



**Early On® Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council (MICC)
Fiscal Ad Hoc Committee Summary of Recommendations
November 18, 2016**

Workgroup Charge:

On February 19, 2016, the MICC established the Fiscal Ad Hoc Committee to review all available funding sources in light of Michigan's existing system(s), to determine what could or should be pursued, and to develop a fiscal plan for Early On® Michigan – a path to developing a fiscally sound early intervention system.

Statement of the Problem

Early On® Michigan, the State's program for the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C, provides specialized early intervention services and supports to approximately 19,000 infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays, and their families each year. Services to young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays have been shown to **positively impact outcomes across developmental domains**, including language and communication, cognitive development, social/emotional development, and health. Families benefit by being able to better meet their children's special needs from an early age and throughout their lives. Benefits to society include reducing economic burden through a **decreased need for subsequent special education**.

Michigan's history as a pioneer in the provision of special education services to infants and toddlers in 1971 and subsequent implementation of IDEA Part C in 1986 resulted in two categories of eligibility and complications in funding *Early On*. A 2013 audit by the Michigan Office of the Auditor General concluded that there are deficiencies in Michigan's system and that additional funding is necessary for *Early On* to find, evaluate, serve, and support infants, toddlers, and their families. Recent State leadership and activities related to other states' financing of early intervention points to possibilities for leveraging significant and necessary strategies and resources for *Early On* Michigan.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: In collaboration with the Office of Special Education and stakeholders, establish a workgroup to determine appropriate steps and criteria for the creation of a single unified system that serves a **single cohort of infants and toddlers eligible for both *Early On* early intervention services and Michigan Mandatory Special Education**.

Recommendation 2: As Michigan continues to face financial challenges, the State must maximize its ability to utilize federal resources to support families with young children, specifically through Medicaid.

a. Support a **study**, jointly sponsored by the Michigan Departments of Health and Human Services and Education, to identify mechanisms that will allow Michigan **to maximize federal Medicaid reimbursement** to support *Early On*.

b. Work with stakeholders including the Michigan Medicaid agency, to develop a proposal to **add early intervention services provided by early interventionists** to the covered services in the Michigan Medicaid SBS program.

Recommendation 3: In partnership with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, identify if and how **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) resources** can be utilized for *Early On*, specifically to support referrals made through the Child Protective Services as part of the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act mandate.

Recommendation 4: Request an opinion of the Department of Insurance and Financial Services about whether *Early On* has the authority to bill **private insurance** for the cost of publicly provided early intervention services.

Recommendation 5: Work with Superintendent Whiston, the Legislature, and Governor to request a **budget line item/State allocation** for *Early On*. Renew the MICC request to the Governor to provide State funding for *Early On*.