

Using Assessments to Improve Transitions to Kindergarten

The webinar will begin at 12:00 p.m. PST / 3:00 p.m. EST

Hosted by:
REL Northwest

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Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO)

Logistics

Please use the chat window to submit any questions; we will post answers on the REL Northwest website (<http://relnw.educationnorthwest.org>), along with a recording of today's presentation and other resources

Technical support

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Using Assessments to Improve Transitions to Kindergarten

November 19, 2014



FOUNDATION FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT



Today's Moderators

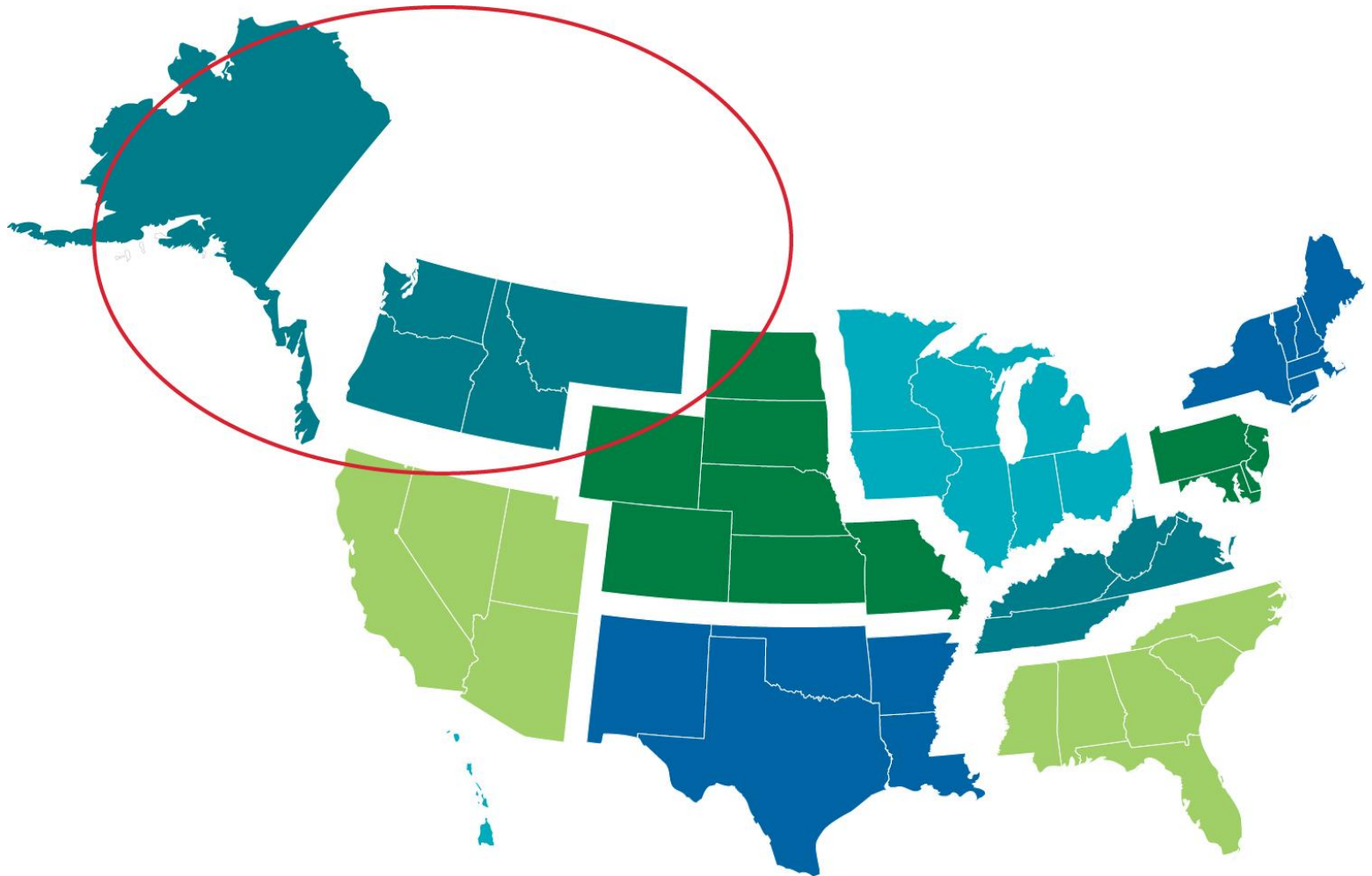


Dr. Fiona Helsel
REL Northwest



Jana Martella
Center on Enhancing Early
Learning Opportunities

REL Northwest Region



Who We Are





Our Mission

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) will strengthen the capacity of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to lead sustained improvements in early learning opportunities and outcomes. CEELO will work in partnership with SEAs, state and local early childhood leaders, and other federal and national technical assistance (TA) providers to promote innovation and accountability.

