December 2018

Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes: Year 6 Evaluation Report

October 1, 2017 - September 30, 2018

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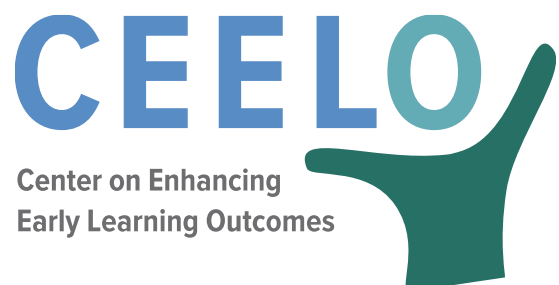Kafilat Oladiran, Education Development Center

CEELO

**Center on Enhancing
Early Learning Outcomes**

Executive Summary

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) is one of 22 comprehensive centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Programs. CEELO was designed to increase the capacity of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to implement comprehensive and aligned early learning systems to increase the number of children from birth through third grade that are prepared to succeed in school.

Between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018 CEELO provided three types of technical assistance (TA): (1) Responsive TA; (2) Strategic TA; and (3) Information Resources and Technology Supported TA.

CEELO engaged in a participatory evaluation in which data were collected over the course of Year 6. The evaluation was designed to: a) assess the degree to which CEELO accomplished planned activities; b) evaluate the nature and quality of CEELO activities; and c) assess the degree to which targeted stakeholders used the TA and other Center activities in their work and reported outcomes; and d) examine the factors that supported or impeded SEAs' efforts to build capacity to implement policy for young children.

Summary of Findings

CEELO exceeded many targets regarding number, type, quality, relevance, and usefulness of activities completed during the year. In Year 6, CEELO TA staff:

- Regularly communicated with federal and private TA providers including the Preschool Development and Expansion Grant (PDG) TA providers, Comprehensive Regional and Content Centers, National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE) and others as needed

- Presented at 15 national and regional meetings

- Completed 44 information requests received during Year 6

- Completed 43 TA requests

- Successfully held a National Roundtable Meeting with 139 participants

- Co-planned and facilitated a fourth cohort of 10 Leadership Academy fellows

- Successfully planned, implemented, and facilitated strategic TA to enhance the effectiveness of State Offices of Early Learning

- Used formative evaluation data to engage in a continuous quality improvement process to enhance the quality, timeliness, relevance and usefulness of CEELO TA and products

- Provided TA that, as reported by recipients, led to changes in knowledge, policy, and practice

- Documented outcomes of CEELO in this report

The accompanying report provides detailed findings from the Year 6 evaluation.

Contents

Introduction

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) is one of 22 comprehensive centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education (USED), Office of Elementary and Secondary Programs. CEELO's technical assistance (TA) is designed to build the capacity of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to implement comprehensive and aligned early learning systems in order to increase the number of children from birth through third grade that are prepared to succeed in school. CEELO's five objectives are to:

1. Improve states' knowledge about and use of early childhood comprehensive assessment systems
2. Enhance states' use of assessment data and other information to improve program quality
3. Help states increase the knowledge and skills of the early learning workforce
4. Strengthen the alignment of birth through third grade educational policies and systems
5. Increase the coordination of resources and policies across statewide systems

CEELO provides universal, targeted, and intensive TA to build the capacity of Regional Comprehensive Centers and SEAs to achieve desired outcomes. CEELO provides each of the eight types of TA that are supported by USED. Table 1 below illustrates the range of TA that CEELO provides and shows the corresponding alignment with definitions identified by the US Department of Education (USED) for Comprehensive Center Annual Management Plans.

Table 1: Types of TA Based on USED Terms with Description of CEELO TA

USED Term	Corresponding CEELO terms (used in the CEELO proposal and database)
Professional Learning	**Professional learning is delivered through Strategic TA** and **Responsive TA** to states when CEELO Center staff collaborates with individuals and groups to design, facilitate, or deliver learning sessions that address a problem or issue-specific concern.
Relationship Brokering	**Relationship brokering is one element of Strategic TA**, for example, our annual meeting ("Roundtable") and Leadership Academy in which CEELO Center staff facilitates collaboration or partnership with another individual or organization who can help address a problem or issue-specific concern.

USED Term	Corresponding CEELO terms (used in the CEELO proposal and database)
Research Synthesis	**Information resources** developed by CEELO Center staff synthesize seminal research on specific topics and provide access by SEAs and other stakeholders to research-based approaches and practices.
Policy Development	**Responsive TA** and **Information Resources** developed by CEELO Center staff are designed to assess, develop, and adapt policies, processes, or procedures that incorporate evidence-based practices.
Tool and Material Development	**Strategic TA** (e.g. Cost of Preschool Quality Tool), **Information Resources** and **Technology-Supported TA** offered by CEELO Center staff including the creation and adaption of information provided during TA into user-friendly tools and resources.
Facilitation	**Strategic TA, Responsive TA**, and **Technology-Supported TA** in which CEELO Center staff convene and facilitate engagement among stakeholders.
Evaluation	**Responsive TA and Information Resources** in which Center staff design and implement formative and/or summative evaluations.
Project Management	Center staff develops processes for tracking and monitoring implementation of programs, projects, or initiatives.

CEELO leadership submitted a Year 6 management plan in September 2017 that identified major tasks designed to build SEA internal and organizational capacity. The ultimate aim of this increased capacity is to achieve sustained improvements in opportunities and outcomes for children from birth through third grade. The management plan articulates an intentional approach to delivering relevant and useful content in ways that maximize the use of technology and leverage the knowledge and expertise of CEELO's federal technical assistance (TA) partners and other national experts. The tasks are organized into the following categories: (1) Responsive TA; (2) Strategic TA; (3) Information Resources (Research Syntheses and Tool and Material Development); and (4) Technology Supported TA (including Evaluation and Project Management). An accompanying logic model illustrates the links between CEELO activities

(organized by task), desired outputs, short-term outcomes, mid-term outcomes and the long-term goal of building SEA capacity. (See **T**able 2 on the following page.)

Table 2: CEELO Logic Model

Inputs	Activities/ Task	Outputs	Short-Term Outcomes	Mid-term Outcomes	Long Term Goal
Grant funding Expertise Organizational Expertise Other comprehensive and regional centers State networks and contact	Offer responsive TA Offer strategic TA Develop information and resources Provide technology supported TA	Number and quality of responsive, strategic and technology-enhanced TA opportunities Number of products Percentage of recipients who report products and TA are high quality	Improve stakeholder knowledge of research, best practice and effective policies in five priority areas	Improve policies in each of five priority areas	Build/strengthen SEA capacity to support birth through third grade services and policies that lead to improvements in early learning outcomes

The logic model guided the development of the evaluation questions, analyses and reporting framework which are presented in the next section.

Evaluation Design

A senior CEELO staff member with experience directing research and evaluation projects led the evaluation of CEELO Year 6 activities with input from CEELO's project co-director and director. Members of the CEELO Management Team developed summaries of TA activities and the evaluation team reviewed the CEELO database, survey data, and other data collected to verify the accuracy of the information included in these summaries.

The evaluation was designed to answer the following questions:

1. Did the project complete planned activities during Year 6 (October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018)? Did the project meet the identified benchmarks noted in the Year 6 management plan?

2. How did stakeholders evaluate the quality, relevance, and usefulness of CEELO activities?

3. How did target stakeholders use the TA and other CEELO activities in their work and what outcomes were associated with CEELO supports?

4. What factors supported or impeded SEA's efforts to build capacity to implement services and policy for young children?

5. What changes should CEELO make to improve TA to better achieve desired outcomes?

CEELO collected data on Year 6 activities, from October 1, 2017 through December 15, 2018. The findings conveyed in this report are based on an analysis of: a) data entered into a CEELO TA database that includes information reported by TA providers regarding each responsive TA request received, b) surveys administered after CEELO strategic TA including surveys after webinars, the annual roundtable, and conference presentations; 4) surveys administered by TA recipients after concluding responsive TA; 5) documents such as changes in policies at the state level or emails sent to CEELO by TA recipients that provide evidence of perceptions regarding CEELO TA or evidence of changes that stakeholders attribute being informed by CEELO. A snapshot of the key methods is presented in **Table 3.** Further information about the data sources are presented in **Appendix A**.

Table 3: Data Collection Activities

Evaluation Activity	Target Audience	Purpose	Number
Annual Survey	Recipients of CEELO strategic and responsive TA	Obtain perspectives regarding the quality and reported outcomes of CEELO's TA	56
Post Responsive TA Survey	State specialists and early childhood stakeholders receiving responsive TA	Obtain perspectives regarding quality and reported outcomes of TA	55[2]

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[2] A survey was sent to recipients of TA asking about the timeliness, usefulness, and relevance of the TA they received.

Evaluation Activity	Target Audience	Purpose	Number
Post Strategic TA Surveys	Participants in the strategic TA including the Roundtable, Leadership Academy, Peer Exchanges, and Cost of Preschool Quality TA	Obtain perspectives regarding quality and reported outcomes of the strategic TA	171
Information Gathering Surveys	State early childhood specialists and stakeholders working to advance early learning priorities	Obtain information to guide TA planning, advance state early learning priorities, and document progress	90
Document reviews – Surveys and Feedback	Evaluation survey summaries provided by recipients of strategic and responsive TA, emails and other documents	Obtain verification of analyses from reviews of surveys and interviews	NA
Database and log reviews	Reviews of TA database, Info line database, and logs produced by CEELO TA providers	Determine the number of requests and the number of states we have provided TA and information in response to requests. Describe the nature and intensity of the TA. Analyze data to create summaries that describe the nature, intensity and impact of the TA. Analyze quality of the data to improve consistency and usefulness of data.	
Document review- Product Targets	Project communications Web analytics CEELO products (e.g., policy briefs and documents)	Determine number of resources posted on website, number of publications by type, etc. to inform whether met targets in Year 6 Management Plan.	

