CEELO

Center on Enhancing
Early Learning Outcomes

BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH AN EARLY EDUCATION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Stacie G. Goffin, EdD

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

THE ECE LEADERSHIP LANDSCAPE

In 2013, the early childhood education (ECE) field is paying limited attention to leadership development (Goffin & Janke, 2013; Goffin & Means, 2009). A recent survey of ECE leadership development programs suggests that the field does not fully recognize the potential of leadership to serve as a change catalyst, although there is evidence of increasing interest in the topic (Goffin & Janke, 2013). Of 55 self-reported ECE leadership development programs, only one—the University of Kentucky's Educational Leadership Studies graduate program—describes itself as targeting individuals in or aspiring to leadership positions in educational organizations serving children and youth (early childhood through post-secondary).

Only three of the 55 programs self-identified as addressing development of a PreK–3rd grade continuum—a systems change the U.S. Department of Education sets as a priority for the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) and a focal point of the 2013 round of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge applications. New Jersey's and Pennsylvania's state education agencies (SEAs) direct two of these three programs. New Jersey's program focuses primarily on principals' content knowledge, and the NJ SEA is exploring ways to expand the program. Pennsylvania's program and a third program—which is currently being developed by the P–3 Education Policy & Leadership program in the College of Education at the University of Washington—include participants from both the birth to five and K–3 systems and address both content knowledge and leadership. Further, Connecticut's new early childhood office is developing a leadership program for elementary school principals.

The survey also found that few K–Grade 3 State Education Agency/Early Learning Agency (SEA/ELA) administrators participate in the 55 programs that self-identified as focusing on ECE leadership development. This reveals that there has been little change since the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes' (CEELO) 2012 proposal to the U.S. Department of Education asserted, "ensuring improved learning outcomes for the nation's youngest children necessitates leaders who can work at the programmatic and systems level. [Yet] the preparation and professional development of leaders at the state level where individuals must initiate and sustain early childhood policy and initiatives has not been a key focus of workforce development in the early childhood field."

In response to this unmet need for leadership development, and as proposed in Year 2 of the CEELO management plan, the CEELO is designing an Early Education Leadership Academy (EELA) for early learning and K–Grade 3 State Education Agency/Early Learning Agency (SEA/ELA) administrators.

DATA COLLECTION TO INFORM THE DESIGN OF THE EELA

Development and implementation of the EELA is an intensive, cross-cutting technical assistance effort that will extend throughout the remaining years of CEELO's cooperative agreement. This report presents findings from four data collection efforts conducted to inform the design, content, and implementation of the EELA (see Appendix A for a description of the methodology):

1. Targeted review of the literature on leadership/leadership development to provide the underpinning evidence for the design and leadership content of an EELA

2. Examination of the changing contexts of SEA/ELA administrators to provide insight into the knowledge and skills SEA/ELA administrators need to exercise leadership

3. Survey of 42 SEA/ELA administrators from 35 states and one territory to inform customization of the content of the EELA for its target audience

4. Interviews with 17 SEA/ELA administrators in 14 states, as well as 7 individuals with related expertise, to inform customization of the format and content of the EELA for its target audience

The report concludes with a series of action suggestions based on the findings from this multi-dimensional view of the leadership development needs of SEA/ELA early learning administrators.

I. FINDINGS FROM A REVIEW OF THE LEADERSHIP LITERATURE

The literature on leadership and leadership development fills libraries. To narrow this vast body of knowledge to focus on the purpose of this review—to inform the design and content of the EELA—the following four CEELO Guiding Principles guided the selection of sources:

(1) Grounded in research

(2) Promoting sustainable change

(3) Building capacity for results and innovation

(4) Responsive to diversity

These principles led to a focus on systems thinking, leadership and its development, and capacity development. As this is not an exhaustive research study or peer-reviewed manuscript, findings extraneous to these topics do not appear in this report.

Three themes emerged from the literature: *leadership matters*; *leadership is a complex, collective endeavor*; and *leadership capacity development should be context-driven and change-focuse*d.

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

A consensus definition for leadership—and thus for its development—is lacking (Bennis, 2007). Further, and as noted by Vroom and Jago (2007), no clear and unequivocal understanding exists as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders or what distinguishes effective from ineffective leaders. Despite this murkiness, few question that leadership plays an important role in facilitating change and increasing capacity. As leadership guru Warren Bennis (2007) remarked, "… we must remember that the subject is vast, amorphous, slippery, and, above all, desperately important" (p. 2).

At a macro level, growing unanimity exists for understanding leadership as a process of motivating people to work together collaboratively to accomplish "something of importance" (Bennis, 2007; Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 1997; Vroom & Jago, 2007). Doing so involves the ability to influence others and the presence of followers (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Yet both of these staples of leadership—"ability to influence" and "presence of followers"—have taken on new meanings. As detailed below, current research is providing new insights into leadership as an endeavor that is far more complex and collective than previously perceived.

LEADERSHIP IS A COMPLEX AND COLLECTIVE ENDEAVOR

The study of leadership historically has been tied to charismatic leaders and trait-based characteristics. This view fueled heroic and romantic ideas about leadership that most social scientists now discard. Yet to the extent these ideas still exist in the minds of the general public and those who devise leadership development programs, they can divert attention away from a more nuanced understanding of leadership and its development (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011; Hackman & Wageman, 2005, 2007; Vroom & Jago, 2007).

In contrast, current thinking attempts to understand the dynamic interplay among context, leadership situations, personal attributes and identity, and key behaviors that result in effective leadership (Ely, Iberra, & Kolk, 2011; European Commission, 2005, 2010; Hackman & Wageman, 2005, 2007; Vroom & Jago, 2007). This shift opens the way for identifying leadership associated with different purposes and calling for different knowledge, skills, and behaviors, for example, adaptive leadership (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009); organizational and systems change (Schein, 2004; Senge, 1990, Senge et al, 2010); change leadership (Kotter, 1996, 2008); and capacity development (Ubels, Acquaye-Baddoo, & Fowler, 2010).

This shift also is accompanied by growing recognition of the complexity involved in advancing education reform in our global, rapidly changing times, especially when the issues being addressed—such as school readiness, reducing achievement gaps, and college and career readiness—transcend what can be accomplished by single individuals or organizations and institutions. This has led to promotion not only of systems thinking (Foster-Fishman, Nowell, & Yang, 2007; Morgan, 2005; Reed, 2006; Senge et al., 2010) and appreciation for the impact followers and leaders have on one another (Avolio, 2007; Bennis, 2007; Hackman & Wageman, 2007; Kellerman, 2008), but also new conceptualizations of leadership variously described as enterprise leadership, collective leadership, and networked leadership.

These new conceptualizations of leadership share a belief in the need for collective action that transcends conventional boundaries (Enterprise Leadership, 2013; Kania & Kramer, 2011; Leadership Learning Community, n.d.; Meehan & Reinelt, 2012). They suggest leadership theory and research is expanding beyond its focus on individual leaders to include leadership as a shared undertaking, which aligns with the worldview held by some of the SEA/ELA administrators interviewed for this report.

With these new leadership paradigms come the need to redefine *followership*.

Traditionally, leadership has been a one-way street: leaders must have followers, leaders act, and followers mainly react or follow along. Current thinking, however, argues that leadership takes many other routes: leaders also are followers, followers can exercise leadership and effect change, and followers can influence leaders and the exercise of leadership (Avolio, 2007; Bennis, 2007; Hackman & Wageman, 2007; Kellerman, 2008). These findings indicate different types of relationships can exist between leaders and followers, including greater equality in terms of influence and contribution. As a result, long-standing distinctions between leaders and followers are blurring, allowing the practice of "shared leadership" to take on new meaning. Further, although individuals in executive positions have more authority and latitude to act, it's increasingly acknowledged that one does not have to be in a "leadership position" to be in a position to exercise leadership. Heifetz, Grashow, & Linksy (2009) even argue that authority can inhibit leadership (i.e., effecting change) because individuals in these positions often are expected to maintain the status quo.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE CONTEXT-DRIVEN AND CHANGE-FOCUSED

Capacity is indicated by the degree to which an individual, organization, or system functions effectively and thus, it's worth noting, overlaps with organizational development in multiple ways (Richter, 2010; Ubels, Fowler, & Acquaye-Baddoo, 2010) (see page 11 for discussion of organizational effectiveness and leadership). As an internal attribute of people, organizations, and systems (European Commission, 2010: Fowler & Ubels, 2010), it is not a specific substance but an *emergent* characteristic based on the combination of numerous elements and shaped by, adapting to, and reacting to external factors and actors. Although leadership capacity can be a lever for change, individuals, organizations, and systems exist within contexts that can foster or impede efficacy. The literature highlights key considerations relevant to capacity building—including the importance of context and nature of change—that have significant implications for the design of the EELA.

