



BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL | ALLOCATION INCREASE

Executive Summary

Building Bright Futures (BBF) is requesting to **increase our legislative allocation by \$261,000 annually (a total of \$505,000) to meet our charge under state and federal statute:** to serve as Vermont's Early Childhood State Advisory Council. This increase would represent parity with other boards and commissions. BBF has demonstrated our role by:

- Providing data and being a resource and key advisor to the legislature,
- Engaging and elevating the voices of families and communities across the state,
- Building capacity of state agencies in gathering and providing information to the field through webinars and forums, responding to requests from the legislature to gather information (for testimony and study sections) and filling gaps within regions to directly support children and families.
- Maintaining a network of over 450 early childhood leaders and stakeholders to articulate the vision of, and make progress on Vermont's Early Childhood Action Plan (strategic plan)
- Improving the outcomes of all children prenatal to age eight and their families
- Supporting early childhood emergency response throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

BBF's Legislative Allocation

BBF is both public and privately funded which allows us to maintain our ability to serve as a neutral convener at all levels of our infrastructure, ensuring all voices are represented in decision-making. Current state appropriations do not sufficiently support even a quarter of our mandates under Act 104. Currently, **only \$244,000 of our \$1.3 million budget, comes from legislative appropriations, which is approximately 19%.** To execute our work in a way that truly meets the need of the early childhood system in a sustainable way, we would require additional base public investment of \$261,000 annually (a total of \$505,000 annual base allocation), which would support our capacity to adapt quickly to execute research and information gathering projects, a clear need and part of the initial and continued vision for BBF and for the state of Vermont as we serve in our advisory role.

Additional Considerations

Parity: When reviewing similar commissions and advisory body state allocations from the Governor's annual budget, the majority receive a much higher legislative allocation and covers up to 100% of their budgets, which raises issues of funding parity. Examples include the Vermont Commission on Women (\$405,791), Developmental Disabilities Council (\$676,110), the Human Rights Commission (\$718,182), the Vermont Arts Council (\$722,859), and the Human Services Board (\$828,689).

Confusing naming in budget: [603645 VT Alliance for Children \\$244,000 \(FY2022 - pg 803/804\)](#) -This is the funding line for the Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council. It is incorrectly named, creating confusion about which group receives this funding (this funding does NOT go to the Vermont Children's Alliance or the Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance). The Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council is NOT an advocacy organization. BBF is named in state statute under Vermont's Act 104. We are quasi-governmental (public and private partners including legislators and non-voting membership from the Governor's Office) and are charged as the primary advisor to the Governor and Legislature on the well-being of children and families in Vermont.

Existing mechanism to route allocation: BBF's current legislative allocation is routed through the Head Start Collaboration Office within the Child Development Division. This existing mechanism can be amended to include the additional funding.

BBF's Early Childhood Network Infrastructure

BBF brings together a network of over 450 stakeholders across sectors to monitor Vermont's early childhood system and outcomes for children and families through:

1. 12 Regional Councils;
2. 7 Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan (VECAP) committees
3. The State Advisory Council (SAC)