Findings

The presentation of key findings is organized based on the evaluation questions. The first section answers the question about whether CEELO accomplished planned activities and the degree to which benchmarks were attained. The next section answers questions about the quality, relevance, and usefulness of TA offered to state early education administrators and collaborators. The final section answers questions about how state policy contexts support or impede CEELO efforts to build capacity.

> *Evaluation Question 1: Did CEELO implement activities as described in the Year 6 Management Plan? Did CEELO meet articulated targets?*

CEELO Met Responsive TA Benchmarks

CEELO responded to 43 TA requests from most regions of the country. CEELO addressed responsive TA requests from early childhood specialists in state education agencies (SEAs), early childhood stakeholders representing other state agencies that oversee early childhood policies and services, regional centers, other comprehensive content centers, and other TA providers. Table 4 presents the degree to which CEELO TA providers met planned output targets during Year 6.

Table 4: Responsive TA

Planned Output Target	Actual Output and Description – Year 6
Collaborate with the PDG TA Center, Regional and Content Centers, NAECS-SDE, and other national and federal TA providers/organizations	CEELO TA staff regularly communicated with federal and private TA providers including the PDG TA Center, Regional and Content Centers, NAECS-SDE and others as needed.
Attend and/or present at **4** national/regional meetings on topics of relevance to SEA and CEELO priorities	CEELO TA staff presented at **15** national and regional meetings.
Respond to 100% of information requests	CEELO addressed **all of the 44** information requests received in Year 6.

Respond to 100% of TA requests.	CEELO completed **43** TA requests received from 33 different states.

CEELO participated in regular calls with federal and private TA providers. The project directors regularly participated in regular calls with the Preschool Development Grant TA providers to share updates about the nature of the TA they were providing to the states. The coordination led to joint TA in many states that is described in Box 2 in the next section. CEELO also coordinated TA with Regional and Content Centers. For example, CEELO and the Northeast Comprehensive Center provided joint-TA to the New York State Department of Education to build their capacity to support Preschool through Third Grade (P-3) initiatives in selected districts in New York.

CEELO coordinated activities with the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE) through regular communication. CEELO's project directors met monthly with the Executive Committee and CEELO staff regularly participated on monthly policy committee calls. Each year, CEELO identifies 2 co-chairs of the Annual Roundtable, and these staff and others participate on the program planning committee of the CEELO Roundtable.

CEELO staff regularly participates on the NAECS-SDE listserv, providing and sharing resources to members. Listserv members pose questions around policy on the listserv, and CEELO has taken an active role in compiling these responses, analyzing the results, and disseminating findings with members – three threads became listserv summaries (see the Information Resources section for more information). CEELO staff also encouraged state specialists to directly post questions to the listserv to build capacity and confidence rather than relying on CEELO to post questions and compile data.

CEELO TA staff presented at <u>15 national and regional meetings</u> sponsored by other organizations on topics of relevance to SEAs and CEELO priorities, far exceeding the benchmark of 4 presentations. Throughout Year 6, CEELO maintained an active presence at national and regional meetings, including the Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) National Learning Network, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – Professional Learning Institute, and presentations to targeted audiences in states such as presentations in Arkansas, New Mexico and New York. See Appendix B for details about these presentations.

CEELO staff frequently co-presented with other federally funded technical assistance centers (RTT-ELC TA, PDG TA) as well as national organizations or research institutions such as the Education Counsel and BUILD Initiative.

During Year 6, CEELO Responded to 43 TA Requests from 32 State Education Agencies on each of the CEELO Priority Issues. Some of the TA was conducted for Preschool Development Grant (PDG) expansion states in coordination with the PDG TA Center and in collaboration with several regional and content centers. TA was provided in the following regions: Appalachian, California, Central, Florida and the Islands, Great Lakes, Mid Atlantic, Midwest, North Central, Northeast, Northwest, Pacific, South Central, Southeast, Texas, and West.

States continued to express interest in TA related to CEELO's priorities. Examples of the range of TA topics addressed in Year 6 that were designed to enhance the capacity of offices of early learning include:

- Facilitation of strategic planning that is focused on a consensus vision and moves from the vision to operational plans such as the supports CEELO provided to the states of Maryland and Nebraska
- Stakeholder engagement as well as family and community engagement including CEELO's partnership with the Michigan Department of Education to engage stakeholders in the development of a prenatal to age 20 family engagement plan
- Performance management supports including CEELO's work with the Texas Education Agency to support the development of a performance evaluation plan and assistance to Rhode Island in the development of a logic model for the early childhood system and the associated performance evaluation plan
- Continuous improvement in program quality, teaching and learning, and child outcomes including CEELO's support of Massachusetts work to align the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System with the state's early childhood workforce registry and data from the state's Preschool Expansion and Development Grant
- Unified data systems support such as our work with Michigan to develop a process of aligning the Kindergarten Entry Data elements and systems with the data required to meet the state's third grade reading guarantee
- Expertise on curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and technology such as our work with South Carolina to develop a process and criteria for pre-k curriculum approval
- High performing early childhood workforce including facilitation of peer to peer discussions among leaders in Connecticut, Illinois and Massachusetts so leaders could share best practices
- Systems alignment by supporting state's work to align pre-natal through third grade systems in Michigan and New York as well as supports to align across early childhood systems such as our supports to Indiana and New Mexico to develop plans to enhance their statewide early childhood systems
- Strategic financing supports including supporting states' use of the Cost of Preschool Quality and Revenue resources in a range of state. (See Box 2.)
- Leadership capacity and staff development supports through our ongoing work across states as well as through our strategic projects (described in the next section).

In Year 6, most of the responsive TA CEELO provided was deliberately intensive as it was designed to build SEA capacity rather than simply responding to an urgent short-term need. **Box 1** provides an illustration of the intensity of TA CEELO offered during Year 6. CEELO also provided TA to other technical assistance centers and national organizations.

BOX 1. ILLUSTRATIONS OF RANGE OF TA PROVIDED BY CEELO IN YEAR SIX

General: CEELO received a request from California inquiring about states that have web-based contracting systems and multi-year contracts. To build California's capacity to be innovative in the use of technology (one of the capacities of highly effective offices of early learning), CEELO sent an email posting questions to the list serve of the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. Subsequently, CEELO conducted a follow up phone call to obtain additional information, summarized what was learned, and sent the summary answering California's question to the requester.

Targeted. Mississippi contacted CEELO to obtain supports for the state's work to develop a family engagement framework. CEELO worked with the state office of early learning to build their capacity around family engagement. CEELO partnered with the state to help them identify family engagement resources, to gather resources, and assess whether existing frameworks would be appropriate for the state. Mississippi decided to adapt the Maryland framework to match the state's needs.

Intensive: Maryland engaged CEELO as a partner to facilitate the office of early learning strategic plan. Through monthly meetings, engaged leaders and staff in a process and served as a facilitator to support the state's strategic planning process. The planning process informed the development of the state's Preschool Expansion and Development grant application.

CEELO responded to all of the 44 information requests made across the range of CEELO priority topics. Information requests were received from SEAs, federal government agencies, TA providers, school districts, non-profits, and intermediaries such as a consultant that was supporting a school district in developing an early childhood strategic plan. In Year 6, CEELO received 44 information requests and responded to all of the requests.

Information requests were related to each of CEELO's priority and to domains of SEA capacity. In Year 6, many information requests were related to an anticipated federal solicitation to support state's Preschool Development and Expansion. As such, many information requests were for resources on how to conduct a statewide needs assessment and strategic plan, how to develop a logic model, how to develop performance measurement plan, and how to identify efficiencies in providing high-quality supports to better support young children.

As in previous years, many information requests from SEAs led to additional TA requests and some of the information requests led to the development of specific products designed to address a need that was articulated by multiple requesters. For example, a number of states

were interested in learning about how districts are supporting P-3 initiatives. CEELO wrote a policy report on this topic and is currently developing a tool that can be used by SEAs to track progress in implementing a P-3 policy framework. As in previous years, multiple states and communities continued to request tools and resources to support decisions about the costs of high-quality preschool and early education. In some instances, CEELO gave the requesters information about the Cost of Preschool Quality and Revenue (CPQ&R) Toolkit and in others, the requests led to intensive TA to provide support in collecting and using cost data for policy decisions.

CEELO Exceeded Strategic TA Benchmark

In Year 6, CEELO provided Strategic TA to nearly all states and territories, across all CEELO priority topics, utilizing a range of TA strategies. The Strategic TA projects and benchmarks are presented below.

1. CEELO framed Strategic and Response TA to support highly effective state offices of early learning

During Year 6, CEELO produced a paper entitled, "Defining Highly Effective Offices of Early Learning in State Education Agencies and Early Learning Agencies – A CEELO Vision Paper" and developed a page on the CEELO website devoted to resources related to this topic. The Highly Effectively Office of Early Learning section of the website includes resources on the key capacities highlighted in the paper. Strategic and responsive TA provided by CEELO was tailored to build the capacity of state offices of early learning in the areas specified in this paper.

2. CEELO strategically supported enhanced SEA early childhood leadership

To enhance leadership capacity of early childhood specialists working in state departments of education, CEELO implemented Leadership Academy for a fourth cohort of fellows during Year 6. The 10 fellows have had four academy trainings spanning 2.5 days, participated in four interim webinars, engaged with their coaches, and refined their Job Embedded Projects. The fellows have also engaged in assigned readings, homework and journaling throughout the year.

As emerging state education leaders have learned about the quality and usefulness the Leadership Academy the demand of applicants has increased. In 2018, 20 state early childhood specialists applied and after a careful review of applications, 10 candidates were accepted into this current academy that will conclude in January 2019. The leadership academy fellows represent the following States: Iowa, Maryland, Tennessee, Texas, Louisiana, Maine, Georgia, New Jersey, Oregon, and Florida.

The Leadership Academy is designed to help emerging leaders from SEAs develop the skills needed to advance vision and strategic plans, enhance personal and organizational leadership

skills, align systems and track results to improve early learning outcomes for children, and effectively communicate about their work.

