

# The Condition of Early Childhood Education and Care in Arizona: 2005

## Executive Summary

The data on Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Arizona continue to remain poor in 2005. Current policy initiatives focus on fully-funded, full-day kindergarten for children who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and improving the quality and capacity of early childhood care and education. Even though public support to strengthen and expand ECEC services in Arizona remains robust, much of the data needed to plan this effort are still either non-existent or hard to find. The data that are available continue to be in a format or of a type that do not allow for the kind of aggregation or analysis needed to guide policy.

## Recommendations

### It is recommended that:

- The Arizona State Legislature give the School Readiness Board (SRB) the authority and funding to develop a comprehensive, coordinated statewide plan for the collection of critical data across the full range of ECEC programs.
- The Arizona State Legislature give the SRB the authority and funding to implement a statewide quality rating system (QRS) based on the findings of the QRS being piloted by the Tucson United Way of Southern Arizona.
- The Arizona State Legislature expand and fund the Statewide Child Care and Early Education Development System (S\*CCEEDS) program to collect training and wage data on the educational levels of all ECEC teachers and providers of care so that universities, community colleges, school districts, and ECEC practitioners can plan appropriately for ECEC teacher preparation and staff training needs.
- The Arizona State Legislature give the SRB the authority and funding to identify and track annually the amount of federal and state dollars invested in ECEC.
- The Arizona State Legislature give the SRB the authority and funding to develop and implement an evaluation plan that will use school readiness indicators data and the QRS data to track child readiness outcomes over time.