Goals

Based on the priorities established by the U.S. Department of Education, **CEELO staff, partners**, and experts will work with SEAs and other decision-makers to achieve the following goals:

- Improve states' knowledge about and use of early childhood comprehensive assessment systems
- Enhance the use of assessment data and other information to improve program quality
- Increase the knowledge and skills of the early learning workforce
- Strengthen the alignment of birth through 3rd grade educational policies and systems
- Increase the coordination of resources and policies across statewide systems

www.ceelo.org



Webinar Goals

- To increase participants' knowledge of how to integrate KEAs into a comprehensive assessment system
- To increase participants' awareness of the potential to use KEA data to inform teaching practices
- To increase participants' awareness of how two states are designing their KEAs as part of a comprehensive B–3 assessment system

Today's Presenters



Dr. Jacqueline Jones



Dr. Thomas Schultz



Mr. John Pruetto



Ms. Anna Severens

Keynote Presentation



Dr. Jacqueline Jones
President and Chief Executive Officer
Foundation for Child Development

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Topics

- Assessment in high-quality programs
- Comprehensive Assessment Systems
- Purpose/Consequence

Two Important Sources

- American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education. (2014). *Standards for educational and psychological testing*. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Snow, C. E., & Van Hemel, S. B. (Eds.). (2008). *Early childhood assessment: Why, what, and how*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

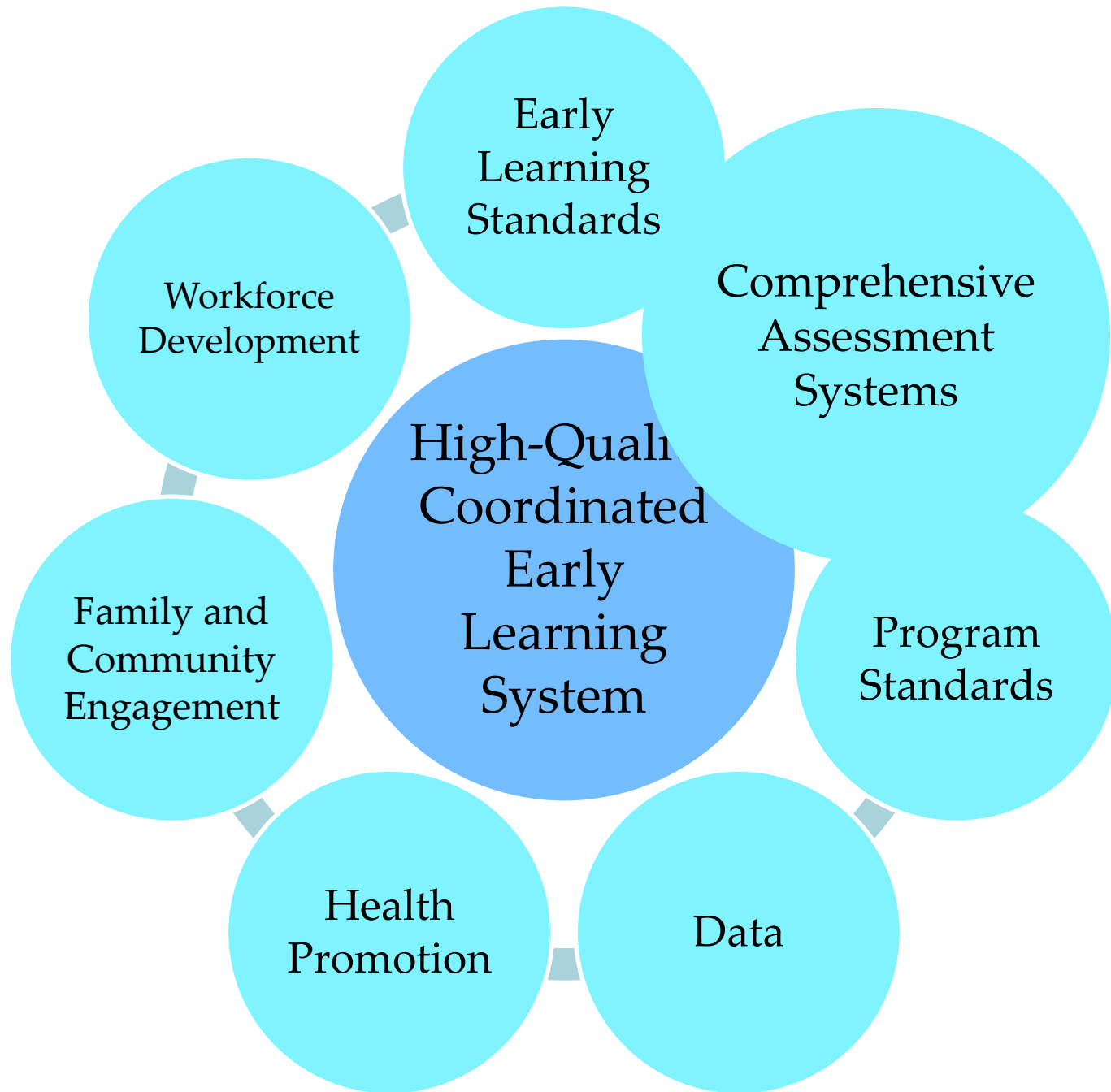
Assessment

... a systematic process to measure or evaluate the characteristics or performance of individuals, programs, or other entities, for purposes of drawing inferences...