Additionally, during year 6, CEELO convened all four cohorts of fellows at the National Roundtable and engaged the third cohort of fellows in the planning of the Roundtable. CEELO also produced a retrospective study of the Leadership Academy early in Year 6.

CEELO successfully engaged state specialists in capacity building through the National Roundtable

To build the capacity of offices of early learning, CEELO successfully convened early childhood specialists and national leaders for our annual National Roundtable on the topic of *Better Together – Our Collective Work Advancing Early Learning.* CEELO brought together 139 individuals who are leaders in early learning to meet in Austin, Texas for two days of interactive learning. Seventy-eight (78) attendees were early childhood specialists who represented 30 state agencies, local districts, and the Department of Defense. Ten (10) states participated in pre- conference webinars as presenters or attendees, for a total of 40 states represented in pre-conference and/or conference activities.

The meeting addressed four core topic areas central to policy progress in early learning:

- Early Learning Opportunities in ESSA (ESSA)
- Equitable Early Learning for all Young Children (Equity)
- High Quality Instruction for Birth through Third Grade (Instruction)
- Advancing the Workforce Birth through Third Grade (Workforce)

Across the topic areas, attendees developed skills in:

- Collective impact in high performing offices of early learning
- Implementing for continuous improvement
- Leading to results
- Systems thinking and alignment

Prior to the meeting, CEELO hosted webinars featuring state specialists and researchers who provided content expertise and application examples via four separate webinars tailored to each content area (ESSA, Equity, Instruction, Workforce). In addition to providing preliminary information, webinars facilitated connections between attendees before the in-person meeting. Recognizing the broad appeal of these areas, CEELO offered these webinars to the public regardless of meeting registration status.

3. CEELO Launched Legacy 2030 to Strategically Support Early Learning Leadership

To support SEAs on ongoing leadership development and to transfer knowledge gained from leaders in the field to emerging leaders, CEELO launched the Legacy 2030 project. This project engaged a National Advisory Group and offered the national advisory group a **Legacy Project**

National Advisory Group Onboarding Webinar. In addition, CEELO held an in-person meeting entitled the Early Childhood Legacy 2030: National Advisory Group Meeting.

A national survey of state early childhood specialists and five focus groups provided CEELO staff with data on the background and professional goals of state early childhood specialists, the policy priorities these state early childhood specialists believe are most critical to achieve outcomes for children, and the professional learning topics that would most help them are successful. CEELO staff are analyzing data collected through the Legacy project and will release short policy fact sheets in early 2019. In addition, CEELO plan's to use this analysis to inform strategic TA offered during Year 7. The information gathered informed CEELO's planning to date. CEELO also is developing a video series entitled, "Pioneers in Early Childhood Education." These videos are designed to capture the wisdom of leaders who have helped shaped the early childhood education field. Videos will be disseminated to a wide audience, with the aim of providing resources that will be helpful for policy advocacy, professional development, and public relations outreach.

4. **CEELO Supported States with ESSA Implementation Focused on Enhancing Early Learning**

CEELO engaged in strategic opportunities to build office of early learning capacity to support research-based foundations of early learning, along with sound operations, systems implementation and performance management processes that drive toward evidence-based results. CEELO engaged in a series of strategic actions to support SEA's implementation of ESSA requirements. During Year 6, CEELO produced a webinar co-hosted by the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. The webinar presented views from three states – North Carolina, Colorado and Arizona. In June, CEELO and the Education Commission of the States (ECS) co-sponsored a meeting on ESSA. A peer exchange was held in September and teams from the six participating states attended. Moreover, CEELO regularly updated the ESSA portion of the website.

5. **CEELO Supported SEA's Capacity to Finance Strategically**

CEELO continued to build tools and provide strategic TA to states and communities to enhance their capacity to finance early education strategically with the use of the Cost of Preschool Quality and Revenue tool. CEELO and Illinois Action for Children hosted a Cost of Quality Early Learning Think Tank. This 2-day event provided an opportunity for 36 individuals, including state and local leaders, advocates, and national experts to review what they are learning about collecting, analyzing and using cost data to inform and drive policy decisions about financing high-quality early learning programs. Participants gained a deeper, shared understanding of both political and strategic approaches needed to make a substantive impact on advancing the field toward adequate and stable funding of high-quality early learning programs. A case study on Determining the Costs of Preschool Quality in Kentucky (May 2018) was written which describes Kentucky's experiences and outcomes using the CPQ&R.

A new CPQ&R landing page was completed, launched and in its first 12 months there were nearly 2,400 unique page views. This landing page was designed to accompany the revised CPQ&R 3.0—which is an Excel spreadsheet. During Year 6, 20 individuals requested this tool. During this year, CEELO also developed a State Administrative Cost of Quality (SACQ) tool. This is a prototype stand-alone model designed to be readily integrated into the CPQ&R, designed to help users generate data on the functions and costs of the state infrastructure to implement, monitor and sustain quality of early childhood programs. SACQ can be integrated into the CPQ&R to determine costs and funding sources related to implementing high-quality preschool programs.

A survey was sent to 30 individuals who had previously requested the Excel CPQ&R tool. Survey findings will inform continued refinements. The updated the CPQ&R is expected to be release in the first quarter of 2019.

6. CEELO supported SEA Capacity to Support Alignment from Prenatal through Third Grade

In partnership with the Education Commission of the States (ECS), CEELO has provided expertise and technical assistance to multiple states, assisting them to identify priorities and actions for improving the P-3 continuum of policy and practice, as outlined in a State's ESSA plan and other strategic plans and priorities of the state education agency. CEELO has provided targeted and individual state TA focused on the principles and recommendations of ECS's K-3 Policymaker's Guide to Action. The guide is designed to assist state education leaders in the development of policies that strengthen principal leadership, licensure and endorsements in K-3, assessments in K-2, third grade reading laws, full day kindergarten, developmentally appropriate curriculum, and other domains in these critical years. States in the network include: Arizona, Colorado, Massachusetts and Mississippi.

Additionally, during Year 6, CEELO has continued to collect and disseminate information on each state pertaining to their early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, PreK, and K-3. On **CEELO's State-by-State Map** you will find links to state program standards for early childhood education, along with teacher and family guidance documents that relate to the standards. Each state page is headed up by links to the state's office/s of early learning. In addition, CEELO produces a **Directory of State Early Learning Contacts** for each state across programs and systems serving children from birth through third Grade and updates it twice yearly. CEELO continued to develop resources and posted these to a new P-3 Alignment section of the CEELO website.

7. CEELO Supported High-Quality Preschool

CEELO is partnering with CCSSO to convene 9 states and the Department of Defense Education Activities to support states in improving the quality of publicly funded PreK, including a High Quality PreK Summit with chiefs from three states and a 3-day meeting on the topic of

PreK curriculum and pedagogy. States are working on policies and practices that are aligned with the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) benchmarks of preschool quality. The following states/territories have joined the network: Colorado, Delaware, DoDEA, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.

8. CEELO Supported the Early Childhood Education Workforce Academy 2.0

CEELO is partnering with CCSSO and NGA to establish an action network with 10 states, four of which have Birth to Grade governance, thus oversight of B-K workforce policies and practice. State teams (which include higher education and the states' Governor Offices) developed action plans to reform their ECE workforce. The states include: Arkansas, California, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

9. CEELO has Engaged in Strategic Partnerships to Advance SEA Capacity to implement early learning strategies and develop strong student standards and assessments

During Year 6, CEELO partnered with CCSSO to support the Early Childhood State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (ECE SCASS) on topics related to implementing early learning strategies of the 19 states' ESSA plans. It supported CCSSO in launching a work group designed to develop a Practical Guide for State Education Agencies to Promote Success of English Learners, Prek to Grade 3. It also partnered with CCSSO to provide support to teams of four states improvement science as a methodology to translate evidence-based practices into classroom practices improve third grade reading and math. 2018-19 ECE SCASS states – DODEA, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Oregon, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, Virgin Island, Washington, Wyoming.

10. CEELO Supported SEA Capacity to Build Local Capacity in New Jersey

CEELO partnered with the NJDOE and invited new staff to participate in the Early Childhood Academy. This project concluded in early 2018 with the final publication posted to the CEELO website.

CEELO Produced Resources in Response to Information Requests and Offered Technology-Supported TA Benchmarks

During Year 6, CEELO supported enhanced state processes and decision-making and took steps to more strategically communicate. CEELO developed information resources based on key strategic topics of high value to state early education administrators, and resources were presented in a variety of formats with the aim of providing timely and relevant information to policy makers. The information resources developed by CEELO are posted to the CEELO website. The evaluation team used technology to gather information on access to the resources,

to analyze trends, and to inform dissemination. Table 5 below summarizes the key products produced by CEELO during Year 6.

Table 5: Technology Enhanced TA Planned and Provided in Year 6

Planned Activity	Description and Number of Participants/Events
Updated CEELO website	During Year 6, CEELO thoroughly renovated the CEELO website, including the development of a searchable resource library with all of CEELO resources posted and annotated.
1 directory and **1** state information page for each state and territory online (57 total)	During Year 6, CEELO continued to maintain and update a dedicated page on its website for each state. State page include information on the state's Early Learning Guidelines, Program Standards, and other information of interest to early childhood stakeholders.
Policy reports, case studies, or meeting reports • Roundtable 2018 Summary • Reports • Quick Reads • Tools	CEELO developed new publications to address policy and research questions posed by early childhood specialists in state departments of education. Details on these products are presented in **Appendix C**. • **1** Roundtable Summary • CEELO produced **4** reports • CEELO posted **3** Quick Reads 3 Tools and **1** tool that is under development
ESSA Resources	CEELO produced ESSA resources and posted existing resources to the ESSA portion of the CEELO website.
1 Webinar proposed	CEELO facilitated **6** Webinars and the slides and recordings were made available on the CEELO website after the webinar concluded. Details about the webinars is presented in **Appendix C**.

E-News	To share its work and resources to a wider audience, CEELO produced **7** e-newsletters ([Impact E-News](#)) during Year 6. Impact shared new resources produced by CEELO, discussed selected technical assistance provided, and frequently featured interviews with state staff around key issues.