Research indicates that leadership behaviors are likely to be more effective when tailored to context—and that one can strengthen the effectiveness of leadership education by focusing on knowledge and skills that will enable leaders to effect desired change in a particular situation and for a specific purpose (Binder & Kramer, 2013; Dia & Eggink, 2010; Snowden & Boone, 2007; van der Heijden, 2005; Vroom & Jago, 2007). This means that "Leadership toward what end?" is always a pertinent question to answer when designing capacity development programs for leaders. Leaders have agendas—driven by values

(Bennis, 2007)—a factor often overlooked, yet highlighted by studies of what Kellerman (2004) calls "bad leadership."

The United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) provides one example of a strategic effort to address "Leadership toward what end?" and to articulate the leadership capacities needed to reach the desired end. In 2010, the OPM issued Senior Executive Service Qualifications, signaling growing appreciation for the knowledge and skills necessary for facilitating within- and cross-agency collaboration. This document identifies what is needed to drive "for success, serve customers, and build successful teams and coalitions within and outside the organization." In addition to fundamental competencies associated with ethical behavior, communication skills, and ongoing learning, the OPM identifies the following five core qualifications, each associated with specified competencies that might be informative in the EELA's design phase (OPM, 2010):

- Leading Change
- Leading People
- Results Driven
- Business Acumen
- Building Coalitions

Two other initiatives are of relevance to the design of EELA's approach to developing leadership capacity: the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008) and Harvard University's Doctoral Program for Education Leaders. The ISLLC Standards are used to guide state policymakers in improving education leadership preparation, licensure, evaluation, and professional development. Developed in collaboration with the National Policy Board on Educational Administration to help strengthen school leadership preparation programs, there are six standards, each of which is followed by the *Knowledge* required for the standard, the *Dispositions* associated with the standard's accomplishment, and *Performances* that could be observed by an informed administrator. In abbreviated form, the six standards are:

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by:

1. Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. Ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient,

and effective learning environment.

4. Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

5. Acting with integrity fairness, and in an ethical manner.

6. Understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Given its focus, the curriculum for Harvard's three-year, full-time, cohort Doctoral Program for Education Leaders launched in 2010 can also inform the EELA's approach to leadership capacity development. The practice-based doctoral program is designed to foster deep understanding of learning and teaching, as well as management and leadership skills for *reshaping* the education sector. Supported by a $10 million grant from the Wallace Foundation and based at Harvard's School of Education, the program prepares leaders for sector leadership roles in school districts, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector. A core purpose is preparing leaders who can guide organizations in a rapidly changing environment. Its integrated curriculum focuses on learning and instruction, leadership and management, and politics and policy, with faculty drawn from the Schools of Education, Business, and the Kennedy School. The core domain of the Leadership and Management strand encompasses four content areas: strategy, entrepreneurial leadership, managing organizational performance, and leading the learning organization (Harvard Graduate School of Education, n.d.).

SUMMARY

Hackman and Wageman's (2007, pp. 43–47) questions for further research offer a succinct summary of this review of the leadership literature and highlight the complexities associated with understanding leadership and planning for its development:

1. Not do leaders make a difference, but *under what conditions does leadership matter?*

2. Not what are the traits of leaders, but *how do leaders' personal attributes interact with situational properties to shape outcomes?*

3. Not do there exist common dimensions on which all leaders can be arrayed, *but are good and poor leadership qualitatively different*?

4. Not how do leaders and followers differ, but *how can leadership models be reframed so they treat all system members as both leaders and followers?*

5. Not what should be taught in leadership courses, but *how can leaders be helped to learn?*

II. FINDINGS FROM AN EXAMINATION OF THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF SEAs/ELAs

The management and governance roles performed by SEAs/ELAs require different functions, call upon different leadership behaviors, build different administrative capacities, and differentially influence what is feasible in the realm of leadership. In 2013, management and governance structures—as well as expectations for early learning administrators—are changing. These shifts in structures and expectations, as detailed in the pages that follow, are key contextual variables and have important implications for the CEELO's selection of leadership development strategies for SEA/ELA administrators (Boesen, 2010; Chapman, 2004; European Commission, 2010; Office for Economic Co-Operation and Development [OECD], 2006; Regenstein & Lipper, 2013).

CHANGING ROLE OF SEAS

Nationwide, SEAs are being driven to shift, both conceptually and operationally, from monitoring state and district compliance with state and federal rules and regulations to actively advancing the state's and nation's education reform agenda. Even as SEAs seek to respond to state mandates related to school and student performance, the U.S. Department of Education is asking them to provide leadership to schools and school districts with the intention of reducing student achievement gaps and ensuring more graduates are ready for college and careers. Although this is not a totally new emphasis for SEAs, it is a significant enough sea change that the 2013 Summer Institute of the Council of Chief State School Officers (2013a) focused on building the capacity of state education leaders to transform their SEAs. Building capacity to transform SEAs is not a straightforward undertaking. Many SEAs have limited resources and staff capacity to apply the recognized means of improving student outcomes (e.g., making better use of data, promoting standards-based education and routine assessment, improving teacher and principal effectiveness, fostering stronger connections between early childhood education, K–12 education, higher education, and careers) (Brown, Hess, Lautzenheiser, & Owen, 2011; Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013b; Gross & Jochim, 2013; Minnici & Hill, 2007; Murphy & Oujdani, 2011; Redding, 2012). Further, ambiguity remains regarding SEAs' exact role and responsibilities in school improvement efforts and federal dollars are being directed to local education agencies (LEAs) versus SEAs. The dynamics of local control add still further complexity to SEA efforts to exert statewide leadership (Murphy & Ouijdani, 2011).

Several types of change are being advocated to address this shift. Recent Federal and state efforts are intended to facilitate organizational change (Brown, Hess, Lautzenheiser, & Owen, 2011; Council of Chief State School Officers, 2012) and develop organizational capacity via increasingly effective management and governance (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013b; Redding, 2012). School turnaround, and similar strategies, focus on promoting more hands-on SEA engagement with schools and facilitating conditions for improved practice and results through the use of performance management systems (Gross & Jochim, 2013; Redding, 2012). And, because of demands to increase the effectiveness of ECE programs, a number of state and federal efforts are targeted to promote the explicit and consistent use of Implementation Science as an approach to increasing the fidelity of implementation of evidence-based interventions (Halle, Zaslow, & Martinez-Beck, 2013).

The State Capacity Performance Reviews Framework (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013b) provides an example of an approach to addressing organizational capacity. It outlines the following six components of an effective SEA (accompanied by self-assessment questions):

- Appropriate authority and effective governance
- Leadership with a focus on policy development and implementation
- Effective organizational design and strong human capital, including an infusion of external expertise
- Strong communications and advocacy to sustain public and political will
- Effective finance and business operations
- Well-established and up-to-date data systems and infrastructure, such as data systems and the technology needed to manage information.

To be effective, authors of the Performance Reviews Framework argue, "SEAs must be structured, led, staffed, and resourced appropriately based on the role(s) they are expected to play today" (p. 2). To this end, Redding (2012), director of the Center on Innovation and Improvement, argues that SEAs must be engaged with:

1. Improvement: Closing the gap between actual practices and standards of practice
2. Innovation: Changing or terminating standards of practice or introducing new ones
3. Transformation: Changing mission, values, and goals

Collectively, these proposals invite SEAs not only to re-imagine their purpose and alter their relationship with schools and school districts but also to tackle their agencies'

effectiveness by engaging in significant, internal organizational change in terms of structure, staffing, priorities, and execution of change strategies (Brown, Hess, Lautzenheiser, & Owen, 2011; Gross & Jochim, 2013; Redding, 2012).

As noted, there is overlap between organizational development/effectiveness and leadership development/effectiveness, but the two are not synonymous (Vroom & Jago (2007). The effectiveness of an organization is influenced by factors other than the quality of its leadership, and there are many ways in which leaders can impact their organizations that are unrelated to what typically is defined as leadership. Further, organizational effectiveness is often affected by situational factors not under a leader's control. Yet effecting and sustaining *cultural change* within an organization does require leadership, and this leadership work will be paramount if SEAs and ELAs are to fulfill expectations being placed on them. According to Schwein (2004), "If one wishes to distinguish leadership from management or administration, one can argue that leadership creates and changes cultures, while management and administration act within a culture" (p. 11).