The Standards (2014)

Assessment

- Does not live in isolation
- Is part of a complex and interconnected high-quality early learning system
- Reflects standards and curriculum
- Should not drive the curriculum



Assessment System

...a coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments – each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used– that organizes information about the process and context of young children's learning and development in order to help Early Childhood Educators make informed instructional and programmatic decisions

Some Components

- Screening Measures
- Formative Assessments
- Summative Assessments
- Measures of Environmental Quality
- Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions

(adapted from RTT/ELC)

Assessment Purpose

(P-2) which assessments to use

how often to administer them

how long they should be,

how the domain of items or children or programs
should be sampled

—should match the stated purpose and require the
minimum amount of time to obtain valid results for that
purpose.

KEA Purposes

A Policy Question:

How are children doing as they enter kindergarten across the state?

A Practice Question:

How should instruction be modified to meet Kathy's needs?

(P-3) ...Although the same measure may be used for more than one purpose, prior consideration of all potential purposes is essential, as is careful analysis of the actual content of the assessment instrument.

INSTRUMENT SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

(I-2) Assessments should not be given without clear plans for follow-up steps that use the information productively and appropriately.



(I-7) Assessors should be trained to meet a clearly specified level of expertise in administering assessments, should be monitored systematically, and should be reevaluated occasionally.



(I-11) Extreme caution needs to be exercised in reaching conclusions about the status and progress of, as well as the effectiveness of programs serving, young children with special needs, children from language-minority homes, and other children from groups not well represented in norming or validation samples, until more information about assessment use is available and better measures are developed.

(S-5) Performance (classroom-based) assessments of children can be used for accountability, if objectivity is ensured by checking a sample of the assessments for reliability and consistency, if the results are appropriately contextualized in information about the program, and if careful safeguards are in place to prevent misuse of information.

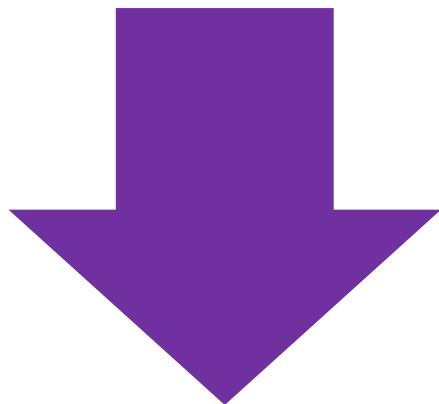
Questions?



State Presentation—North Carolina



Mr. John Pruette
Executive Director
Office of Early Learning
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

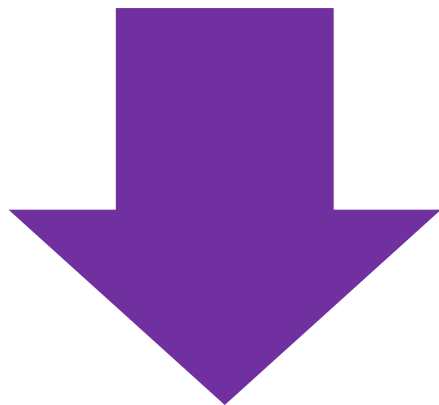


Assessments



Transitions
to
Kindergarten





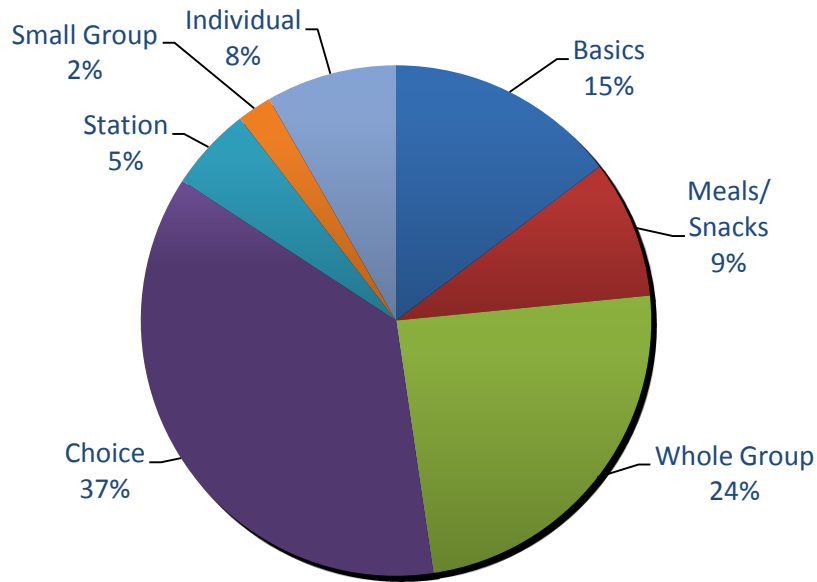
Kindergarten
Entry
Assessment
(KEA)