CEELO successfully updated and populated the center website with relevant resources aimed at addressing target audience needs. During Year 6, the ceelo.org website had 56,895 page views, which was close to the number of page views in Year 5 of 58,384 page views. The number of unique page views was 38,322 in Year 4. Since it was launched www.ceelo.org has had nearly over 267,091 page views.

The most frequent pages that were viewed in Year 6 were the home page (12,894) state pages (7,121 page views) followed by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) page (2,809), CEELO Roundtable (2,268 page views), Cost of Preschool Quality toolkit (2,194 viewers), Birth through Third Grade resources (1,839), and CEELO products (1,503). The most frequent pages that were viewed in Year 4 were the state pages (5,818 page views) followed by CEELO Roundtable (2,099 page views), resources on B-3 (1,149 viewers) and information about CEELO (1,074 viewers).

The website is a tool for increasing communication and contact between states and with the comprehensive centers. There is a dedicated page with information on the other comprehensive centers that is updated as needed. The [ECE Contact Directory](#) – a comprehensive listing of state personnel leading programs serving young children is regularly updated. This resource serves as a valuable conduit of information to connect states as indicated from verbal and email communication.

States express interest in learning about key documents and policies in other states. The [state-by-state pages](#) contain information on each state pertaining to their early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, pre-K, and K-3. It also hosts links to state program standards for early childhood education as well as teacher and family guidance documents that relate to the standards. Each state page is headed up by links to the state's office/s of early learning.

Finally, CEELO regularly uses Twitter® to disseminate CEELO products as well as important research and policy updates. CEELO now has 1,372 **Twitter**® followers, an increase from 1,012 last year and 688 followers at the end of Year 4.

Evaluation Question 2: Was CEELO TA of high quality, and relevant and useful to state early education administrators and collaborators?
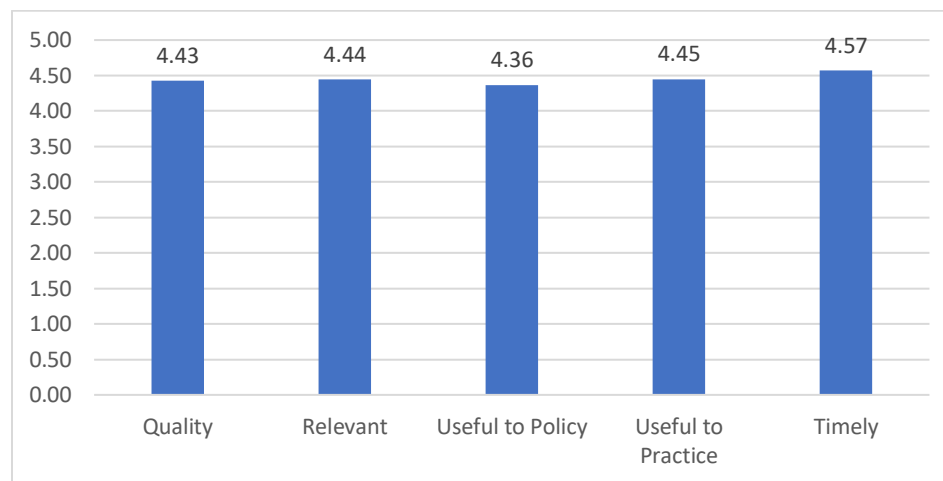
Recipients of Responsive TA Provided Favorable Evaluations

Overall, recipients of CEELO TA continue to report CEELO technical assistance as high quality, relevant, and useful to policy and practice. Respondents reported a variety of types of support (presentations, meeting facilitation, partnership building, provision of expertise, briefings, and peer learning facilitation and support) across a number of relevant early childhood topics.

For the Year 6 evaluation, survey data that had been collected at the conclusion of responsive TA were analyzed. Approximately 55 individuals received the survey.

Figure 1 below shows that recipients of CEELO's TA evaluated the TA as highly relevant, timely, and useful and also reported that it was high-quality. On a 5-point scale with 1=very low and 5=very high, the average score for quality, relevance, usefulness to policy, usefulness to practice and timeliness was above a 4.

Figure 1: Average Rating of CEELO Responsive TA (N=55)

Scale: 1=very low, 5=very high

Recipients of CEELO TA also provided open-ended responses regarding the quality, relevance, timeliness and usefulness of the responsive TA:

CEELO was very helpful in bringing the conference together. The regional comprehensive center TA provider was instrumental in convening a workshop for administrators/ leaders and elicited thoughtful conversation about obstacles and opportunities for success. Our CEELO TA provider did a phenomenal job of re-iterating the science and research presented and presenting a framework and discussion on next steps. This summer institute would not have been successful without the assistance of our CEELO partners.

The team did an amazing job! Thank you for bringing CEELO to us!

CEELO is flexible in their approach so that states can achieve the goals they set, not somebody else's. Our CEELO TA provider listens to our needs. Meets us where we are and takes us further. I appreciate the responsiveness of CEELO. When I need data or a resource or talking points for a particular issue, they respond right away with getting me what I need. As a state leader, their partnership, expertise, and support is critical to the work I do supporting young children and families.

Participants Provided Favorable Ratings of Webinars

Post webinar online surveys were administered after two of the CEELO-sponsored Webinars and a total of 15 individuals responded to the survey. One survey asked respondents about usefulness to policy and practice (which was completed by 5 of the respondents) and a different survey asked one question about the general usefulness (which was completed by 10 of the respondents).

Figure 2: Average Rating Given to CEELO Webinars (N=15)
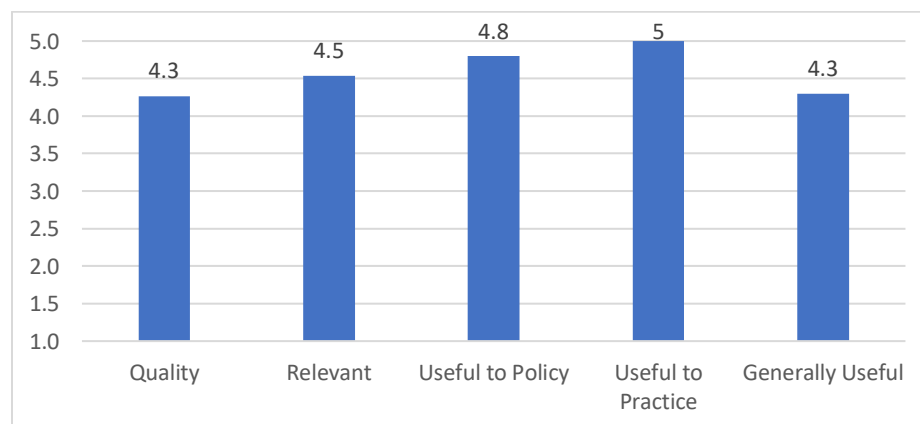
Participants Provided Favorable Ratings of CEELO Sponsored or Facilitated Meetings

Throughout the year, individuals who participated in meetings facilitated by CEELO or in which CEELO presented were asked to respond to surveys. For example, participants in a meeting in Arkansas, in which CEELO provided participants with information about sustainability planning provided ratings of the in-person meeting. The ratings of quality, relevance and usefulness were all rated above a 4: quality=4.3; relevance=4.4; and usefulness=4.4. Moreover, responses to open-ended questions reveal positive comments. Some commented that the quality and usefulness was high and others commented on the partnership between the state agency and CEELO TA providers. For example, one participant at the Arkansas meeting stated, "I want to take the time to thank [the state and CEELO] for putting this on and trying to help all of us (big or small) sustain our high-quality programs."

Participants Provided Favorable Ratings of Selected Strategic TA Opportunities

CEELO Annual Roundtable. Participants in the 2018 Roundtable gave high marks to the event. In a post-meeting survey, 55 attendees provided feedback on their experience with the meeting. On a 5-point scale from 1=very low to 5=very high, participants rated the quality a 4.25, the relevance a 4.33 and the usefulness a 4.17.

Respondents reported valuing the format, the opportunities to learn from and share with colleagues, the resources and tools shared, and the content. Moreover, attendees reported that they appreciated the use of state specialists in planning, presenting, and facilitating. To provide voices of attendees, a selection of quotes is listed below.

Meeting Design

Respondents commented on how well elements of the meeting fit together and flowed, as well as positive remarks regarding the breakouts, experts, and pre-conference webinars.

Cohesive presentation across the breakout presenters. Their content seemed to build off each other and the initial presenter set norms that were then followed by our cohort throughout the conference.

Keynote speakers were good. Great networking opportunities and great opportunity to catch up on 'hot' topics.

Cohort Structure

While related to the meeting design, the frequency of comments pertaining specifically to the cohorts merited a theme related to this.

I liked the relatively small size of the cohort group. It was helpful in getting to know others and to hear more directly from states about their work.

Hearing where other states are in the process of professional development and what others are doing to work with Higher Ed...understanding through the collective impact lens.

Networking and/or Learning from States

Respondents tended to mention networking without going into too much detail. In addition to connecting with other early childhood leaders, many cited the opportunity to learn from other states about their approaches.

Networking with people from across the country all dedicated to Early Childhood

Participants Rated Leadership Academy Quite Favorably

Fellows who participated in the Leadership Academy provided favorable evaluations regarding the quality, usefulness, and relevance of the experience. Post meeting surveys were administered after three of the in-person meetings. All respondents (100%) gave ratings of 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale with 1=very low and 5=very high. Figure 3 below shows the average rating given by fellows on the post-meeting surveys.

