

## Early Childhood Education (ECE) Collaborative

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. The Early Childhood Education (ECE) collaborative's focus is on ensuring students have access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood education that prepares them for PreK and elementary school. This collaborative is one example of CCSSO's commitment to students on every step of their journey to be successful in school. State members who join the ECE collaborative include early childhood or education directors and specialists.

### 2018-2019 Highlights:

- Addressed chronic absenteeism at point of transition to public school by inviting Attendance Works to provide policy recommendations
- Continued the joint sessions with English Learners and Math Collaboratives to highlight the potential capacity for greater collaboration among offices in state education agencies (SEAs)
- Co-hosted final joint National Roundtable meeting with early learning leads from more than 40 states, including SCASS states, and strong collaboration with National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE) and Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO)
- Established assessment workgroup which resulted in (3) states (MD, SC, OR) to participate in proposal for federal grant to develop a K-2 assessment item bank
- Began work on (4) ECE publications:
  - *Practical Guide for State Education Agencies to Promote Success of English Learners PreK-Grade 3* by Alexandra Figueras-Daniel, Teaching Strategies
  - *K-2 Assessments: An Update on State Adoption and Implementation* by Michelle Croft, ACT
  - *Leveraging ESSA Plans in Preschool Development Grant Implementation: Guidance and Recommendations for States* by Elliot Regenstein, Foresight Law + Policy
  - *Third Grade Reading Laws: Implementation and Impact* by Bonnie O'Keefe, Bellwether Education

### 2019-2020 Goals

The ECE Collaborative is working toward a vision of leveraging state education staff to ensure access to high quality developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive early child education in programs serving children, birth to 5, and students K-3, to improve academic outcomes and mitigate achievement gaps by third grade. Progress towards this vision will center around the following goals:

- Support SEA staff to develop policies and support systems for local districts to create equitable, aligned, and coherent birth/PreK to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade frameworks
  - Creating networks of collaboration between LEAs and early childhood education programs;
  - International insights from innovative early childhood systems;
  - Case studies of P-3 implementation;

- Models of alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Support SEA staff in implementing early learning strategies in accordance with their state’s consolidated ESSA plan, especially in support of disadvantaged children, including:
  - State policies supporting third grade reading legislation;
  - Helping school districts plan for implementing evidence-based improvement strategies;
  - Plans, resources, and tools to scale PreK expansion and full day K.
- Support SEA staff to create support systems for local districts to implement high-quality curricular and evidence-based practices for early literacy and early math as well as social and emotional learning in PreK to grade 3, including:
  - Defining equitable access to high quality early learning;
  - Monitoring student progress for better outcomes (introducing paper on a balanced PreK to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade assessment system which is being developed by the ECE Collaborative Workgroup on Assessment);
  - Teacher engagement through inquiry of teaching and learning.

**Anchor documents**

- [Equity Starts Early: How Chiefs Will Build High-Quality Early Education](#)
- [States Leading for Equity: Promising Practices Advancing the Equity Commitments](#)  
(Commitment #6 – Start Early: Invest in the Youngest Learners)

**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.

**2018-19 State Members Included:**

DoDEA, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MD, MI, MN, MS, MO, NE, OK, OR, SC, UT, USVI, WA, WY

**2018-19 Partners Included:**

AdvancedEd, DRC, Teaching Strategies, Teachstone, WIDA