Transitions
to
Kindergarten

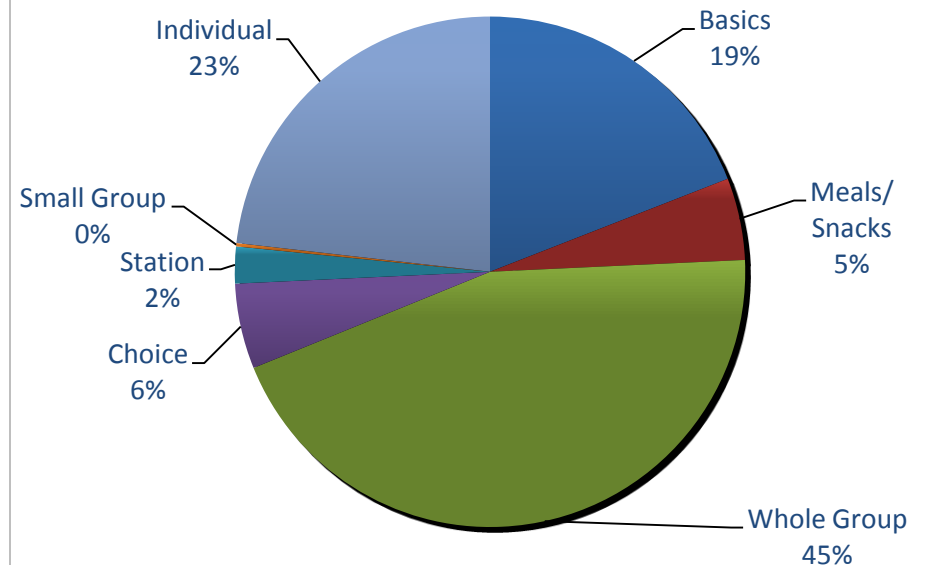


Activity Setting - Pre K



Typical experiences for children as they move between PreK and Kindergarten

Activity Setting - K



Source: Sharon Ritchie, Director, FirstSchool
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute,
UNC – Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC.

Average Ratings of Interactions in Pre-K - 3rd Classrooms



Source: Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning, *Measuring and Improving Teacher-Student Interactions in PK-12 Settings to Enhance Students' Learning* (Charlottesville, Virginia: Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning, 2011).

NC's Assessment Design Process

Assessment for Learning and Development in K-3

A REPORT BY THE K-3 NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT THINK TANK



NC K-3 Assessment Design Process

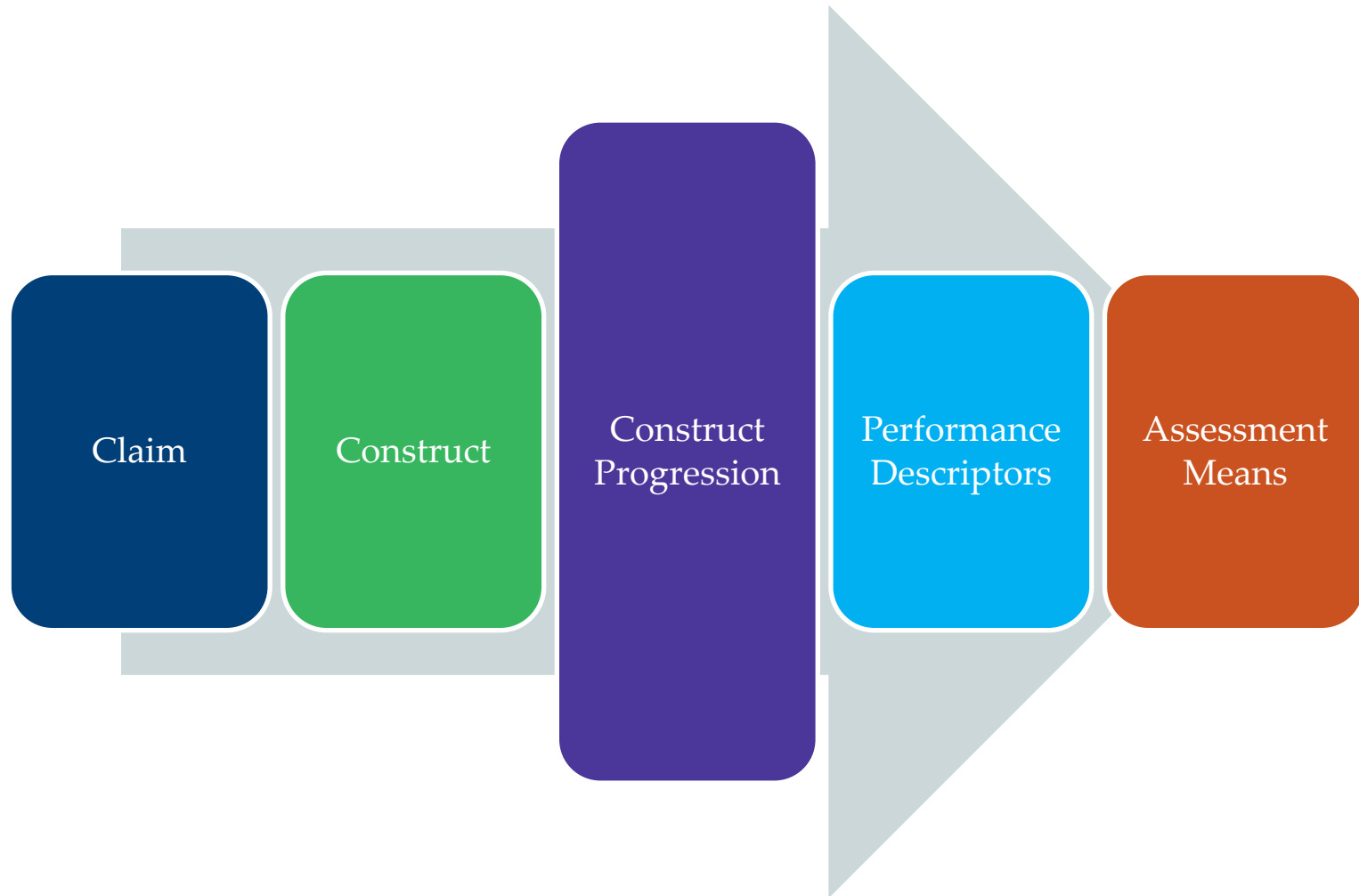
Assessment for Learning and Development in K-3