Figure 3: Average Rating of the Leadership Academy Meetings
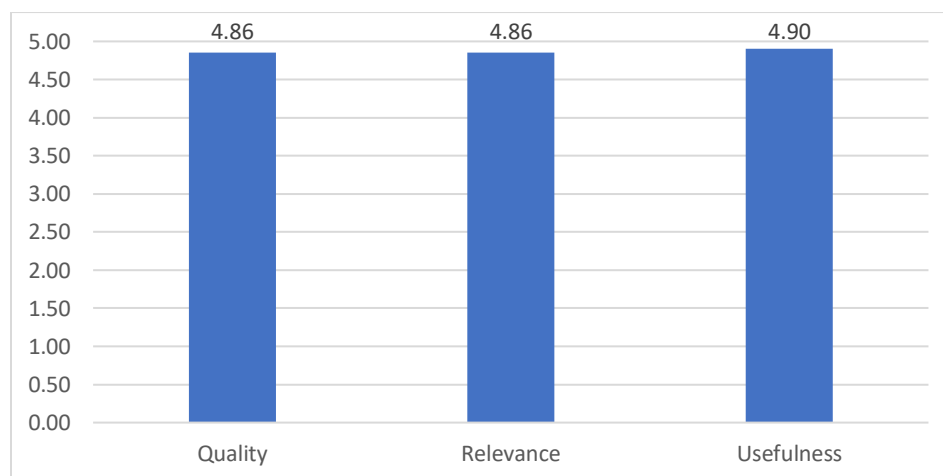
Participants commented about their experiences at various Leadership Academy meetings.

Comments about the meeting on systems thinking included the following:

The content was very relevant and challenged my thinking. I have already implemented the strategies in my work.

The opportunity to connect the session with my project was really helpful... not only in understanding what the habits of system thinkers are but also how they apply to my project.

. . . lots of very relevant information and opportunities to practice applying the concepts to our projects. Her expertise and passion for her content was evident. She also made explicit efforts to understand our needs as learners and checked in with us to see if we were getting what needed. The coaching session was helpful as well - and just opportunities to reconnect with other fellows was great.

Participants provided comments after the Results Based Leadership and Communication in person meetings as well. One illustrative comment after the Result Based Leadership meeting was as follows,

"The RBL and systems thinking dovetails nicely. Both talk about seeing the big picture/going to the balcony. After the meeting on Communication, an illustrative comment provided by one participant is: "Very practical. Very easy to turn around with my team."

Other Strategic TA Activities Received High Ratings

Participants in other strategic TA activities provided favorable ratings as well. For example, participants in the CCSSO meetings rated the meetings above a 4: quality=4.8; relevance=4.9; usefulness=4.6. Similarly, the ratings of the Cost of Preschool Quality Toolkit Think Tank received ratings above 4: quality=4.2; relevance=4.5; and usefulness=4.2.

A teacher in the work group called the guidelines "very helpful," adding "the document gave me some ideas to implement in my Kindergarten classroom[3]."

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[3] Appendix D- Virginia: Preventing Expulsions and Suspensions in Pre-K

"Having CEELO join our state advisory group for the Cost of Quality Study helped us build credibility and support for the process, including involvement of state agency staff[4]."

Respondents Completing a Year-End Survey Gave High Ratings

A web-based evaluation survey was administered to individuals who had participated in CEELO responsive and strategic TA during Year 6. CEELO sent the survey to 263 individuals and 56 responded—a response rate of 21 percent. Respondents gave high ratings to the quality, relevance and usefulness of CEELO's TA. Ninety-six percent rated the quality as high or very high, 100% rated the relevance as highly or very highly relevant, and 100% rated the usefulness as highly useful or very highly useful.

> *Evaluation Question 3: Did CEELO TA assist state administrators in building capacity to implement policy for children birth through third grade? What specific policy outcomes were achieved?*

CEELO's Assistance is Supporting States in Achieving Desired Goals

Analysis of data from the TA database reveals that CEELO TA requests accomplished desired goals and focused on enhancing state education agency capacity to support enhanced early learning outcomes. Given the range of state needs and varying nature of the TA, the reported outcomes and benefits ranged accordingly.

All of the responsive TA requests that were completed accomplished the desired goals established by early childhood specialists and CEELO TA liaisons. Many of the TA requests were similar to those received during previous years, but in Year 6, CEELO worked in partnership with states to build capacity aligned with the CEELO's framework of highly effective offices of early learning. Illustrative examples of the goals of these requests are as follows:

- Enhance state education agency capacity to develop aligned and coordinated supports to more efficiently and effectively support enhanced early learning outcomes
- Partner with the state to build the capacity to engage stakeholders in the development of a P-20 family engagement plan
- Support office of early learning's capacity by facilitating the development a strategic and an operational plan

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[4] Appendix D- Kentucky: ECE Cost of Quality Study

- Provide support so states can engage in innovative financing through the use of technology-based tools
- Partner to strengthen vertical and horizontal alignment of policies and engage stakeholder voices in the development of a P-20 family engagement plan.

Box 2 below presents an illustrative example of CEELO's work to build the capacity of leaders and staff to support early learning outcomes.

BOX 2. LEADERSHIP AND STAFF CAPABILITIES: HOW CEELO IS ENHANCING LEADERSHIP CAPACITIES THROUGH THE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

CEELO has provided 30 state education agency professionals with the opportunity to participate in the CEELO Leadership Academy. States that have had participants include: Alabama (3), Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia (2), Hawaii, Iowa, Illinois (2), Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland (2), Maine, Michigan (2), Minnesota (2), Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey (2), Nevada, Oregon, Tennessee (2), and Texas.

The first Leadership Academy was held in 2014-2015 with the aim to enhance leadership capacity of State Education professionals. The Leadership Academy curriculum was designed to ensure that leaders are adaptive and innovative and use effective management strategies. Systems thinking training is a key component of the curriculum and allows the fellows to practice analytical skills while making relationships across complex early childhood systems. Results based leadership training provides the fellows the opportunity to view themselves as responsible for change and improvement while tracking data and outcomes of programs they administer. This training helps to identify disparities among race, class and culture and to make progress toward equity in early childhood. The academy concludes with training focused on effective communication and provides the fellows with opportunities to practice articulating how the trainings impacted their required job embedded projected.

Outcomes of the Leadership Academy

The Retrospective Study included perspectives of 21 fellows representing 15 States. Fellows reported that the Leadership Academy led to improvements in their personal leadership as well as outcomes for their states. Specifically, the Fellows reported that participation:
- Increased knowledge, skills, and competencies as a leader
- Enhanced understanding of racial equity
- Expanded their professional network
- Enhanced their professional voices
- Provided a chance to share expertise with others
- Increased their confidence as leaders
- Contributed to their professional growth and development
- Informed the conceptualization, refinement, and/or implementation of early childhood policies

Analysis of Year 6 evaluation data reveals that the fourth cohort of fellows have reported changes from the baseline survey even though the Leadership Academy has not yet concluded. Specifically, a comparison of baseline survey data and surveys completed in November 2018 reveal that fellows scores on the following items rose significantly from pre- to mid-term surveys ($P<.001$): 1) Personal knowledge, skills, and competencies as a leader); 2) Strength of professional voice in terms of confidence communicating to advance early childhood policies and practices; and 3) Confidence as a leader. The evaluation team will perform independent t-test analysis of pre and post survey data to assess changes after the Leadership Academy concludes for Cohort 4.

Building capacity of SEAs is a primary aim of CEELO TA. CEELO surveyed SEA staff to ask about ways in which TA had or had not affected SEA capacity. Survey results reveal that respondents were most likely to report that CEELO provided authoritative support to support priorities to advance early learning priorities, and increased individuals' understanding of a topic. Respondents also reported CEELO gave them information that they have shared insights and information they gained from their work with CEELO with policymakers and colleagues, and have deepened relationships with other state specialists through their work with CEELO.

Uses of CEELO TA and Resources

Recipients of CEELO TA and resources reported using the supports in a variety of ways. Recipients of CEELO TA report using the assistance to strengthen policies and practices and several reported that the TA enhances overall SEA capacities to advance early learning priorities.

Other state early childhood specialists reported that the TA has resulted in enhanced interagency work and in specific changes to policies and practices. Examples of reports are provided below.

Support cross-agency systems development and stakeholder engagement

CEELO helped us develop a more effective way of gaining input from stakeholders, and encouraged us to continue our cross-agency systems development.

Strengthened cross-agency work; helps to emphasize ECE pedagogy w policy folks; helps continued effort- push for progress.

Supports are allowing us to design and scale our early learning program.

It has led to engagement with a wider range of stakeholders; Supported greater collaboration between the state agencies responsible for early learning services

Because of the presentation we did based on CEELO information and guidance, we were able to talk at a deeper level with stakeholders about the functions and competencies related to systems leadership and systems thinking. That presentation was successful with those who attended and has led to more presentations requested to help stakeholders think accurately and clearly about systems work.

Informed policy/practice

It is extremely important to be able to back up policy requests with solid data, research, and/or expertise from other states. This is what CEELO provides to our agency so that we can make informed decision concerning policy and best practice for early childhood programing across the state.

[CEELO provided] preK resources that have assisted us in the development of Universal PreK work. TA around inclusion of Early Childhood strategies into state ESSA plan was helpful. [We] have shared different resources with other members of ESSA team outside of Early Childhood staff. TA support was very helpful- provided strategies to consider. State-to-state sharing opportunities through CEELO meetings is always helpful- gives us knowledge of best practices used by others.

[CEELO's] help has informed policy development and practices.

Several individuals also noted that the CEELO supports the strengthening of relationships among early childhood specialists and the leveraging of existing supports.

CEELO is always trying to be on the forefront of new research, best practices, and connecting states. They have provided opportunities for learning that we would not have had without their facilitation.

CEELO has continued to work with early childhood specialists to support ongoing capacity building that is aligned with all of the aspects of a highly effective office of early learning. CEELO is collecting evaluation data to capture changes from baseline and after CEELO partners with state offices of early learning. Box 3 provides an illustration of CEELO's work with one state to build capacity to support family engagement.

BOX 3. CEELO'S COLLABORATION WITH MICHIGAN AND CCSSO TO BUILD FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CAPACITY

Introduction

Between 2017 and 2018, CEELO provided technical assistance to support the Michigan Department of Education's capacity to design and development of a P-20 Family Engagement Framework. CEELO supported leadership development and stakeholder engagement to create a P-20 Family engagement framework. To ensure sustained support, CEELO worked with MDE stakeholders to ensure the work was aligned with MDE's vision and strategic plan. MDE has continued to refine the Family Engagement Framework with ongoing assistance from the Council of Chief State School Officers in coordination with CEELO.