This distinction is not intended to minimize the importance of organizational effectiveness. Rather the distinction is intended to help differentiate among leadership, organizational effectiveness, management skills, and content knowledge. Each often is critical to the success of the other. Effective leadership, in particular, typically relies on the essential "supporting roles" contributed by content knowledge, management skills, and organizational effectiveness—as well as personal competencies—to achieve leadership agendas. These distinctions therefore matter when contemplating the design and content for a leadership development initiative.

According to Fowler and Ubels (2010), "Unless organizational capacity has been developed sufficiently to harness training and the acquisition of new skills, training courses do not 'take,' and skills do not adhere. The organization that does not know where it's going and why; which has a poorly developed sense of responsibility for itself; and which is inadequately structured, cannot make use of training course and skills acquisition" (p. 14–15). Fullan (2008) expresses it this way: Individual leaders, no matter how great cannot carry the day. "….Everybody knows that the culture of the organization is crucial, and that purposeful, collaborative organizations are more effective. …. Individual and organizational development must go hand in hand" (p. 36, 28).

CHANGING MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES OF SEAS/ELAS

Two recent analyses—a review of Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge applications[1] (Dahlin, 2013) and an examination of preK–K program governance approaches (Regenstein & Lipper, 2013)—offer insights into the changing landscape of SEAs/ELAs. Both sources identify four options states are considering and/or implementing: (1) consolidating state agencies; (2) creating a new state agency or entity; (3) creating dedicated capacity/leadership for early learning in governors' offices; and (4) creating new interagency coordinating bodies. In addition, the review of Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenging applications noted the emergence and/or presence of regional governance structures with varying levels of authority to allocate resources and accountability for results, structures adding a new governance layer in some states. Both analyses found that states' choices in this regard vary widely, not only in terms of a preferred structure for managing, coordinating, and providing oversight, but also in terms of the location or placement of programs and oversight responsibilities.

CHANGING EXPECTATIONS FOR ELA ADMINISTRATORS

Changes in management and governance structures strongly effect early learning administrators and alter the scope of their leadership role, both creating new opportunities and presenting limitations. As sharp shifts occur in administrators' organizational contexts, new expectations for how they should do their work—and with whom they should work— are arising and demand new expertise in key areas. Early learning administrators must be able to:

- Develop working relationships with K–12 colleagues
- Draw upon a broad range of content knowledge and skills
- Navigate cross-agency relationships and change
- Advance system changes within and across state agencies
- Exercise leadership, rather than just overseeing programs

Nationwide, changes in policy are requiring early learning administrators to bolster relationships between their state's birth to five and K–12 systems, a task that requires garnering the attention of often overwhelmed K–12 colleagues and administrators. In addition, and in contrast to most of their K–12 colleagues, they also are being asked to help integrate, align, and coordinate elements of their state's early childhood system—a system

---

[1]This review focused on section A-3, which requires applicants to present existing and proposed strategies to coordinate statement management and governance of ECE programs.

much larger and complex in scope than an early learning system and requiring cross-agency interactions and relationships that can be difficult to effect (Waddel, Faber, Haertle, Mauro, & Grejin, 2013). Achieving this goal of integration and alignment calls upon them to mobilize Birth to Five system colleagues, create a shared agenda, and figure out how to make stronger alignment actually happen. They must also create aligned standards; design developmentally appropriate child assessments and, in some cases, teacher evaluation systems; effectively integrate data into their program improvement and performance assessments; and help drive improved teacher preparation and effectiveness.

III. FINDINGS FROM A SURVEY OF SEA/ELA ADMINSTRATORS

In June 2013, CEELO distributed a six-question survey to 109 individuals on its list of SEA/ELA contacts. The questions focused on the contacts' previous leadership development experiences and the knowledge and skills they deemed most important to their current work. (See Appendix E for full survey instrument.)

CEELO received completed surveys from 42 respondents (38% response rate) from 35 states and one territory. Analysis of survey data revealed considerable variation in respondents' roles, titles, budgets, responsibilities, and years in present position. Responsibilities ranged from managing single federally funded programs to managing the work associated with an office or division within an SEA/ELA. Number of staff overseen varied from 0 to 205, and budget oversight extended from zero to $160 million, with considerable variation existing between the two extremes for each of these administrative responsibilities.

More than half of the leadership development experiences identified by respondents were provided internally by their agencies, either as part of staff meetings or formally organized training. Higher education coursework was noted by 20% of respondents, while receipt of mentoring and/or coaching was noted by approximately 12%.

Of the list of eight possible management/leadership development topics listed in the survey, respondents were most likely to have received training in the following four areas:

> SURVEY QUESTIONS
> 1. Please provide brief information about your role and responsibilities in your agency.
> 2. Has your agency ever supported your leadership development? If so, in what way?
> 3. From the following list of leadership attributes, please choose any for which you have had direct training [internal agency or external training]
> 4. Please rank these knowledge or skills based on your view of their importance to effective leadership within your agency.
> 5. Are there specific skills or capabilities necessary for effective leadership within State Education Agencies that might differ from other categories of leadership?
> 6. Of these or others, what 3 – 5 NEW skills and /or new knowledge would most assist you in building your professional capacity?

- Working Collaboratively (80% of respondents)
- Change Management (approx. 66% of respondents)
- Leadership Style and Practices (approx.. 63% of respondents)

- Visioning (approx. 63% of respondents)
- Staff Supervision (approx. 60%)

Training experience in the three other topics—engaging new partners, group dynamics, and share decision-making—dropped to 51% and below. Unknown from the survey is the content, depth, or scope of any of this prior training.

Respondents ranked visioning (80%), change management (75%), working collaboratively (72.50%), and engaging new partners (70%) as "very important" in enhancing their effectiveness as leaders and managers, followed by a steep decline in topical prioritization. However, when asked whether SEA/ELA early learning administrators had unique leadership development needs, the majority of respondents noted the politicized working environment, including the need to interface with policy makers and contribute to policy development. Respondents also frequently mentioned the need to work within a state bureaucracy and with systems. Yet additional themes in leadership development needs emerged from respondents' identification of new knowledge or skills that would most develop their professional capacity. Twenty-three percent of respondents expressed interest in building their capacity around change management and twenty-eight percent expressed interest in building their capacity to work collaboratively, share decision making, and promote cross-agency communications—grouped together because of congruence among the three topics. No other development areas found this level of shared interest.

SURVEY MANAGEMENTAND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TOPICS

- Visioning - leading development of new policies or initiatives
- Change management - leading Implementation of new policies or initiatives
- Leadership style and practices - helping others make complex decisions
- Working collaboratively - gaining consensus among different perspectives
- Engaging new partners - establishing relationships and trust with leaders outside your own organization or agency
- Effective staff supervision - team building, training, motivating and influencing to improve practice
- Group dynamics and effective communication
- Shared decision making and distributed leadership Leading professional learning communities

A summary of survey findings follows:

- Responses highlight the wide range of knowledge and skills of interest to potential EELA participants.

- Change management and working collaboratively appear to be the most salient topics for respondents, even though respondents identified these two topic areas as ones most frequently the focus of internal training.

- Limited alignment seems to exist between the stated knowledge and skills associated with an SEA/ELA administrator position and priority leadership development subject areas. For example, despite frequent mention given to their work's political context, including relationships with policy makers, navigating this reality to advantage did not emerge as a priority leadership development subject area.

- Respondents expressed significant interest in expanding their management/technical skills. They assigned a high priority to topics such as change management, by way of one example. Itemization of respondents' other interests, with the exception of visioning, largely fall within this category as well. The level of interest in expanding technical knowledge suggests respondents' quest for increased technical knowledge and skills, which has implications for the EELA's content.

IV. FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH SEA/ELA STAFF AND ECE EXPERTS

The 17 interviewees from SEAs/ELAs, and the 7 early childhood education experts that CEELO staff informally questioned (see page 22 and Appendix A), occupy a range of state agency structures and fill a diverse set of roles with varying levels of authority, budget, and staff oversight. They come to their roles via a wide range of pathways, possess different degrees of knowledge of ECE, child development, management, and leadership and lead in states with differing commitment levels to ECE.

Interviewees varied in their self-awareness of their approach to leadership and the extent to which they articulated intentionality about how they executed leadership. Nevertheless, many noted shared challenges such as experiencing intense demands on their time, navigating their agency bureaucracy and political context, and establishing a presence within their agencies. Interviewees also spoke to the challenge of finding competent staff and the importance of building a team coalesced around a shared understanding of their work. The following six leadership themes emerged from multiple reviews of the interview transcripts and were more apparent in the comments of seasoned administrators.

