

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

At Charleston

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 5-13

By the Governor

WHEREAS, nothing is more imperative to West Virginia's future than the well-being of its children, and it is incumbent on West Virginia to ensure that our youngest citizens have every opportunity to develop, learn, and contribute to society in a healthy and safe environment; and

WHEREAS, West Virginia has created a pre-kindergarten ("Pre-K") system which is widely recognized as one of the best in the nation and which benefits from collaboration with the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council, its representative departments and organizations, and other State and local organizations serving young children and their families; and

WHEREAS, the growing empirical knowledge among national and State organizations about best practices as a result of these efforts and the substantial investment of federal and State resources into various early childhood services have put West Virginia in an advantageous position to make further progress in meeting the needs of our children and to carefully consider actions which will improve the future of our children and our State; and

WHEREAS, West Virginia will benefit from the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan for early childhood development that clearly defines the services and programs best calculated to benefit the health, development, and school-readiness of young children, including the estimated costs, implementation strategies, and potential governance models; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive plan must balance the needs of our State's youngest citizens with the ability to fund services, and this requires a review of all services and programs and recommendations about whether the State should continue using existing services or implement new services within the constraints of available resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, EARL RAY TOMBLIN, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby **ORDER** that:

1. The West Virginia Early Childhood Planning Task Force (hereinafter, "Task Force") is hereby created to study early childhood services in the State and to produce, by no later than December 31, 2013, a development plan for early childhood in West Virginia, which will:

a. Identify those services currently available in the State for the purpose of improving the health, development, and school-readiness of children aged birth to five and, where advisable, identify new services with the same purpose; and

b. Review services available to expectant mothers regarding pre-natal preparation to improve the health, development, and school-readiness of children at birth;

c. Prioritize each service by analyzing the potential impact of each service on early childhood health, development, and school-readiness; and

d. Identify the costs associated with implementation of the identified priority recommendations; and

e. Recommend strategies for improving, coordinating and, where advisable, implementing services in the State which improve early childhood health, development, and school-readiness; and

f. Analyze the value of a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) with respect to child care services in the State as a critical element of a comprehensive system of services for young children; and

g. Recommend a plan by which West Virginia could fund the identified priority services; and

- h. Recommend a plan for implementation; and
- i. Recommend whether changes should be made to the governance of State administration of services pertaining to early childhood and to families with young children, and the steps needed to implement any changes in governance; and
- j. Recommend strategies to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of early childhood services and recommend changes with respect to these services.

2. The Task Force shall consist of the following nine members;

- a. The Governor, or his designee, who shall serve as Chair of the Task Force;
- b. The Secretary of the Department of Education and the Arts; and
- c. Seven citizens members, to be appointed by the Governor, who will represent the

following:

- i. A representative of the medical community;
- ii. A representative of the faith-based community;
- iii. A representative knowledgeable in early childhood education, including the four-year-old kindergarten program;
- iv. Two representatives of the business community;
- v. An attorney with experience in the field of health and human resources;
and
- vi. A representative with experience in rural school and community development.

3. The Task Force shall:

- a. Ensure collaboration with State and local organizations, both public and private, including, but not limited to, the Governor's Office, the Department of Education and the Arts, the Department of Health and Human Resources, the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, the Early Childhood Advisory Council, and Head Start;
- b. Involve other appropriate non-governmental entities at local, State, and national levels that effectuate the delivery of services to young children and their families;
- c. Solicit input from parents, professionals and the public about the needs of, and services to, young children and their families;

d. Seek financial support for the work of the Task Force from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and other charitable foundations, the Legislature, corporations, and other non-governmental entities;

e. Engage administrative, research, and consulting assistance as may be needed.

4. The Task Force shall have access to all relevant data and information as needed to complete its work.

5. The Task Force will be dissolved March 8, 2014, unless its charge is extended in writing by the Governor.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.



DONE at the Capitol, in the City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this tenth day of May, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Thirteen, and in the One Hundred Fiftieth year of the State.

Earl Ray Tomblin
GOVERNOR

By the Governor

Natalie E. Emmert
SECRETARY OF STATE