A REPORT BY THE K-3 NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT THINK TANK



- Proposes claims for essentials in five domains
- Promotes the use of a formative assessment process
- Provides recommendations for development and implementation

NC's Assessment Design Process



Early Learning Standards, Common Core, and NC Essential Standards

Construct Progressions



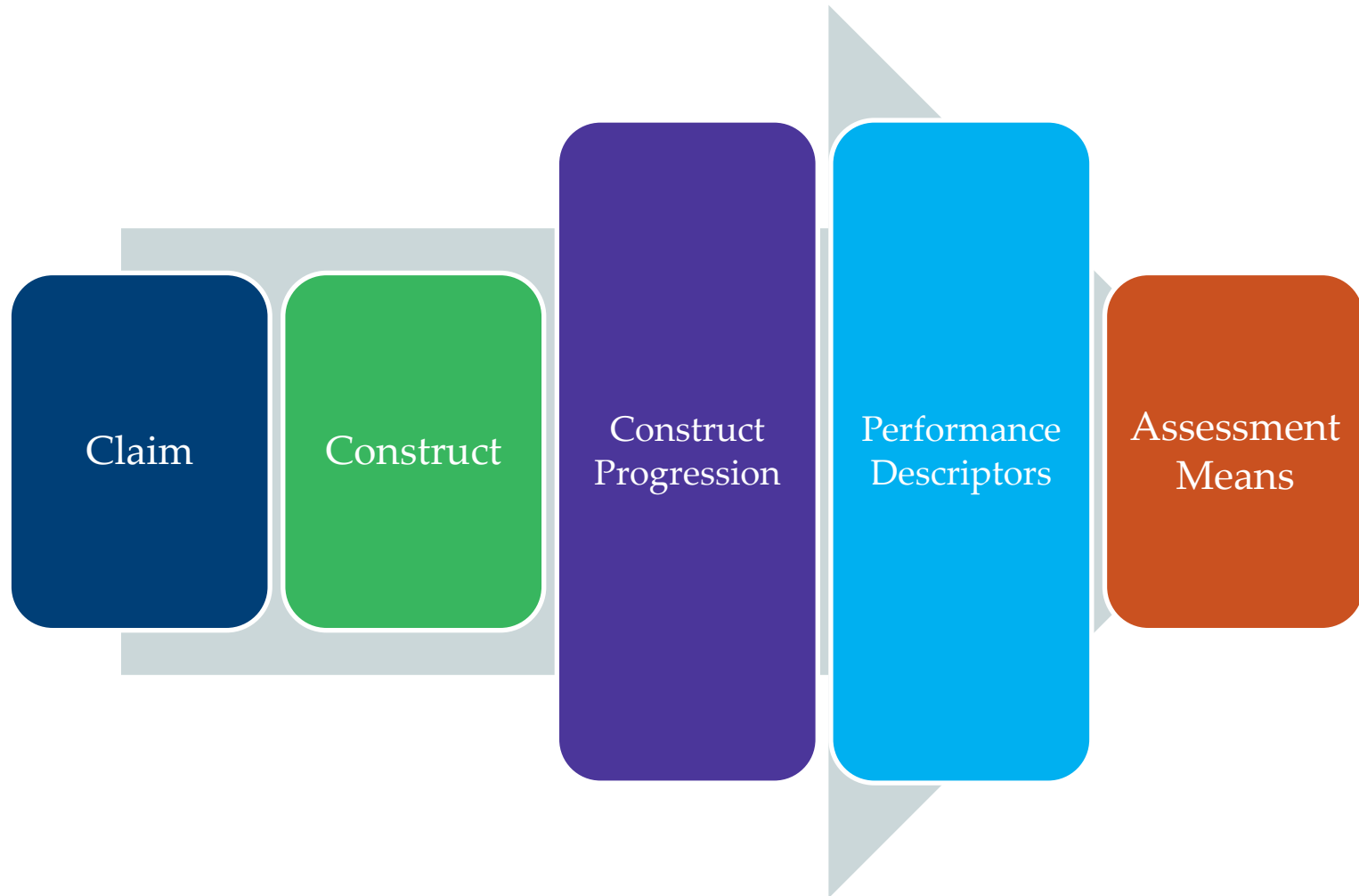
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graph LR; A[Construct Progressions] --- B[Lay out increasingly more sophisticated understandings of core concepts, principles or skill development in a domain.]; A --- C[Describe development over an extended period of time.]; A --- D[Provide a picture of what it means to "improve" in an area of learning.];
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Lay out increasingly more sophisticated understandings of core concepts, principles or skill development in a domain.