1. *Vision*. While the scope varied by individual, interviewees repeatedly spoke to the importance of having a vision and using it to set direction around a shared purpose—a leadership topic elevated by survey respondents as well. Interviewees' concepts of visioning variously encompassed ideas like "keep the end in mind"; openness to different perspectives; and ability to identify common ground. For some interviewees, creating a common purpose for collective work resulted from getting others to agree with a purpose identified by the interviewee, while for others its power resulted from a process of joint creation and ownership.

2. *Relationships Matter*. The rationale for the importance of building relationships differed by individual, although interviewees didn't necessarily rely on only one rationale. Relationships were seen as necessary for: building trust, creating new opportunities for moving forward on an agenda; building understanding of different perspectives and interests; enabling the "right" people to be brought to the table; coalescing collective intelligence around work to be accomplished; developing recognition as a valid voice; moving an agenda with power brokers; and generating partnerships for expanded capacity.

Table 1. List of Interviewees

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS	COHORT INTERVIEWS
W. Clayton Burch, Executive Director, Office of Early Learning, WV Department of Education	Rolf Grafwallner, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Early Childhood, MD Department of Education & Michelle Palermo, Associate Director, Early Childhood Education, RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Shannon Dustan, 619 Coordinator & Interagency Coordinator, ID Department of Education	James Lesko, Former Director, Early Development and Learning Resources, DE Department of Education & Stephanie Siddens, Director, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, OH Department of Education
Harriet Feldlaufer, Bureau of Teaching & Learning, CT Department of Education [new title as part of new, free standing Office of Early Childhood yet to be confirmed]	Tonya Russell Williams, Director, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, AK Department of Health and Human Services & Tracy Tucker, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, AK Department of Education
Ellen Wolock, Administrator, Division of Early Childhood Education, NJ Department of Education	Tom Webber, Commissioner, MA Department of Early Education and Care & Donna Traynham, Education Specialist, MA Department of Education
Dana Jones, Early Learning Specialist, IN Department of Education	Bob Butts, Assistant Superintendent of Early Learning, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, WA Department of Public Instruction & Kelli Bohanon, Director of the Division of Partnerships and Collaboration, WA Department of Early Learning.
John Pruette, Executive Director, Office of Early Learning, NC Department of Public Instruction	Reyna Hernandez, Assistant Superintendent, IL State Department of Education
Beth Rous, Professor, Educational Leadership Studies, University of KY	Sara Slaughter, Program Officer McCormick Foundation
Sharon Ryan, Professor, Early Childhood and Elementary Education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey	Jacqueline Jones, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary, US Department of Education
Camille Maben, Executive Director, First Five California & former Director CA Child Development Division	Anna Severens, Education Programs Professional, NV State Department of Education
Sharon Triolo-Moloney, Director, Early Learning & School Readiness, Colorado Department of Education	

3. *Collaboration*. Closely related to "relationships matter," many interviewees spoke to crossing established boundaries within their agencies as well as across agencies. This often encompassed having an astute understanding of others' perspectives and interests and using this knowledge to create partnerships based on "bringing value to others' work" (Interviewee).

4. *Content Knowledge*. Every interviewee identified the importance of being knowledgeable about ECE content relevant to their state's policy issues—most especially child development as it relates to adhering to developmentally appropriate practices, current research, and the state's ECE system. Responses concentrated on PreK and Kindergarten and if part of the state's agenda, the P–3 continuum.

5. *Navigating the Agency's Political Context*. This theme encompasses understanding of politics and the policy making process, being politically savvy, and capacity to maneuver changes in the state's political landscape. This capability was often associated with relationship development, ECE content knowledge, effective communications, and the recognition that liking someone or being of the "same mind" is not necessary in order to find common ground and work together to effect change around a mutual interest. As expressed by several interviewees: Focus on the work to be accomplished.

6. *Perseverance, Fortitude, Creativity—and even Courage*. Multiple interviewees explicitly acknowledged the need to take a long view: sticking with the effort; keeping "the big picture" in mind; being creative, as well as nimble, in identifying and pursuing possible next steps; and accepting the reality of having to live with tension (i.e., "being mentally tough)." While some interviewees emphasized effectiveness as managers in this regard, others came across as having a more entrepreneurial approach.

A key take-away from the interviews was the inadequacy, in the current socio-political context, of limiting the SEA/ELA administrator role to one of program oversight, policy development, and implementation, or generator of administrative rules and regulations. Interviewees widely recognized for their leadership were engaged in effecting a long-term, transformational change agenda, and among the tools in their leadership tool kit were policy development and administration of new rules and regulations. As expressed by one interviewee, "To be a leader, it's not about being in charge but being a strong advocate focused on key principles. … Can you take an idea, develop it, position it, and communicate in a way so it's difficult to say it's not the right thing for kids? [Yet] some think [this work] is only about changing policy and requiring something."

Notably, these six themes coincide with Bennis' (2007) reminders that leadership is never purely academic and that adaptive capacity is singularly important, as well as Sternberg's (2007) leadership model that argues effective leadership is a synthesis of wisdom, creativity, and intelligence and the ability to effectively marshal and deploy these three resources. "One needs creativity to generate ideas, academic (analytical) intelligence to evaluate whether the ideas are good, practical intelligence to implement the ideas and persuade others of their worth, and wisdom to balance the interests of all stakeholders and to ensure that the actions of the leader seek a common good" (p. 34).

CONCLUSION: PROPOSALS FOR THE DESIGN OF AN EELA

WHAT THE FINDINGS SUGGEST

Below are key considerations informing action suggestions for CEELO's EELA:

- <u>Approach to leadership development.</u> Interviewees expressed strongest interest in an extended, job embedded and practice-oriented leadership development program that would permit them to learn with and from their colleagues. Several stressed that it was important to "avoid abstract learning." Aligned with a trend in leadership development programs, these preferences are consistent with what is called the 70-20-10 Model. Pioneered by the Center for Creative Leadership, the model is premised on the belief, increasingly supported by evidence, that leadership is learned through doing. It calls for 70% of leadership development to consist of on-the-job learning, supported by 20 percent coaching and mentoring, and 10 percent classroom training. The model's three components should be mutually reinforcing in terms of informing and enhancing the learning being encouraged by each element.

  Learning is further boosted when opportunities exist to benefit from others who have engaged in similar work. And as noted previously, the value of formal learning is strengthened when it supplies technical skills, theories, and information that apply directly to the task being addressed.

- <u>Leadership development in a highly contextualized leadership world</u>. Variations in states, policies, institutional structures, organizational roles, and leadership knowledge among SEA/ELA administrators are extensive, and the formal literature on leadership stresses the significance of context and specifics of a leadership situation. Although SEA/ELA survey respondents prioritized technical skills, such as management and collaboration as topics of interest, the knowledge and skills identified by the formal literature and seasoned SEA/ELA interviewees also merit attention.

  If the crux of leadership is mobilizing others to engage in the work of achieving common purpose, the following topics would seem to be particularly relevant: (1) developing increased self-knowledge and awareness of oneself as a leader, including understanding one's own "immunity to change"; (2) systems thinking; (3) in depth understanding of collaboration—which may differ from survey respondents' ideas about "working collaboratively" —and what it means to engage new stakeholders;

(4) strategic thinking in a political context; (5) using data to inform and monitor change; (6) negotiation; and (7) managing conflict/difficult conversations.

THE CEELO CONTEXT

Key questions remain for the CEELO management team as it designs the EELA in the coming months. No one leadership program can do it all, which helps at least partially explain the proliferation of leadership programs on a wide array of topics. Questions include:

- What is CEELO's capacity for implementing and staffing a multi-faceted leadership development academy?
- What is the anticipated trajectory for EELA over the next four years and beyond?
- Who will serve as faculty and will there be a core faculty?
- Is there a target audience beyond the broad umbrella of SEA/ELA administrators (see Appendix B for the range of views Management Team members expressed related to potential target audience for EELA)?
- What changes in knowledge, skills, and behavior does CEELO most want its leadership academy to foster?
- How will it know if the Academy succeeds?
- To what extent is CEELO interested in putting its imprint on the EELA in terms of content?
- What, if any, leadership development priorities are emerging based on the Management Team's expanding knowledge of SEA/ELA content and leadership needs and interests?
- Does attention need to be given to "managing" the time and attention of CEELO's primary audience as their access expands to a growing number of webinars and learning communities?
- What is the role of K–3 SEA specialists in the context of CEELO's "Early Childhood and K–Grade 3 SEA Administrator" framework?
- What does it mean to be "strategic, agile, responsive, and flexible" in the context of designing an early education leadership academy?
- What opportunities and/or downsides exist in considering effective partnerships with other TA providers in designing an early learning leadership academy?

