

## Early Childhood Education (ECE) Collaborative

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) collaborative informs directors and specialists of early learning at state education agencies on critical education policies and problems of practice for children, birth to age 8. The meetings provide subject matter experts, exemplary state and local models of practice, and cross-state sharing among the participating state teams.

The ECE collaborative offers three in-person meetings that are supplemented periodically by online meetings and webinars that sustain and extend the work. State members are always offered the opportunity to shape the agendas for the three meetings to address their most pressing needs. State members who join the ECE group include early childhood or education directors and specialists.

### 2017-2018 Achievements:

In the 2017-2018 program year, ECE met with a series of national experts and engaged with other CCSSO groups in cross-collaborative work. Examples include the following:

- **Guest Speakers:**
  - Lori Connors-Tadros, *Senior Project Director, Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO)*
  - Danielle Ewen, *Senior Policy Advisor, EducationCounsel*
  - Jana Martella, *Co-Director, Education Development Center (EDC)*
  - Scott Groginsky, *Senior Director of State Affairs/ Senior Advisor for Policy and Effective Practice, National Head Start Association*
- **Cross collaborative work:**

Below are the joint sessions, webinars, and collaborative work ECE lead with other CCSSO groups in the 2017-18 membership year.

- Joint session with School and District Improvement (SDI) collaborative: “State Support for Implementation of Needs Assessments”
- Joint session with English Learner (EL) collaborative: “Evidence-based Practices for Young Dual Language Learners”
- Joint session with English Learner (EL) and Math collaboratives: “Early Math for Dual Language Learners for PreK to Grade 3”

Note that the third meeting each year is hosted by CCSSO, in collaboration with the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists at State Departments of Education and the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO).

### 2018-2019 Goals

*CCSSO is committed to supporting each state’s role in creating the structures and supports that help students enter kindergarten ready to learn and ultimately graduate high school ready for college, careers, and life. ECE’s focus on ensuring students have access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood education that prepares them for pre-K and elementary school displays CCSSO’s commitment to students on every step of their journey to be successful in school.*

- Continued support to states in implementing early learning strategies as part of the ESSA implementation, namely by integrating early learning into school improvement and supporting early childhood educators.
- State teams will be able to focus their work on early learning indicators impacting the well-being of young learners such as chronic absenteeism and K-2 assessment to support high quality instruction.

## Connection to Equity

A focus on equity is central to CCSSO's 2017-2020 strategic plan and our work with our members. CCSSO and state chiefs are committed to each child—regardless of background—graduating ready for college, careers, and life. In 2017, CCSSO and the Aspen Institute released [Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs](#), which set forth ten commitments and a series of actions state chiefs can take to advance equity. Each of CCSSO's collaboratives is a venue for working with national experts and collaborating with peer states to identify concrete strategies for advancing relevant commitments found in the report. Equity will play a major role in the agenda of the collaboratives over the next membership year. Examples of equity commitments from [Leading for Equity](#) the ECE collaborative addresses through its work are:

- **Equity Commitment 3b)** Set ambitious and achievable interim and long-term goals for English learners and ensure they are making adequate progress achieving English language proficiency.
- **Equity Commitment 4b)** Provide targeted supports and guidance to districts to help teachers and leaders build and sustain excellent schools.
- **Equity Commitment 6c)** Align pre-K/early learning standard to K-3 standard and provide professional development for pre-K and elementary school educators.

## Anchor documents

### [Equity Starts Early](#)

## Biography of Advisor

**Rolf Grafwallner** is Program Director for Early Childhood Initiatives at the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in Washington, D.C. where he works with states to improve learning opportunities and outcomes for young children. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Grafwallner worked on early childhood policy and school reform as an Assistant State Superintendent at the Maryland State Department of Education. He has been a teacher, program director and administrator prior to joining the Department. His expertise is on large scale early childhood assessments, governance, finance, organizational leadership, and early education systems building. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland – College Park in Education Policy Planning and Administration.

## CCSSO contacts:

**Leila Sammänder** serves as a Program Associate within the early childhood education department at Council of Chief State School Officers. She comes to the organization from Ascend



at the Aspen Institute, where she managed partner and network relations and engagement, as well as event management for programs on two-generation solutions to poverty. Leila holds a master's degree in education policy from the University of Pennsylvania. While pursuing her graduate degree, she worked at the Consortium for Policy Research as a graduate assistant on the Ongoing Assessment Project, a professional development intervention that trains teachers to use math items of high cognitive demand to gather information on student thinking. Leila has her bachelor's degree in political science and Spanish from the University of Delaware.

**Sheryll Famularcano** serves as a Program Associate for the Early Childhood Education Department at the Council of Chief State School Officers. Sheryll was formerly the Program Coordinator for the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) in Garden Grove, CA where she developed and implemented college readiness and leadership development curriculum and assisted in the development of the organization's strategic plan by coordinating various outreaching events. She holds a bachelor's degree in Asian American Studies and a minor in Education from the University of California, Irvine. She is passionate about creating opportunities and pathways so that education is accessible and attainable for all while empowering future leaders.

**2017-18 State Members:**

DoDEA, IN, IA, KS, ME, MD, MI, MN, MS, MO, NE, OH, OR, UT, WA, WY.

**2017-18 Industry Partners:**

Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), Reading Recovery Council, Teaching Strategies, Teachstone, WIDA Consortium