Describe development over an extended period of time.

Provide a picture of what it means to “improve” in an area of learning.

NC's Assessment Design Process

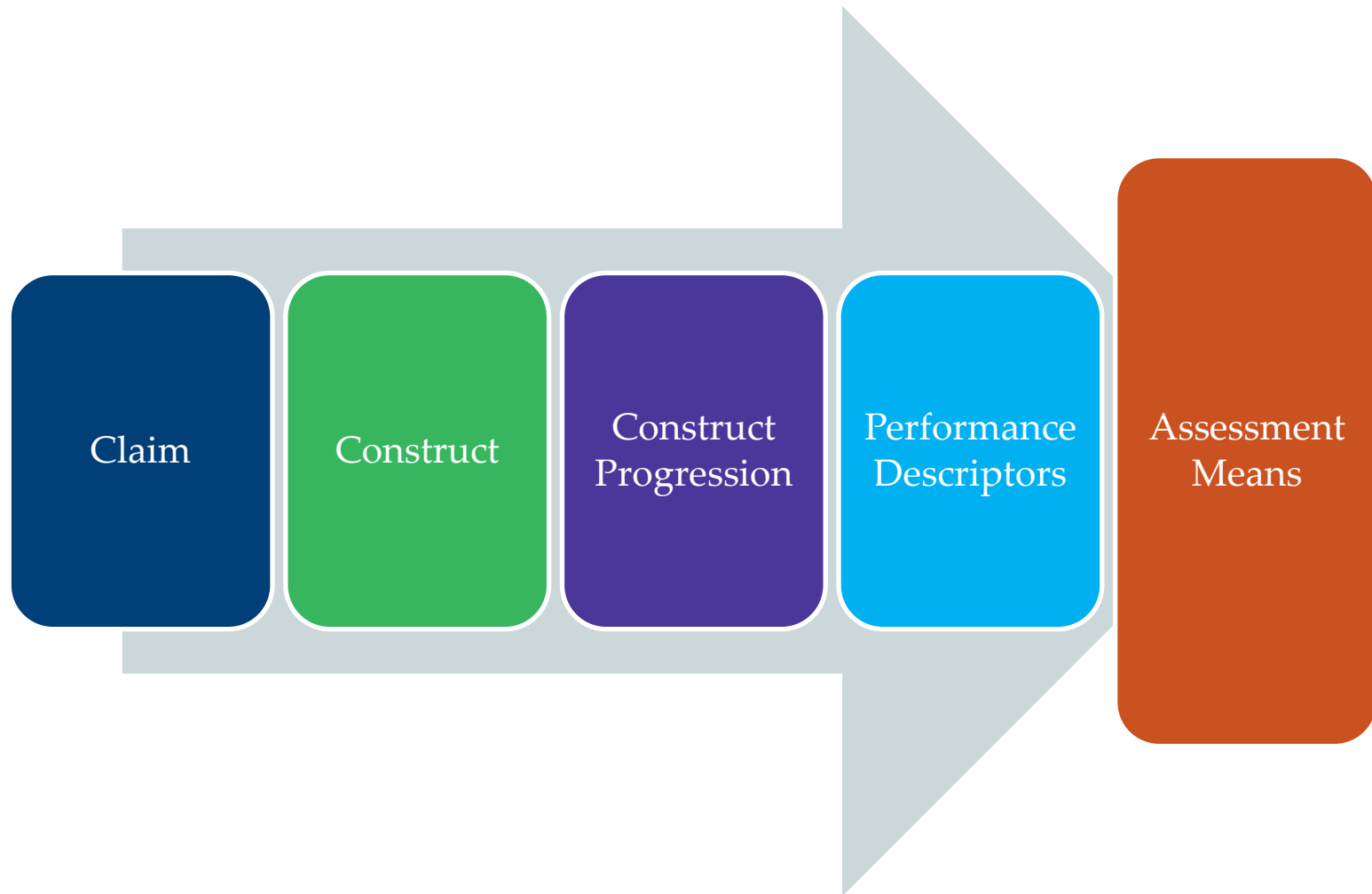


Early Learning Standards, Common Core, and NC Essential Standards

Construct Progressions

Understanding	Skills	Performance Descriptors
Identify the major concepts within a particular construct	Identify the competencies within each “understanding”, ranging from simple to higher levels	Paint a picture of performance, specifying exactly how students would demonstrate their understanding or skill at each stage of the progression