ACTION SUGGESTIONS

The following 11 action suggestions reflect findings from the information gathering efforts outlined in the preceding pages, as well as CEELO's current context and resources:

1. Consistent with EELA's description as cross-cutting and intensive technical assistance, m*aximize integration—to the extent meaningful—with CEELO's program components*, such as its annual convening, ongoing TA support, recognized content experts, and the expertise of the CEELO Management Team. In other words, infuse priority leadership knowledge, skills, and behaviors in all facets of CEELO's work.

2. *Fuse EELA's content around job embedded projects*. Organize the EELA around participant self-selected projects drawn from CEELO's five priority focus areas and performance measures. This feature optimizes the probability that survey respondents' topical priorities of visioning, change management, working collaboratively, and engaging new partners can be meaningful addressed while also helping drive CEELO's performance outcomes.

3. *Employ an application process.* Have prospective participants submit an application that includes a synopsis of a proposed project based on one of CEELO's five priority focus areas and performance measures accompanied by the endorsement of a supervisor and the written support of a manager/supervisor/colleague who will support their implementation efforts by meeting with them to discuss the plan and its execution. This step would indicate a level of participant and agency motivation and commitment, inform the EELA's composition, ensure participants have ongoing support, and offer a context for planning the first EELA meeting. This approach would, of course, necessitate developing an application and review process along with transparent selection criteria.

    Projects could be organized not only around a topic area but also incorporation of X number of defined behaviors of interest to CEELO—incorporated by the applicant as development goals in his/her application. By way of example, these might include: use of data, intra and/or cross agency partnerships, collaboration, internal and/or external organizational capacity development, system development, and promotion of sustainability. This feature would help ensure that desired early learning, management, and leadership content are part of the proposed project.

4. *Craft an extended timeframe for the EELA*. Interviewees asked about format options for the EELA overwhelmingly indicated interest in an extended timeframe that included face-to-face time that was highly interactive. Many commented that webinars do not

hold their attention and lend themselves to multi-tasking. Two individuals suggested as an alternative video teleconferencing, including the varied technologies offered by Go To Meeting. If online learning is pursued, CEELO should consider and contact developers of higher education programs offering hybrid models of face-to-face and online learning, to gather their insights on maximizing online learning opportunities.

One potential scenario might be a semester or a nine-month leadership development experience. The format could draw upon online learning modes (e.g., webinars) only to transmit technical information and, if feasible, use video-conferencing for interactive exchange around focused topics between face-to-face interactions. In this scenario, the first meeting of the EELA would be at least 2-days in duration—a minimum number of days expressed by interviewees—so participants can forge relationships in the context of the EELA. This face-to-face session would also allow participants to engage with new content, further develop their projects with support from colleagues working on similar topics and from content experts and "assigned" coaches (see below), and, finally, allow for individual and shared reflections.

5. *Use a cohort model* so participants can (a) develop and deepen relationships, hopefully opening themselves to more forthright exchanges and (b) organize into learning communities based on selection of the same topic (see below). A range of projects within a selected topic area is a pedagogical advantage in this regard.

6. *Identify the EELA's core management and leadership content*, weaving it throughout the EELA. Developing increased self-knowledge and awareness of oneself as a leader, including understanding of one's own "resistance to change" (perhaps incorporating activities such as gathering input from others about one's knowledge, skills, and success as a collaborator, change leader, and so forth); systems thinking; in depth understanding of collaboration; strategic thinking in a political context; using data to inform decision-making, continuous improvement, and one's leadership credibility; and negotiation and conflict management. CEELO's existing web based resource materials could be expanded to include management and leadership topics.

7. *Use CEELO advisors,* as well as Management Team members, as content resources who can be accessed by participants and also be used to develop on-line instructional content.

8. *Rely on CEELO Management Team members and seasoned SEA/ELA administrators (past and present) to provide individualized coaching* to participants. If possible, coaches

should be assigned based on experiences tackling a project similar to one chosen by a participant. This suggestion, at its best, would include providing at least one training for this cadre to review EELA's content and optimize coaching skills. Conference calls among coaches scheduled during the EELA could be structured to facilitate mutual learning and advise the program's continuing development of face-to-face meetings and between meeting exchanges.

9. *Create learning communities organized by topic area.* Organize participants working on the same topic area as a learning community and make it possible for them to engage with one another through conferencing—audio and video—to learn with and from each other. To maximize the potential of this learning opportunity, participants should be provided with the knowledge and skills associated with effective learning communities and the chance to practice these skills at least during the first face-to-face meeting of the EELA.

10. *Anticipate the need for EELA's sustainability* by building the capacity of the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE) to assume responsibility for the EELA. This suggestion was sparked by an interviewee comment. The NAECS-SDE SDE is a CEELO strategic partner and a primary recipient/requestor of CEELO technical assistance; therefore, this approach could result in expansion of the overall leadership capacity of the ECE field as well as of SEA/ELA administrators and contribute to the sustainability of the EELA in future years.

11. *Assess EELA's effectiveness.* Given the opportunity EELA has to contribute to ECE leadership development and the capacity of the U.S. Department of Education to reach its goals for school readiness and school success, build in, from the beginning, formative and summative assessments. Beyond budgetary and staff implications, moving forward on this action suggestion depends on CEELO's response to questions of purpose and desired outcome(s) for the EELA, and for the study itself.

Given the negligible attention paid to SEA/ELA administrators' development as leaders, the EELA would seem poised to make an important contribution to ECE leadership development and to supporting the U.S. Department of Education's goals to improve the quality of the early learning workforce and young children's preparation for success in Kindergarten and beyond.

   Together, the findings and action suggestions presented in this report provide guidance to CEELO in crafting an implementation plan. Yet there are decisions to be made regarding CEELO's leadership priorities, target audience, budget and internal capacity to support the EELA, and desired results before an implementation plan can be fully realized. Although the action suggestions steer around these still needed puzzle pieces, this report offers a platform for deliberating these critical questions central to ensuring effective design, content, and execution of the EELA.

REFERENCES

American Psychologist. (2007). *Special Issue: Leadership, 62* (1).

Argysis, C. (1991, May–June). Teaching smart people how to learn. *Harvard Business Review*, 99–109.

Avolio, B. J. (2007). Promoting more integrative strategies for leadership theory-building. *American Psychologist*, *62*(1), 25–33.

Bennis, W. (2007). The challenges of leadership in the modern world: Introduction to the Special Issue. *American Psychologist, 62*(1), 2–5.

Binder, E. B., & Kramer, K. (2013, June). *Facing the future: How successful nonprofits link strategy to leadership development.* The Bridgespan Group.

Boesen, N. (2010). Institutions, power and politics. In J. Ubels, N-A Acquaye-Baddoo, & A. Fowler (Eds.), *Capacity development in practice* (pp. 145–155). London: Earthscan.

Brown, C. G., Hess, F. M., Lautzenheiser, D.K., & Owen, I. (2011, July). *State Education Agencies as agents for change: What will it take for the states to step up on education reform*? Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

Chapman, J. (2004). *System failure: Why governments must learn to think differently* (2nd Ed.). London: Demos [www.demos.co.uk].

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2008)*. Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards for School Leaders.* As adopted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. Washington, DC: Author.

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2012). *Our responsibility. Our promise. Transforming educator preparation and entry into the profession*. Washington, DC: Author.

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2013a). 2013 CCSSO Summer Institute Agenda. Washington, DC: Author.

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2013b). *CCSSO state capacity performance reviews framework*. A Council of Chief State School Officers work product developed by EducationCounsel, the Center for Educational Leadership and Technology, and education consultant Valerie Woodruff.

Dahlin, M. (2013). Findings from review of Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge applications. [Unpublished manuscript.]

Dia, B., & Eggink, J. W. (2010). Leadership, the hidden factor in capacity development: A West African Experience. In J. Ubels, N-A Acquaye-Baddoo, & A. Fowler (Eds.), *Capacity development in practice* (pp. 208–224). London: Earthscan.

Ely, R. J., Ibarra, H., & Kolb, D. (2011, September). Taking gender into account: Theory and design for women's leadership development programs. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 10*(3), 474–493. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amle.2010.0046

Nickerson, J., Sanders, R., Kamarck, E. et al. (2013, August). *Enterprise leadership: The essential framework for today's government leaders*. Panel presentation at The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://www.brookings.edu/events/2013/08/14-enterprise-leadership-government

Panelists included co-editors of *Tackling Wicked Government Problems* Jackson Nickerson and Ron Sanders, as well as some of the contributors. Brookings Senior Fellow Elaine Kamarck, director of the Management and Leade

European Commission. (2005). *Reference Document No. 1: Institutional assessment and capacity development: Why, what and how*. Luxemburg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European Commission. (2010). *Reference Document No. 6: Toolkit for Capacity Development.* Luxemburg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Foster-Fishman, P., Nowell, B., & Yang, H. (2007) Putting the system back into systems change: A framework for understanding and changing organizational and community systems. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 39,* 197–215.