How the Work Aligns with the MDE Vision and Strategic Plan

The design of the MDE Family Engagement Framework is aligned with the MDE vision and 10-year strategic plan. This plan, entitled "Top 10 in 10" articulates single set of early childhood outcomes against which all public investments will be assessed. Moreover, the MDE has articulated priority action items for advancing learning and development including a recommendation to create a P-20 family engagement plan.

How Stakeholders were Engaged

MDE began the work by reaching out to national and state leaders to learn how they engaged stakeholders across state agencies and within communities. Based on the advice of those who had developed frameworks, the coordinator identified the family engagement activities and stakeholders within MDE and across the state. Based on this analysis, a state-level stakeholder committee was identified to spearhead the work. The stakeholder committee includes representatives from MDE, other state agencies, family members, and community leaders.

With assistance from CEELO, MDE surveyed all stakeholders regularly leveraging existing technology by administering a web-based survey, convened the committee through virtual and in person meetings, provided materials and templates to participants, and reviewed data gathered from families and community members.

How the MDE is Engaging Systems

A primary purpose of the Family Engagement Framework is to provide consistency and alignment within MDE and across the state for supporting families from prenatal through 20. To ensure the framework reflected state priorities, the coordinator at MDE met with key leaders to get their buy-in and support for the effort and drafted an email that was sent by the superintendent to all division leads. She reviewed the family engagement activities that were being supported by each division within the MDE to build on and align existing efforts. She compiled existing documents, obtained information about each division's priorities and regulations, and shared this information, first with an internal MDE stakeholder team comprised of the leaders of the MDE divisions and then with a larger stakeholder committee.

MDE recognized that families are engaged through a range of programs. MDE administers the state's child care program, the Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the After School and Out of School Time programs in addition to K-12 programs. Therefore, the stakeholder committee includes representatives of these offices. In addition, administrators of the programs housed outside the MDE were engaged including stakeholders from the Michigan Library Association and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. These state-level stakeholders worked to align family engagement efforts across state programs.

How MDE is Engaging Families and Community Members

The family engagement coordinator engaged family members and community leaders in the stakeholder committee. In addition, she convened five focus groups throughout the state to capture first hand voices of family members. She identified barriers and opportunities faced by families with children from birth through higher education. She shared the focus group data with the stakeholder committee and this committee incorporated family voices in the framework document. Once the draft framework is issued, the stakeholder committee plans to vet the document and pilot test it with existing community groups whose leaders are represented on the stakeholder committee.

What has Resulted to Date

A family engagement leadership Team is now participating in a Family Engagement cohort sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers, which gives the team to leverage expertise of national experts and other state stakeholders leading similar work. To date, MDE has issued a consensus definition of family engagement to be used across all MDE programs, identified principles to guide the work, drafted a Family Engagement Framework document to distribute to stakeholders overseeing the work, and has drafted a public document that summarizes the definition, principles, and key strategies.

CEELO developed surveys to be used by MDE to assess conditions at the beginning of the process and currently as the process is unfolding. Survey findings reveal that at baseline 16 percent of stakeholders reported that MDE had a consensus definition of family engagement and in the summer 2018, 89% reported the existence of a consensus definition. Stakeholders also reported progress on developing a P-20 family engagement framework, providing family engagement supports to districts, and supporting parents as partners in children's education. In response to an evaluation survey, one stakeholder engaged in the work provided the following comment, "Great work, all! Interesting parallel going on with workforce preparation!"

To date, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the Virgin Islands have had the opportunity to participate in CEELO webinars, and annual or regional meetings; they have access to materials on the website and receive CEELO materials in E-News and other electronic means. Many factors impact a state's ability to effectively use TA, and CEELO's ability to build capacity to implement effective policy varies based on the specific needs and capacities of the states. In Years 4 and 5, CEELO TA specialists noted substantial staff turnover in SEAs. To address this issue, CEELO developed the Leadership Toolkit to support ongoing leadership training, continued to provide tailored TA to new SEA staff, and set up regular times for consultation calls to support the SEAs ongoing work.

Other issues of concern to state specialists have been reported in earlier sections of this report. Specifically, state specialists reported a need for a tool to determine the costs of high-quality preschool, support for sustainability planning after the conclusion of the Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge or Preschool Expansion and Development Grant programs, and support for ESSA planning and implementation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In Year 6, CEELO devoted more resources to strategic TA activities and the TA needs that emerged there, scaling back efforts to provide individual responsive TA. Recipients of the TA reported an appreciation for CEELO's role in supporting strategic planning and being proactive in supporting state leaders in their plans to improve the capacity of their agencies to more efficiently and effectively improve early learning outcomes.

> *Evaluation Question 4: What did we learn about how state policy context supports or impedes efforts to build capacity? How can CEELO improve delivery of TA that builds SEA capacity to implement policy for children birth through third grade?*

- *Build State Education Agency capacity to learn from one another and tailor experiences to meet participants' needs.* Participants in the CEELO strategic TA opportunities reported that learning from other states' experiences continues to be valuable and provides specific actionable support. Combined with expertise from outside experts, respondents reported that opportunities to learn from others continue to be both effective and efficient. Consistent with findings from the previous evaluations, ratings of these opportunities have consistently been high and those attending these experiences report that the knowledge gained practical tools and policies and procedures developed by other states are very valuable. As CEELO concludes its seventh year, it will be important to empower early childhood specialists to continue to engage with their peers.

- ***Continue dissemination of products and materials that have been rated as useful to SEA early childhood leaders and staff.*** Evaluations of CEELO Webinars and products have been highly rated in terms of quality and relevance. Specialists also encouraged short documents as more accessible, preferring syntheses and analyses to larger policy papers. CEELO should consider developing a mechanism for sustained dissemination of these products and materials.

- ***Leverage strategic TA and streamline the number and intensity of responsive TA offered.*** Consistent with the Year 7 management plan, multiple respondents reported that intensive TA that is aligned with strategic opportunities yield specific and measurable benefits. Responsive TA recipients reported that they are grateful for the agility that CEELO demonstrates in offering supports in response to targeted requests.

Appendix A: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The objectives of the evaluation were to collect data and report findings to use formatively to improve CEELO activities and to document perceived outcomes of CEELO activities. Three different teams were engaged in collection and analysis of data for this evaluation report. The scope of the data collection and analysis activities and methodology employed by each team is described below.

CEELO Evaluation Team

The CEELO team began collecting data in the last quarter of 2017 and completed data collection, analysis, and reporting in December 2018. A senior CEELO TA provider who leads multiple large-scale evaluations and has experience working at the Government Accountability Office worked in collaboration with a CEELO research assistant and the CEELO leadership team to engage in a participatory evaluation. The primary focus of the 2018 annual report was Year 6 (fiscal year 2018) but the report includes some data that were collected and analyzed in previous years and references some activities that concluded in the first quarter of Year 7.

Surveys. The CEELO evaluation team drafted different surveys that were used to capture data about the quality and outcomes of CEELO activities.

- **Post TA and InfoLine Surveys** were administered after CEELO provided TA or information line responses. Surveys were only administered at the conclusion of a TA activity and as noted, in many instances the TA was seamless and in such cases recipients were not asked to complete surveys each time a new TA request began.

- **Roundtable Surveys** were administered to participants in the annual meeting via paper-based survey.

- **CEELO Leadership Academy** surveys were administered after each in person meeting and one was administered to all Fellows who had participated over the four-year period in which the Leadership Academy was offered. In year 6, three surveys were administered after each in person meeting.

- **Other Surveys** such as surveys of participants in regional center quarterly calls, surveys of participants in the peer learning community, and a needs sensing survey of stakeholders in selected states were administered.

Database and log reviews. CEELO uses a database that was developed during the first year of funding that includes variables to capture the following aspects of the TA: the requester, provider and any possible collaborators, the intensity, the priority topic, the goals, the tasks necessary to achieve the goal, target dates, and follow up steps. Separately, CEELO staff collected data regarding ongoing collaborations with other TA providers.

CEELO TA providers and staff populated the databases and logs over the course of the year. The CEELO evaluation team analyzed the data to determine the number of requests, the

intensity of the TA, the priority topics covered, the number of states that had requested and received TA and information, and the number of collaborative activities CEELO engaged in.

Document reviews. The CEELO evaluation team reviewed project agendas, emails, and ongoing communication among the Leadership Team to obtain contextual information. The team used Google analytics to determine the number of Web hits over the year, the number of states that had accessed the site, and the most popular pages. Finally, the CEELO evaluation team reviewed materials developed by CEELO and also reviewed comments by peer reviewers to determine and assess the quality of the materials.

Table A1: Data Collection Activities[5]

Evaluation Activity	Description	Purpose	Number Year 1	Number Year 2	Number Year 3	Number Year 4	Number Year 5	Number Year 6
	Collaborators	Learn about effectiveness, quality, and impact of collaborations	NA	16	17	12	NA	NA
	Publications (CEELO E-News recipients, State specialist, and collaborators)	Learn about the quality and usefulness of CEELO's resources	NA	NA	50	95	NA	30
	Post TA/info line response surveys	Learn about perceptions of quality and usefulness of information	16	59	53	30	30	55
	Post Webinar surveys	Learn about perceptions of quality and	84	130	144	52	NA	15

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[5] These numbers include incomplete responses and responses in which respondents said they did not receive or access services. These were excluded from the data set and are not reflected in selections in the narrative or charts in the report; hence, the difference in numbers.

		usefulness of information						
	Roundtable surveys	Determine quality, usefulness and desired next steps	73	113	36	49	56	54
	Other Surveys	Assess needs of target audience and obtain feedback on targeted activities	43	90	74	170	61	90
Interviews	CEELO TA recipients - State early education administrators	Learn about the nature, effectiveness, and impact of TA Learn about future needs	11	15	15	11	17	NA
Document Review	Reviews of TA database, Info line database, and logs produced by CEELO TA providers Determine the states we have provided TA and info responses Describe the nature and intensity of the TA Analyze data to create "vignettes" that describe the nature, intensity and impact of the TA Analyze quality of the data to improve consistency and usefulness of data Project communications Web analytics CEELO products (e.g., policy briefs and documents) Determine number of resources posted on website, number of publications by type, etc. to inform whether met targets in Year 4 Management Plan						

Appendix B: CEELO Presentations Conducted in Year 6

Listed below are the titles of the 15 presentations, by month, by CEELO staff in Year 6

December 2018

State Capacity for Improvement – Defining Highly Effective Offices of Early Learning examines state level leadership and organizational capacity as essential to leading sustained improvements in early learning opportunities and outcomes. This session at the Ounce of Prevention – Partnership for PreK Improvement (PPI) peer learning convening highlights the CEELO Vision paper and discusses organizational capacity, effectiveness, and leadership and staff capabilities necessary for states to lead improvement in the long-term. Presenters, Lori Connors-Tadros, Jana Martella also explore strategies and opportunities for advocacy that focus on creating the organizational capacity necessary to advance PPI's work.