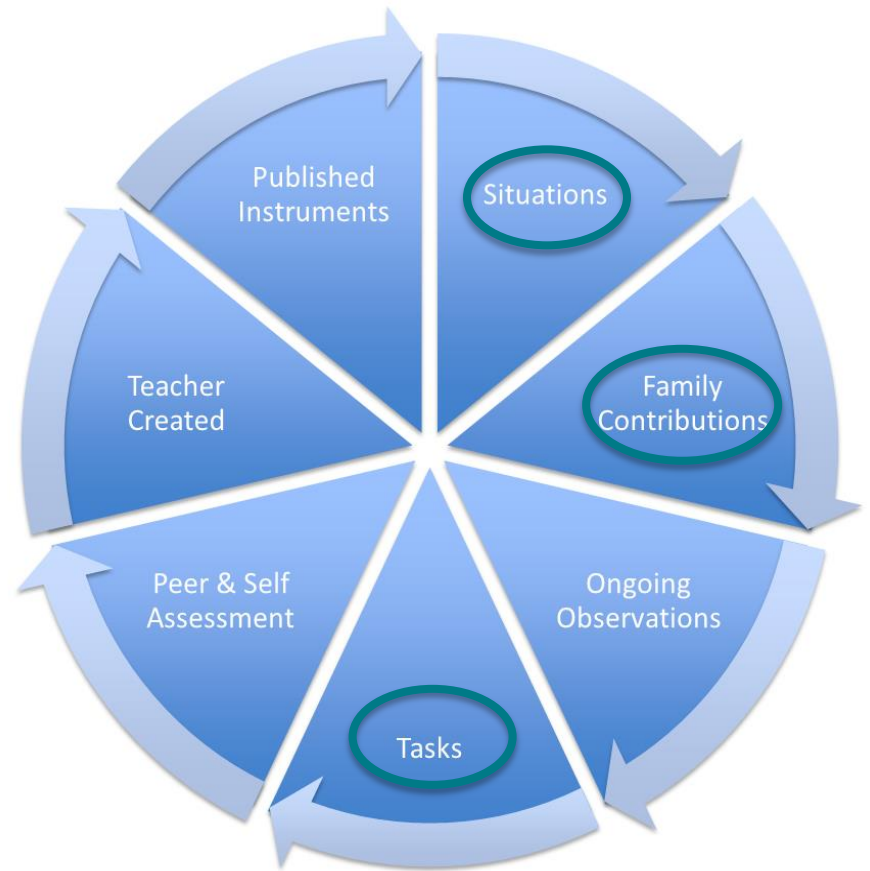
NC's Assessment Design Process



Early Learning Standards, Common Core, and NC Essential Standards

NC K-3 Assessment Means

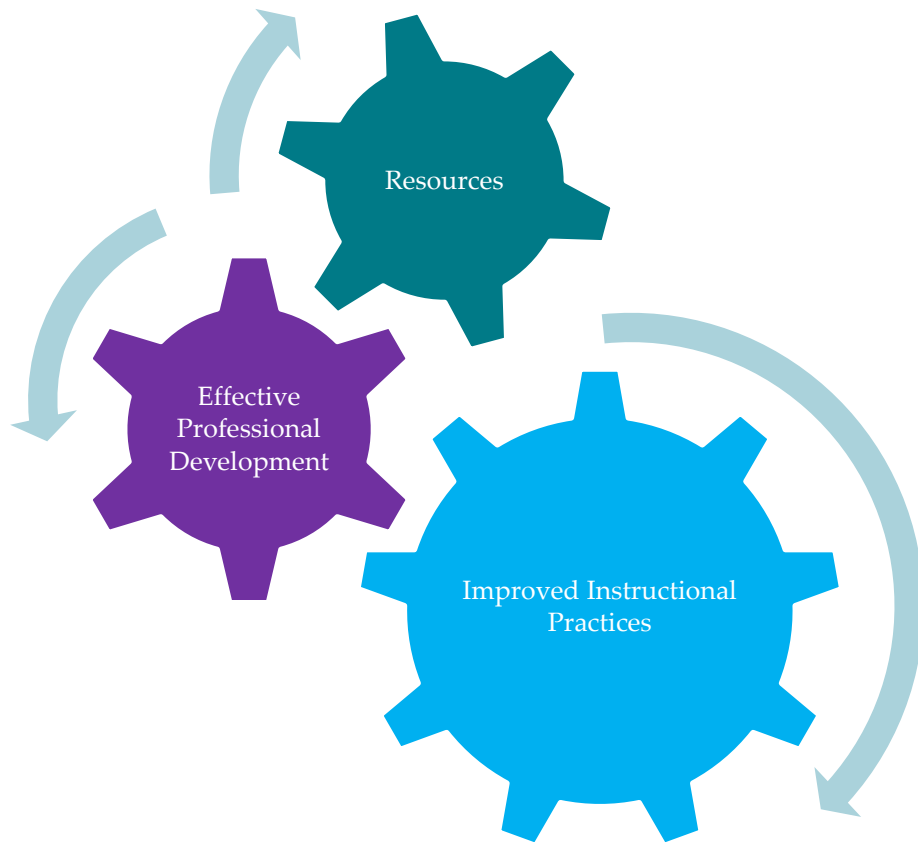
- Multiple Means to Elicit Evidence of Learning
 - Ongoing Observation
 - Situations
 - Tasks
 - Family Contributions
 - Self-Assessment
 - Peer Assessment