Fowler, A., & Ubels, J. (2010). The multi-faceted nature of capacity: Two leading frameworks. In J. Ubels, N-A Acquaye-Baddoo, & A. Fowler (Eds.), *Capacity development in practice* (pp.11–24). London: Earthscan.

Franks, R. P., & Schroeder, J. (2013). Implementation science: What do we know and where do we go from here? In T. Halle, A. Metz, & I. Martinez-Beck (Eds.), *Applying implementation science in early childhood programs and systems* (pp. 5–19). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Fullan, M. (2008, April 9). School leadership's unfinished agenda. *Education Week*, *27*(32), 36, 28.

Goffin, S. G., & Janke, M. (2013, May). *Early childhood education leadership development compendium*: *A view of the landscape* (2nd ed)*. Washington, DC: Goffin Strategy Group. Retrieved from www.goffinstrategygroup.com

Goffin, S. G., & Means, K. (2009, September). *Leadership development in early care and education: A view of the current landscape.* Washington, DC: Goffin Strategy Group. Retrieved from available at www.goffinstrategygroup.com

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam.

Gross, B., & Jochim, A. (2013, May). Leveraging performance management to support school improvement. *The SEA of the Future, 1*(1). Building State Capacity and Productivity Center at Edvance Research, Inc.

Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2005). When and how team leadership matter. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *26,* 37–74.

Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2007). Asking the right questions about leadership: Discussion and conclusions. *American Psychologist, 62*(1), 43–47.

Halle, T., Zaslow, M., Martinez-Beck, I., & Metz, A. (2013). Applications of implementation science to early care and education programs and systems: Implications for research, policy, and practice. In T. Halle, A. Metz, & I. Martinez-Beck (Eds.). *Applying implementation science in early childhood programs and systems* (pp. 295–314). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Harvard Graduate School of Education. (n.d.). *Doctor of Education Leadership*. Retrieved from http://www.gse.harvard.edu/academics/doctorate/edld/

Heifetz, R., Grashow, A. , & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and your world*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.

Jochim, A. E., & May, P. J. (2010). Beyond subsystems: Policy regimes and governance. *Policy Studies Journal*, 38(2), 303–327.

Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011, Winter). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, 9*(1), 36–41.

Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. L. (2001). *How the way we talk can change the way we work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. L. (2009). *Immunity to change: How to overcome it and unlock the potential in yourself and your organization*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

Kellerman, B. (2004). *Bad leadership: What it is, how it happens, why it matters*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Kellerman, B. (2008). *Followership: How followers are creating change and changing leaders*. Boston: Harvard Business Press.

Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard Business Press.

Kotter, J. P. (2008). *A sense of urgency*. Boston: Harvard Business Press.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (1997). *The leadership challenge: How to keep getting extraordinary things done in organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Leadership Learning Community. (n.d.). *A new leadership mindset for scaling social change*. Retrieved from http://leadershiplearning.org/new-leadership-mindset-download

McGonagill, G., & Dorffer, T. (2012). New leadership in a web 2.0 world. *Systems Thinker*, 23(3), 2–6.

Meehan, D., & Reinelt, C. (2012, October). Leadership and networks: New ways of developing leadership in a highly connected world. *Leadership for a New Era Series*. Retrieved from http://www.leadershiplearning.org/new-report-leadership-and-networks-new-ways-developing-leadership-highly-connected-world

Minnici, A., & Hill, D. D. (May 2007). *Educational architects: Do state education agencies have the tools to implement NCLB*? Washington, DC: Center on Education Policy.

Morgan, P. (March 2005). *The idea and practice of systems thinking and their relevance for capacity building*. The Netherlands: European Center for Development Policy Management.

Murphy, P., & Ouijdani, M. (2011*). State capacity for school improvement.* Washington, DC: Center on Reinventing Public Education.

Office for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2006). *The challenge of capacity development: Working toward good practice.* Paris: OECD Publishing.

Redding, S. (2012). *Change leadership: Innovation in State Education Agencies*. Lincoln, IL: Academic Development Institute.

Regenstein, E., & Lipper, K. (2013, February). *A framework for choosing a state-level early childhood governance structure*. Retrieved from www.buildinitiative.org

Reed, G. E. (2006, May–June). Leadership and systems thinking. *Defense AT&L*, 10–13.

Richter, I. (2010). Riding the pendulum between 'clocks' and 'clouds': The history of OD and its relation to CD. In J. Ubels, N-A Acquaye-Baddoo, & A. Fowler (Eds.), *Capacity development in practice* (pp. 101–116). London: Earthscan.

Schwein, E. H. (2004). *Organizational culture and leadership* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Snowden, D. J., & Boone, M.E. (2007, November). A leader's framework for decision making. *Harvard Business Review*, pp. 69–76.

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Doubleday.

Senge, P., Smith, B., Kruschwitz, N., Laur, J. & Schley, S. (2010). *The necessary revolution: Working together to create a sustainable world*. New York: Broadway Books.

Sternberg, R. J. (2007). A systems model of leadership, *American Psychologist*, 62(1), 34–42.

Ubels, J., Fowler, A., & Acquaye-Baddoo, N-A. (2010). A resource volume on capacity development. In J. Ubels, N-A Acquaye-Baddoo, & A. Fowler (Eds.), *Capacity development in practice* (pp. 1–8). London: Earthscan.

Ubels, J., Acquaye-Baddoo, N-A., & Fowler, A. (Eds.). (2010). *Capacity development in practice*. London: Earthscan.

United States Office of Personnel Management. (June 2010). *Senior executive services qualifications. Executive Core Qualifications*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/senior-executive-service/executive-core-qualifications/

van der Heijden, K. (2005). *Scenarios: The art of strategic conversations* (2nd ed.). West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons.

Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (2007). The role of the situation in leadership. *American Psychologist, 62*(1), 17–24.

Waddell, S., Faber, K., Haertle, J., & Mauro, A., & Grejin, H. (2013, January). *Inter-organisational learning: A new frontier*. Retrieved from http://www.capacity.org/capacity/opencms/en/topics/learning/interorganisational-learning-a-new-frontier.html

Zaccaro, S. J. (2007). Trait-based perspective of leadership. *American Psychologist, 62*(1), 6–16.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY

LITERATURE REVIEW

The goal of this data collection activity was to inform the design and content of a leadership academy—not to serve as a formal and academic review of the full body of literature on leadership and leadership development. The literature review focused on over 50 sources—articles, books, and white papers—that were pertinent to developing an EELA and related to CEELO's four Guiding Principles. Topics included SEA/ELA's changing context, systems thinking, leadership and its development, organizational change, and capacity development.

ADMINISTRATORS ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

States' early learning governance structures were gleaned from an analysis of state's Race to the Top-Early Learning Applications (section A-3). As part of their applications, many states discussed existing and proposed changes to effect greater coordination and governance of early learning programs, and these entries provided the basis for understanding the diverse options states are considering, implementing, and/or have executed.

SURVEY OF SEA/ELA ADMINISTRATORS

CEELO used Survey Monkey online software to conduct its survey of SEA/ELA staff. Surveys were distributed to 109 individuals on CEELO's list of SEA/ELAs, which is inclusive of all states and territories, and 42 individuals completed the survey. CEELO's directors, Lori Connors-Tadros and Jana Martella, and author/investigator, Stacie Goffin, constructed the survey questions, which examined two categories of interest: respondents' past leadership development experiences and leadership and management topics they consider of high priority.

INTERVIEWS

Seventeen formal interviews were conducted with SEA/ELA early learning administrators. In addition, the author gathered input from Sharon Ryan, and Tom Schultz gathered information from Reyna Hernandez, Jacqueline Jones, Camille Maben, Anna Serverens, Sara Slaughter, and Sharon Triolo-Moloney (see Table 1 on page 18 for list of interviewees and their roles). Interviewees were drawn from recommendations provided by CEELO's co-directors and other Management Team members. Interviews were a combination of individual and "cohort" interviews, the latter typically involving two

interviewees. This approach reflected a desire to foster exchange between select interviewees as well as extend the number of interviewees informing this work. Conflicting schedules undermined the possibility, as initially hoped, of hosting one call with state leaders from initial Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge awardees, resulting in two 2-person calls and one individual interview with this group of administrators.