Elements to Consider in Crafting an Evaluation Plan supports states in the development of evaluation plans that include formative and summative components. The session at a Peer Learning Community sponsored by the Preschool Expansion and Development Grant Technical Assistance Center, engaged participants in a discussion of the technical and adaptive skills and dispositions needed by state education agency leaders in the crafting of evaluation plans that can be used to assess state-level systems change initiatives. Diane Schilder led this presentation and discussion at a meeting in Bethesda, Maryland.

October 2018

Leadership at ALL Levels – Advancing the Field through Individual and Organizational Leadership explores toolkits and resources designed to support knowledge and skill development in individual leaders to enable them successfully build and sustain high quality systems that implement evidence-based practices. Leadership development is an on-going process and it involves complex skills and abilities related to establishing vision and direction, providing motivation and guidance, and promoting collaboration within and across agencies and programs. Jana Martella presented the material with Tracy Jost and Kafilat Oladiran in the 2018 Early Educators Leadership Conference hosted by the Council for Professional Recognition on October 9, 2018 at the National Harbor, MD.

August 2018

A Look at Prekindergarten Across the Country focuses on costs and revenues, selected high-capacity states, and how to seize opportunities in ESSA, PDG and other resources. CEELO and NIEER presenters provided information during this webinar to the National Council of State Legislatures Early Learning Fellows Program, highlighting how to design PreK programs for success, and craft policies to reach goals. The webinar was led by Lori Connors-Tadros and Karin Garver.

Taking Leadership to a New Level: Helping Early Intervention Leaders Adapt to Change and Move Programs and Policies to Success for Young Children presented during the 2018 Improving Data – Improving Outcomes Summer Data Institute aimed at helping participants better understand the characteristics of a good leader and reflect on their own leadership skills.

State experiences and resources were shared that support knowledge and skill development in individual leaders. This information was presented by Mary Beth Bruder, Lori Connors-Tadros, Jana Martella, Stacy Kong, and Lisa Wasacz.

July 2018

P3 Overview and Panel Discussion reviewed the findings of the recent report PreK-3rd Grade Systems: Lessons Learned from New York School Districts. Delivered at the New York State Department of Education Summer Institute. This material was presented by Diane Schilder, Peg Drapo, Elaine Debono, and Tara Marshall.

Two Sides of the Coin: Costs and Financing High Quality Early Learning shared what states are learning about using cost data to inform and drive policy decisions on financing high-quality early learning programs. Once policymakers know costs, the flip side is putting together the financing to drive quality. Presentation by CEELO's Lori Connors-Tadros and GG Weisenfeld, joined by Theresa Hawley, Illinois Action for Children, and Nasha Patel, Louisiana Department of Education at the BUILD Initiative's 2018 QRIS National Meeting.

The Elementary and Secondary Schools Act (ESSA) and Early Learning: Plans and Opportunities for Implementation shares what we are learning about how states and local communities are ensuring early learning is a priority during implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Presentation by CEELO's Lori Connors-Tadros, joined by Nasha Patel, Louisiana Department of Education, Margareth D. Legaspi, Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), and Karen McKnight, North Carolina Head Start State Collaboration Office at the BUILD Initiative's 2018 QRIS National Meeting.

June 2018

Taking Technical Assistance To A New Level: Helping Early Childhood Leaders Adapt To Change And Move Programs And Policies To Success For Young Children focuses on three essential characteristics of high performing early childhood efforts: individual and organizational capacity, organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and leadership and staff capabilities. CEELO's Jana Martella and Diane Schilder presented at the 2018 NAEYC Professional Learning Institute in Austin, TX.

"Evidence-Based" Is Not A Dirty Word: How To Confidently Use And Contribute To Research In Your Practice provides strategies and tools to identify high-quality research and practice and strategies for applying research to program and classroom use. CEELO's Melissa Dahlin and Diane Schilder were joined by Kathleen Theodore (AIR) at the 2018 NAEYC Professional Learning Institute in Austin, TX.

April 2018

Arkansas Preschool Development Grantee (PDG) Sustainability Training was conducted by CEELO Director Lori Connors-Tadros and Susan Mitchell, AEM/PDG TA during a one day training for the Arkansas Preschool Development sub grantees.

February 2018

Data is Our Friend: Understanding the Costs of Quality presents information on using the Cost of Preschool Quality and Revenue tool to get good data on costs of high quality early learning programs to drive policy decisions. The material was presented by CEELO Director Lori Connors-Tadros.

P-3 Opportunity in ESSA CEELO Co-Director Jana Martella presented key opportunities to support early childhood education within the new elementary and secondary education act at the New Jersey ASCD Early Learning Summit

January 2018

Approaches to Financing State Prekindergarten Programs presented by NIEER and CEELO Director Steve Barnett highlights research on different funding schema drawing from national models, highlighting cost of quality and state education infrastructures, and effective state support systems.

December 2017

Funding the Future Generation presented by GG Weisenfeld at the 2017 Winter Commissioners Meeting for the Education Commission of the States presented how a child's pre-K-3 experience can set them up for future success — or possible challenge — and begins to shape movement of the achievement gap. The talk identified what state leaders should consider as they construct polices to provide all students with an equitable entry into education.

Appendix C: CEELO Publications Year 6

Policy Reports and Briefs

CEELO Leadership Professional Learning Community-Final Report was conducted by Jim Squires and Penny Milburn for a professional learning community (PLC) to support leadership development among newly appointed, high-level leaders of early education in state education agencies. The goal of the PLC was for participants to increase awareness, gain critical knowledge and develop leadership skills needed to guide highly effective offices of early learning within state education agencies. This is a summary of the activities and findings from the report.

PreK-3rd Grade Systems: Lessons Learned from New York School Districts report provides an analysis of information collected from the PreK-3rd grade teams and reveals cross-cutting lessons learned. Recognizing the ultimate goal of PreK-3rd grade systems is to improve child outcomes and close achievement gaps, the New York school districts highlighted in this report have selected a range of priorities and approaches that reflect the unique district context, initiatives, priorities, and stakeholder perspectives. Each district has made progress in the implementation of their PreK-3rd grade plans. This report was conducted by Diane Schilder.

Building Capacity to Enact Change for Classroom Quality Improvement in New Jersey examines State Education Agencies (SEAs) across the country work on directly impact early childhood teaching and learning in local education agencies (LEAs). To do this, the SEA must rely on local change agents to increase classroom quality across a state. The work presented in this paper set out to build the capacity of educators, teachers and leaders in New Jersey to spearhead change in LEAs with the support of the SEA.

The State of Early Learning in ESSA: Plans and Opportunities for Implementation focuses on three key topics for early learning in ESSA: setting clear goals and policy priorities for early learning, integrating early learning into school improvement, and supporting early childhood educator development. Based on a review of submitted state ESSA plans, the brief provides examples from state plans that highlights a variety of approaches from different state education agencies and identifies areas for further growth and attention in implementation. This report was written by Bonnie O'Keefe.

Impact E-Newsletter

December 12, 2018 highlights the crucial role stakeholders play in state early education policy, specifically how New Mexico systematically engage with a variety of constituents for its PDG B-5 proposal. Our Leadership Spotlight shines on Jim Squires, who offers advice for state early education leaders, and CEELO shares resources to help create highly effective offices of early learning, updates on our leadership professional learning community and news about the 2019 Leadership Academy.

October 11, 2018 describes the CEELO launch of Year 7 and CEELO's renovated website, which is providing easier access to resources and other materials. This issue also highlights Laura Bornfreund, director of early and elementary education policy at New America, our

partner for the ESSA blog series. We share resources from BUILD to help states applying for PDG-B5 grants, key points from a recent Think Tank on calculating "true costs" of quality preschool, and a look at how New York is planning and implementing a P3 framework.

July 18, 2018 E-Newsletter shares lessons learned by former state early education policymakers and shines a spotlight on the influential career of Gayle Stuber, retired Kansas State Department of Education early childhood coordinator. CEELO also seeks submissions for a new blog series, launches a new webpage focused on OEL effectiveness, and shares a retrospective review of the State Early Learning Leadership Academy, along with recent presentations on ESSA, financing high-quality pre-K, applying research to programs and classrooms and taking TA "to the next level."

May 24, 2018 E-Newsletter addresses early childhood workforce issues and features Mississippi Superintendent of Education Carey Wright sharing advice for getting policymakers to support pre-K. CEELO also shares materials from a recent Cost of Preschool Quality Think Tank and strategic planning progress in Maryland. Looking forward to Roundtable 2018 on June 7-8 in in Austin TX!

March 20, 2018 E-Newsletter focuses on the legacy and lessons learned from two groundbreaking state preschool programs. Our Leadership Spotlight features Susan Adams, assistant commissioner for Georgia's Pre-K celebrating its 25th anniversary. CEELO also shares a redesigned CPQ&R to calculate costs and identify funding streams associated with providing high-quality ECE, along with a TA@Work story about a multi-state consortium focusing on enhancing family engagement.

