducing the number of license types and improving clarity in the administrative rules.

Wrap up

- A recommendation was made that members come to the next meeting prepared to determine which license types should be streamlined.
- Next in-person meeting: Thursday, March 19, 2026, Room 327B, Judicial Wing, State Capitol

Meeting adjourned

- 2:30pm CT