By intention, SEA/ELA interviewees occupied a range of state agency structures, performed a diverse set of roles with varying levels of authority, budget, colleagues and/or staff oversight, and worked in states with different commitment levels to ECE. In addition, two interviewees were chosen for their intimate knowledge of educational leadership issues.

Interview questions were drafted and shared with the CEELO Management Team for comment. As noted at the time, these questions—and their number - would be customized to each interviewee, taking into account each interviewee's role. Interviewees received the questions two days prior to their call. The confirmation letter (see Appendix C) informed interviewees that unless they advised me to the contrary, I would be free to incorporate their thinking (albeit without attribution) into this report. Interviews extended from one hour to an hour and a half. A compilation of interview questions can be found in Appendix D.

Interviews were characterized as informal conversations. This approach fostered a highly interactive exchange and allowed for probing of different lines of thinking, enriching the conversation and expanding the information gathered.

Additionally, at the start of the work, CEELO Management Team members were asked to respond to four questions on their thinking about the EELA, which are listed in the text box to the right. Appendix B includes a compilation of answers received from four team members to these questions.

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONS ON THE EARLY EDUCATION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
COMPILATION OF CEELO MANAGEMENT TEAM RESPONSES

Four CEELO Management Team members responded to the four (4) questions listed below.
_____

1. The SEA Leadership Academy (Academy) is intended to "build understanding and capacity of leaders in SEAs to improve outcomes for young children." What is your present thinking about the Academy, how it might be structured, and its content?

- Over time, I think the Academy should in some way provide development along the entire continuum of SEA early childhood office staff (NOTE: staff responsibilities and budgets may offer a selection criteria). I expect the Academy to engage a small number of state leaders in a mixed delivery model (face-to-face meeting(s) and interactive learning community(ies) involving multiple technologies and methods during a prescribed period of time.

- Work with a cohort of SEA early childhood leaders, providing a mix of expert presentations/webinar; peer learning/networking; possibly an individual project; possibly mentoring by alumnae state leaders.

  Duration of 12-24 months so we could potentially do several cohorts in grant years 2-5.

  Ideally 1 or 2 in-person events – possibly weekend retreat.

  Content would be a mix of early childhood/state policy content, and personal/organizational leadership skills/research

- The leadership issue is about position of authority/influence, skills, knowledge, and relationships. Presently there are SEAs where people in positions of authority lack depth of knowledge, appropriate skills, and the necessary relationships (not mandated by appointment as with ECACs) to advance things. Conversely, there are people with sufficient knowledge, skills, and relationships who play secondary leadership roles, mostly advisory or managerial.

  Given this, I think a Leadership Academy needs to address fundamental knowledge of the field, skills (communication/collaboration, facilitation, leadership, data-savvy, problem solving tools/techniques similarly to those used in business (e.g., Memory Jogger), and topic specific collaborative projects. Also, participants need knowledge of their state's legislative and regulatory processes, including how to identify key supporters. Mentorship and coaching are en vogue, yet still valuable; so I'd emphasize a process whereby they interview/adopt a mentor and engage in coaching.

The format should be a sustained effort (multiple times to connect to learn, share, and get feedback), be project oriented, and result in a product or plan for future application.

2. Who do you see as the target participants from the SEAs?

- SEA early childhood specialists, and depending on the state, their SEA divisional colleagues in curriculum, instruction, professional development, accountability, etc. (b) SEA early childhood specialists' direct supervisors and those they report to the influence B-3rd grade policy, practice, and funding decisions either directly or indirectly.

- State early childhood specialists managing pre-k programs as well as policy development/program improvement for children birth-3rd grade in SEAs.

- Primary: State early childhood administrators and specialists (may include Head Start Collaboration Coordinators depending on the state), commissioner/superintendent (ideally but not realistic) or their deputies.

  Secondary: SEA curriculum and assessment specialists, Title 1 coordinators, Special Education coordinators, Head Start State Collaboration coordinators in in SEA, governor's early childhood liaisons (ECAC or special gubernatorial councils)

- Initially, SEA Early Learning Leads with the possibility of either expanding or engaging other SEA stakeholders, inclusive of the "extra" state agencies.

3. What changes do you think are needed within SEA early childhood offices to effect early childhood outcomes? Please be as specific as possible.

- Ensuring the governance and organizational structure is clear and good communication exists between departments and staff across early childhood and K-3.

- More knowledgeable staff (more bodies), effective/flexible early childhood teams that span PreK-3rd grade, Superintendent/Commissioner buy-in, outside technical assistance, DAP as an SEA value (not just ECE), understanding of how to demonstrate effectiveness through data

- Elevating the leadership skills of SEA early childhood staff so their offices are high performing and directed at performing and directed at effecting changes in programs, ultimately resulting in child outcomes. Making child outcomes the lodestar so SEA leaders will gather the information needed, reflect and plan with that information, and take actions necessary for organizational improvement.

- Most SEAs are woefully under-resourced in terms of staff/consultants/contractors to manage and monitor and drive improvement of 0-5 programs and K-3rd grade. SEAS have worked hard to develop standards (program, child, teacher) but don't have timely, credible data on where children, teachers, and programs stand in relation to those standards, nor proven mechanisms for driving/guiding improvement in relation to standards.

The idea of a birth-grade 3 "system" is not fleshed out or very widely shared; local educators/administrators see themselves as categorized in traditional ways by funding sources or institutions (e.g., elementary school principals).

Most governors/chiefs/legislators see early childhood as an add-on special initiative vs. a core component of education reform and as an option for funding with discretionary dollars for some children vs. a core public responsibility.

Guidance from SEAs to ECE teachers and program managers on best practices is lacking. Practitioners are overwhelmed with voluminous standards and regulations and publications but aren't getting clear pictures of how to work with children to accelerate their learning progress, nor how to work successfully with extremely diverse classrooms of teachers.

4. What are the three to five leadership skills and/or new knowledge that you would like SEA participants to gain from the Leadership Academy?

- Change management
- Interpersonal relationships
- Organizational effectiveness
- Birth through 3rd grade learning pedagogy
- Role of families and communities in children's learning – in and out of the school day and across ages/grades

- How to lead change/program improvement as mid-level managers in state government, i.e., using the levers that state government provides (policy issuances/regulations; professional development initiatives; program monitoring and technical assistance;; funding) to improve the quality and effectiveness of publicly funded programs for young children, birth-3rd grade.
- People skills/strategic judgment in managing one's boss/boss' boss and leading/managing the work of less experienced/more junior staff members or people employed as consultants/intermediate unit or higher education partners.
- Making the most of opportunities presented by state legislation, budgets, priorities of state policymakers; federal initiatives/funding to advance an agenda.
- Communicating/motivating change – how to speak and write and use varied forms of media and technology to convey a vision of high quality early learning and care; a pathway from current realities to higher levels of quality; convincing the different sectors of early care and education to work together; persuading K-12 superintendents/principals to make ECE a priority in education reform strategies and a funding priority.
- Technical expertise in an array of areas: child and program assessment tools; using evaluation studies and child/program assessment data for continuous improvement; use of technology in classrooms and for professional development; implications of emerging research in child development/early childhood pedagogy.
- Possibly time management; work/family/personal balance; career planning (how long to stay in state government/what to do next).

- ❖ Ability to gather, analyze, and take action on pertinent data
- ❖ Effective management/problem solving
- ❖ Navigating bureaucracies, including managing up

- ❖ Organizing for innovation

- ➢ Communication skills and relationship building (dealing with difficult people/situations; persuasive writing)
- ➢ Outcome-oriented project planning, development, management and leadership (tools for planning and monitoring progress)
- ➢ Using data to effectively communicate progress and plan for improvement
- ➢ Stress management
- ➢ Awareness of resources and support

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW CONFIRMATION LETTER

Dear :

I am writing to confirm our telephone interview for <u>XXXX</u> to discuss your thoughts on an Early Education Leadership Academy to be sponsored by CEELO. You can join the call by dialing YYYY/ I will call you at YYYY.

The interview will last XXX minutes. The questions I'm hoping we can explore together are below. The information gained will be used to inform recommendations submitted to CEELO regarding a planned leadership development opportunity for SEA state early childhood leaders. Specifically, CEELO plans to develop, pilot, and implement an Early Education Leadership Academy (EELA) for SEAs that prepares early education leaders to facilitate change efforts that contribute to improved educational quality and outcomes for young children.