January 24, 2018 E-Newsletter focuses on the future and the important role early learning plays in creating a more productive, equitable and healthy future for children, families and communities. Our Leadership Spotlight features Sue Reed, Maine Department of Education early learning specialist. CEELO also shares new ESSA and KEA resources and a TA@Work story from Utah.

November 21, 2017 E-Newsletter celebrates five years of CEELO partnership with state early childhood specialists and previews what is coming next. Our Leadership Spotlight features Lauren Zbysinski, AZ Dept of Education Director of Professional Learning & Sustainability and NAECS-SDE Vice President. CEELO shares lots of new resources and shares TA@Work stories from Virginia and Kentucky.

Quick Reads

Determining Costs of Preschool Quality in Kentucky describes how Kentucky and the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence validated estimates that reflect the cost of providing preschool and child care across Kentucky at various levels of quality. The data collection methods, including use of the CPQ&R, and the cost findings are summarized.

Strategies to Improve Instructional Practice in Early Childhood Settings by Lori Connors-Tadros, Ph.D. Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes and Sarah Daily, Ph.D. Child Trends, Based on a state information request to review national research on best practices that have

been shown to improve results on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), with a specific focus on research that impacts instruction and is applicable to teachers in school and community-based settings.

State pre-k and charter school: a summary of state policies (CEELO FastFact) by GG Weisenfeld, Ed.D., and Manuela Fonseca, Ed.D., identifies policies or practices that are in place at the state level to support charter schools in implementing pre-K. For 23 states and D.C., enabling legislation, the contracting process, funding levels, state supports, monitoring, and quality requirements have determined the ease and the degree to which charter schools have been able to implement high-quality, state-funded pre-K programs.

Tools

Tool to Guide Decisions Regarding Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) Selection and Implementation is designed to assist in the process of selecting, revision, or implementing a KEA. States have requested technical assistance to help with the Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEA's) decision-making process. The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) drafted the tool and facilitated a stakeholder engagement process using the tool.

Steps for Logic Model Development is designed to help state agencies develop logic models that illustrate the logical links between activities, outputs and outcomes.

Cost of Preschool Quality and Revenue (CPQ&R) was updated in December 2017. The CPQ&R 3.0 incorporates a number of design improvements based on new quality standards benchmarks and what we have learned as states used earlier versions of the CPQ. These changes increase the utility and flexibility of the CPQ&R in providing data on costs and revenue sources for high-quality preschool programs to inform policy decisions.

Webinars

Deepening Your Understanding of Best Practice and Evidence-Based Practices co-sponsored by CEELO and the PDG TA Center focused on highlighting the differences and critical distinctions between "best practice" and "evidence-based practice" program evaluations. Dr. Diane Schilder from the Education Development Center was the guest presenter. The webinar provided information on strategies to strengthen and enhance program evaluation efforts. Linkage to the ESSA language on use of evidence and research-based practices was reviewed. The webinar shared information on improving program evaluation within the Early Learning field and included recommendations for program evaluation efforts.

Early Learning Opportunities in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

This webinar, recorded on April 26, 2018, provided an overview of the early learning opportunities in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) focusing on the lessons from the CEELO-CCSSO policy brief reviewing plans approved by USED, The State of Early Learning in ESSA: Plans and Opportunities for Implementation. Presenters focused on three key priorities for early learning in ESSA: 1) setting clear goals and policy priorities for early learning; 2)

integrating early learning into school improvement; and, 3) supporting early childhood educator development.

High-Quality Instruction – Birth Through Third Grade.

During this webinar, panelists discussed what constitutes high-quality instruction in the early grades. This webinar addressed multiple perspectives, including addressing the following questions: 1) What does RIGOR look like in the context of play-based learning? 2) How do state agency personnel support district leaders and schools in optimizing curricula and environments for students from preschool through third grade? 3) How do district personnel and teachers effectively implement high-quality curriculum for children from preschool through grade three? Listeners had a chance to learn from a national expert, state agency personnel, district leaders, and teachers working on issues of high-quality instruction.

Equitable Early Learning for All Children

This discussion-based webinar focused began with a viewing of a previously recorded EDtalk by Jennifer Adair, followed by discussion and Q & A. Jennifer Keys Adair, PhD, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education at The University of Texas at Austin, discussed her work that focuses on the connection between agency and discrimination in the early learning experiences of children of immigrants.

Advancing the Workforce Teaching Birth Through Third Grade. Participants on this webinar heard from Albert Wat (Alliance for Early Success) and Debra Adams (Connecticut) on their reflections on NAM's Transforming the Workforce Initiatives, along with Linda Bray and Susan Sarver (Nebraska) on their state implementation efforts transforming the workforce. After, Laura Bornfreund and Abbie Lieberman provided an online tour of New America's guidebook to the report's findings.

What's New at CEELO in 2018-2019? focuses on the Center's goals for the next two years; how CEELO will be supporting state early childhood goals in upcoming month; highlights signature projects building leadership and organizational capacity, birth to third grade data and policy, and financing and sustaining high-quality early learning programs; and, hallmarks state leaders from AZ, IL, KY, and NE discussing with their work with CEELO.

Appendix D: CEELO Technical Assistance at Work

PDG-B5

In September, the US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education released a Notice of Funding Available for the new BIRTH TO FIVE Preschool Development Grant (PDG) as authorized in ESSA . Last month, 47 states and territories submitted grant proposals. Funding announcements are expected next week. The CEELO-ESSA webpage announced technical assistance (TA) resources for implementing the grant.

Highly Effective Offices of Early Learning
CEELO published a new resource to assist state efforts to define and develop highly effective offices of early learning.

The presentation by Lori Connors-Tadros and Jana Martella highlights the CEELO Vision paper to address organizational capacity, effectiveness, and leadership and staff capabilities necessary for states to lead improvement in the long-term.

Presenters also explore strategies and opportunities for advocacy that focus on creating organizational capacity. Additional resources are available on the CEELO website's Highly Effective Offices of Early Learning page.

P-3 Planning and Implementation in New York
Diane Schilder and Melissa Dahlin of CEELO worked with the New York State Department of Education (NYSED) to help clarify what P3 is and to encourage planning and implementation. Partnering with NYSED and the Northeast Comprehensive Center, Diane and Melissa convened a meeting of four pilot district teams in 2017. Teams of administrators and educators from preschool through third grade learned about P3 and began the planning process and later shared both challenges and lessons learned with NYSED and CEELO.

CEELO is continuing to partner with NYSED and the Northeast Comprehensive Center to develop a tool supporting P3 planning and implementation, and documenting outcomes on district policies, classroom quality, family engagement and early learning outcomes.

Guam PreK Program

GG Weisenfeld, CEELO TA lead to Guam, tapped former CEELO Leadership Academy Fellow Kim Guieb, a pre-K specialist from Hawai'i, to work with Melly Wilson, at Pacific Regional Comprehensive Center in response to a technical assistance request from Eloise Sanchez of Guam's Department of Education.

Working together, they addressed peer coaching; leveraging resources to expand public PreK and facilitate public-private teacher professional learning opportunities; and how to promote expansion of PreK in ways that do not threaten or negatively impact the private sector.

TA will continue as GDOE PreK program strives to help more families understand the important role early learning plays in preparing children for school, while showing policymakers the value of supporting public preschool programs.

Strategic Planning in Maryland

New Assistant Superintendent for the Early Childhood Division Steven Hicks and CEELO Co-Director Jana Martella facilitated branch chiefs from the unit and convened monthly to co-construct components of their plan. Over the last several months, branch heads will be honing in on a clear and achievable vision and mission for their division, with goals and action strategies to assure progress for Maryland's youngest children on their road to success.

Family Engagement Network

The Council of Chief State School Officers, a CEELO partner, worked closely with seven states to develop statewide family engagement frameworks. As part of this State Consortium, each state is committed to developing a Birth-to Grade 12 family engagement framework designed to enable SEAs to guide and work with early childhood education providers and local districts in a coordinated and seamless outreach to families.

Participating states included Arkansas, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New York, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. During a recent meeting in Atlanta, states participants explored how best to engage families in the school improvement process, while also addressing key factors such as equity, stakeholder engagement, and implementation.

Utah: Early Childhood Systems

CEELO Co-Director Jana Martella joined a Utah team from varied child-serving departments, divisions and programs to survey their state map. The group started at "30,000 feet" looking at larger scale federal and national early childhood initiatives, including: systems building; workforce initiatives; early learning in the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); P-3 alignment; prekindergarten across the states; and, Pay-for-Success (an approach with roots in Utah.) This work prepared the team for the "Transition Summit", convening local school and Head Start leaders from around the state to consider new transition components of Utah's ESSA plan.

Virginia: Preventing Expulsions and Suspensions in Pre-K

Since November 2016, CEELO Co-Director Lori Connors-Tadros has been helping the Virginia Department of Education and Department of Social Services develop guidelines for preventing suspension and expulsion of young children and supporting children with challenging behaviors in early childhood settings. *Guidelines for the Prevention of Suspension and Expulsion of Young Children: Supporting Children with Challenging Behaviors in Early Childhood Settings* will soon be published online.

Kentucky: ECE Cost of Quality Study

In Kentucky, state and local leaders are identifying how to ensure sufficient funding for the preschool program serving low-income children and all 3- and 4-year-olds with developmental delays and disabilities, regardless of income. The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, in consultation with a statewide advisory group, worked to identify the

actual costs of providing quality early care and education. CEELO provided technical assistance on using the CPQ estimator.

About CEELO

One of 22 Comprehensive Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) strengthens the capacity of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to lead sustained improvements in early learning opportunities and outcomes. CEELO works in partnership with SEAs, state and local early childhood leaders, and other federal and national technical assistance (TA) providers to promote innovation and accountability. For other *CEELO Policy Reports*, *Policy Briefs*, and *FastFacts*, go to http://ceelo.org/ceelo-products.

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO)

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