



Date: February 13, 2025
To: Chair Scheu and Chair Perchlik and members of the House and Senate Committees of Appropriations
CC: Representative Rey Garofano and Senator Martine Larocque Gulick, Legislative members on the State Advisory Council
From: Dr. Morgan Crossman, Executive Director, Building Bright Futures
Re: Building Bright Futures' Budget Allocation

Building Bright Futures' Role in Vermont's Early Childhood System

Building Bright Futures (BBF) is Vermont's early childhood public-private partnership charged under Title 33, Chapter 46 and the federal Head Start Act to serve as Vermont's Early Childhood State Advisory Council. State statute charges BBF with maintaining and monitoring the vision and strategic plan for Vermont's early childhood system and serving as the primary advisor to the Governor and legislature on the status of children in the prenatal period through age 8 and their families.

BBF's mission: To improve the well-being of children and families in Vermont by using evidence to inform policy and bringing voices together across sectors and within regions to discuss critical challenges and problem-solve.

Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (SAC) does not directly lobby for or oppose any specific bill or action discussed within the legislature or legislatively appointed committee. Our role is to convene and elevate the voices of families and early childhood partners, monitor the system by identifying high-quality up-to-date data, and synthesize this information to advise decision-makers.

BBF Network Infrastructure: BBF has five primary responsibilities: to advise, monitor, convene, empower, and respond. These roles and charges are fulfilled through BBF's infrastructure, which includes a network of over 500 early childhood partners (figure below):

- A network of 12 Regional Councils convene early childhood experts throughout Vermont communities to move forward local and statewide early childhood priorities.
- 7 Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan (VECAP) committees uphold and monitor the early childhood vision and strategic plan for Vermont.
- The State Advisory Council (SAC) brings together cross-sector early childhood leaders to issue recommendations, increase coordination to advance a connected and evolving early childhood system, and advise the Governor and legislature.



BBF harnesses the power of the [Vermont Early Childhood Data and Policy Center](#) and the expertise of the network to support data-informed decision-making and policies.



BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL | ALLOCATION INCREASE

Building Bright Futures is appealing to the legislature for an increased base allocation of \$322,444.50. **Current state appropriations do not sufficiently support the monitoring efforts required to ensure that the state’s investments in children and families are having the intended impacts. The ever-changing needs for monitoring and advisement on behalf of the legislature, administration, and early childhood system require BBF to be increasingly adaptive and responsive, and to build state capacity in the following early childhood system responsibilities:**

- Measuring, monitoring, and integrating data to support collective understanding of young children’s experiences with service provision, child and family outcomes, and the system of services across sectors
- Providing direct advisement to the legislature, administration, and federal delegation on policy and program implementation based on data and monitoring efforts
- Coordinating early childhood policy priorities with all members of the administration supporting children and families (Governor’s Office, AHS, CDD, VDH, DMH, ESD, FSD, ORE, & AOE) to ensure aligned vision and strategy
- Supporting accountability and technical assistance for legislative, community, and administrative partners

This additional funding is necessary to support personnel, overhead, and program expenses/contracts to support Building Bright Futures’ ability to provide continuous monitoring and timely direct advisement on children, families, services, and policies based on the most up-to-date data and monitoring efforts.

	Current State Allocation	Request for Base Increase in Gov.'s Recommended Budget	Total Base with Increase for Gov.'s Recommended Budget
Personnel (wage and fringe)	\$702,000	\$219,687	\$921,687
Overhead	\$23,000	\$32,244	\$55,244
Other Services (Regional Councils)	\$12,000	\$0.00	\$12,000
Travel	\$28,000	\$0.00	\$28,000
Program Expenses and Contracts	\$6,707	\$70,513	\$77,220
Total	\$771,707	\$322,444	\$1,094,151

In these uncertain fiscal times, it is more critical than ever to ensure that dollars spent have the intended impact. This allocation will ensure that we have the resources needed to monitor the system to ensure accountability and prudent management of public dollars. Thank you for your consideration and support.