This interview is confidential, meaning I will not link your name to any specific quotes or comments you make without your permission. I will be taking notes, though, and it's possible interviews will be shared with CEELO staff. If so, identifying information will be removed.

If for some reason you no longer are able to participate at this date and time, please contact me at sggoffin@goffinstrategygroup.com or 202.986.1661 to reschedule.

Thank you again for being willing to share your time and expertise with me.

Sincerely,
-stacie goffin

APPENDIX D
COMPILATION OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- *No common definition exists for leadership. So to begin,*
  How do you define leadership? How does your definition inform the way in which you exercise leadership?

- *To the extent that leadership knowledge and skills can be generalized,* what would you consider as the most important leadership knowledge and skills for SEA early childhood leadership (birth to age 8)?

- Do you have a vision for the leadership exercised by SEAs as it affects early learning? If so, what is it?

- Is there a distinction in your mind between professional development and leadership development? If so, how would you distinguish them?

- *While acknowledging the crucial role of context,* what would you identify as the change levers most available to SEA early learning leaders?

- What would you consider the most important leadership knowledge and skills needed for performing your role?

- What do you think a high-performing SEA/Early Learning Agency/department should look like? How should a high-performing SEA early childhood office improve programs, teaching, and outcomes?

  What would you consider the most important leadership knowledge and skills needed to get to these results?

- As you reflect on your accomplishments to date, what knowledge, skills, and/or conditions would you identify as being central to effecting the changes you've promoted or are in the process of implementing?

- What obstacles have you encountered in implementing leadership as you've defined it? What knowledge and skills have you applied to overcome these obstacles?

- *You are recognized as an accomplished leader.* As you reflect on your accomplishments to date, to what do you attribute your effectiveness? What knowledge and skills would you identify as being central to effecting the changes you've promoted?

- What do you wish you were better at in terms of leadership skills/abilities – and why?

- What new leadership knowledge and skills have you had to acquire in order to be an effective leader? What has been the most difficult for you to learn and/or execute? [Prompt: Why do you think that is? What kind of support would you have found useful?]

OR

- What new leadership knowledge and skills have you had to acquire as your responsibilities have expanded? What new leadership knowledge and skills, if any, have you needed to acquire given [insert state] state education agency structure?

- Are there shifts in the political/economic/social context that are causing you to rethink your approach to exercising leadership? If so, what are they?

- Do you think there are there specific skills or capacities necessary for effective leadership with State Education Agencies that might differ from the exercise of leadership in other agencies or organizations?

- What unique catalytic role/contribution do think SEAs can and should make to early childhood education?

- What does a high-performing SEA early childhood office look like?

  What would you consider the most important leadership knowledge and skills needed to get to these results? Do you feel these are sufficiently present in your staff and if not, what are your thoughts on capacity building?

- What have you done – or are you doing – to extend the capacity of your office and/or agency so the gains made during your tenure will be sustained?

- *[Insert state] is strongly promoting development of a P-3 continuum*. What would you identify as the change levers most available for generating this new relationship between the Birth to Five and K-3rd grade systems?

  What leadership knowledge and skills do you think are going to be needed for this to be accomplished – from you? From your staff and/or from other staff?

- Now that the WV Office of Early Learning extends up to grade 5, do you envision the ECE staff needing expanded leadership knowledge and skills? If so, what is your thinking in this regard?

- Now that the Office of Early Childhood is part of the Bureau of Teaching and Learning, do you envision the ECE staff needing expanded leadership knowledge and skills? If so, what is your thinking in this regard?

- What new leadership knowledge and skills have you had to acquire in order to effectively coalesce stakeholders around the development and execution of the RTT-ELC? What has been the most difficult to execute?

- What new leadership knowledge and skills have you had to acquire as things have shifted in North Carolina, both organizationally and politically – as well as the new context created by the Early Learning Challenge grant?

- As you reflect on your tenure at the US Department of Education, what did you observe as the strengths and growth opportunities for early childhood individuals in SEAS/free-

standing departments? How do these reflections align with your experiences during your tenure in New Jersey's SEA?

- *We want the Leadership Academy to be responsive to the needs and interests of SEA early learning leaders.* If you were designing a Leadership Academy for individuals in your role, how would you advise us? What would you suggest as the most important content focus in terms of leadership knowledge and/or skill?
  What suggestions do you have regarding the Academy's design/format? What would you view as a reasonable time commitment to request of participants? What would you propose in terms of the Academy's time frame?

  What suggestions do you have regarding the Academy's design/format? What would you view as a reasonable time commitment to request of participants? What would you propose in terms of the Academy's time frame?

- Tell me about the thought process that went into developing the Educational Leadership Studies program? What informed the program's learning priorities?

  Are there lessons learned from the program that CEELO can benefit from?

  What would you identify as key content priorities for CEELO's Early Education Leadership Academy?

- What else should I be asking you about expanding the leadership capacity of SEAs/Early Learning Agencies?

APPENDIX E
CEELO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY SURVEY

CEELO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
SEEKING YOUR INPUT - EARLY EDUCATION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The preparation and professional development of state leaders is critical to assuring a seamless and aligned system of early care education for children birth through age 8. CEELO is conducting research to inform the design of technical assistance in 2014 for SEA leaders of early childhood and early elementary programs. We plan to develop, pilot and implement an Early Education Leadership Academy (EELA) for SEAs that will provide up-to-date knowledge in early education and leadership, and prepare leaders to facilitate change efforts that contribute to improved educational quality and outcomes for young children. The purpose of this survey is to gain greater understanding of the leadership competencies and skills that you think are needed to work effectively within the SEA and across state and other partners to effect change and sustain outcomes for young children. We are also interested in the current opportunities you have to build your own skills and competencies to effectively lead early childhood and early elementary programs.

Note: we refer to Early Education Leadership Academy to include leaders in State Education Agencies with oversight for programs for children birth through kindergarten entry and kindergarten through grade three.

We'd like your input to inform the Academy's development. We would appreciate your responses to the questions below by Monday, July 8.
Thank you!

1. Please provide brief information about your role and responsibilities in your agency.
    ▪ Name programs responsible for
    ▪ Number staff directly supervised
    ▪ Budget overseen [$$]
    ▪ Other responsibilities

2. Has your agency ever supported your leadership development? If so, in what way?
    ▪ Intentional Leadership Development during regularly scheduled staff meetings
    ▪ Direct leadership training [within agency]
    ▪ Higher education course(s) in leadership development [outside agency]
    ▪ Mentor or coaching supports

3. From the following list of leadership attributes, please choose any for which you have had direct training [internal agency or external training]
    ▪ Visioning - leading development of new policies or initiatives
    ▪ Change management - leading implementation of new policies or initiatives
    ▪ Leadership style and practices - helping others make complex decisions
    ▪ Working collaboratively - gaining consensus among different perspectives
    ▪ Engaging new partners – establishing relationships and trust with leaders outside of your own organization or agency
    ▪ Effective staff supervision – team building, training, motivating and influencing to improve practice
    ▪ Group dynamics and effective communication
    ▪ Shared decision-making and distributed leadership

- Leading professional learning communities

4. Please rank these knowledge or skills based on your view of their importance to effective leadership within your agency

1-Not Important   2-   3-Somewhat Important   4-   5-Very Important

- Visioning - leading development of new policies or initiatives
- Change management - leading implementation of new policies or initiatives
- Leadership style and practices - helping others make complex decisions
- Working collaboratively - gaining consensus among different perspectives
- Engaging new partners – establishing relationships and trust with leaders outside of your own organization or agency
- Effective staff supervision – team building, training, motivating and influencing to improve practice
- Group dynamics and effective communication
- Shared decision making and distributed leadership
- Leading professional learning communities

5. Are there specific skills or capabilities necessary for effective leadership within State Education Agencies that might differ from other categories of leadership?

6. Of these or others, what 3 – 5 NEW skills and /or new knowledge would most assist you in building your professional capacity?

AUTHOR BIO
Stacie G. Goffin, Ed.D.

Stacie Goffin is Principal of the Goffin Strategy Group. Established in 2004, the Goffin Strategy Group dedicates itself to building early childhood education's ability to provide effective programs and services for young children through leadership, and capacity- and systems-building. It works with state non-profits and governments, national organizations, and philanthropy. A widely published author, Stacie's conceptual leadership focuses on leadership and advancing early childhood education as a professional field of practice.

Prior to forming the Goffin Strategy Group, Stacie led the five-year effort to redesign the National Association for the Education of Young Children's [NAEYC] early childhood program accreditation system. She is a former senior program officer at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, higher education faculty member, and preschool educator. More information can be found at www.goffinstrategygroup.com.