Draft NC K-3 Formative Assessment Constructs

Domain	K-3 Constructs
Approaches to Learning	Self-Selected Activities Perseverance: Assigned Activities Perseverance: Collaborative Activities
Cognitive Development	Counting Problem-Solving
Emotional-Social Development	Emotional Literacy Emotion Regulation
Health & Physical Development	Fine Motor Development; Midline Gross Motor Development
Language Development & Communication	Following Directions Letter Naming Book & Print Awareness Vocabulary Writing

Transitions to Kindergarten



Questions?



State Presentation–Nevada



Ms. Anna Severens
Early Childhood Education Programs Professional
Nevada State PreK Director
Office of Early Learning & Development
Nevada Department of Education



Nevada Key Activities

- **2009:** Governor established Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (NECAC)
- **2010:** NECAC began strategic planning with school readiness minigrant
- **2011:** NECAC priority included Statewide Coordinated KEA Tool; vetoed by the Governor
- **February 2012:** NECAC convened School Readiness Summit to define school readiness
- **June 2012:** NECAC adopted school readiness definition
- **January-July 2012:** NECAC commissioned statewide KEA Needs Assessment through ARRA funds
- **September 2012:** NECAC recommended piloting Teaching Strategies GOLD as Nevada's KEA tool

Nevada Key Activities (continued)

- **June 2013:** Legislature appropriated \$1.5M for 2-year pilot for assessment of school readiness (SB486)
- **Fall 2013:** Silver State KIDS emerged from 2nd RttT-ELC application
- **October 2013:** Restructuring of state early childhood leadership structure moved key programs, including Head Start State Collaboration Office into NDE
- **Fall-Spring 2014:** Pilot implementation of Silver State KIDS including feedback from teachers
 - Phase I (2013-14)- 7 districts; 13,000 PreK; 900 K
 - Phase II (2014-15)- 11,000 PreK and 1,293 K

Needs Assessment

- Large, inclusive, statewide needs assessment process used multiple methodologies to collect data. Site visits were made in all 17 counties; focus groups were held; surveys were completed by 200 providers and stakeholders and more than 500 parents; and interviews were completed with 30 key informants.
- Findings indicated that a tool was needed to cover multiple domains of child development and learning, birth-3rd grade that were sustainable for the long term. Educators asked for more data sharing and partnerships between early childhood and schools. Parents wanted more information about what was expected in kindergarten.

Major Accomplishments

From 2011-2013:

- 1) The NECAC led a successful effort to develop and pilot a comprehensive KEA initiative, including convening a School Readiness Summit
- 2) Adopted SR Definition
- 3) Completed a statewide KEA Needs Assessment
- 4) Analyzed existing assessment tools
- 5) Made recommendation to pilot TSG
- 6) Conducted a statewide planning summit for implementation
- 7) Secured \$1.5M from state legislature to pilot assessment

Challenges & Opportunities

- Limited state staff to oversee and manage the pilot effort. Existing staff had to take on additional responsibilities.
- Uncertainty about NV's role in KEA-EAG consortium because of NV's earlier commitment to the TSG pilot and changing leadership.
- KIDS is perceived as an early childhood initiative, and K-12 leaders are not well represented on NECAC. Hopefully, move to NDE and Governor's appointment of an early childhood liaison on the P-20W Council will increase visibility at the K-2 level.
- State-level leadership transitions.
- Ongoing need for support and infrastructure for PD on implementation of observation-based assessment, and using data to improve instruction and connecting assessment with other state and local data systems and reports, including report cards.
- Need for common definitions across early childhood and primary grades, such as DAP, rigor, and centers.

Lessons Learned

- **Infrastructure & Professional Development:** As new projects are taken on, such as piloting an assessment instrument, it is necessary to build in additional staffing and infrastructure to manage and provide PD.
- **Leadership Transition:** When leaders are in transition, it is important to have adequate documentation of efforts and outcomes.; More involvement of K-3 leadership
- **Technology:** IT teams need to be included early on in discussions about how to integrate early childhood data in the longitudinal data systems of the state.
- **Collaboration:** Nevada leaders noted the benefits of working with other states through the Kellogg KEA Project, TSG Professional Learning Community, and the MD/OH EAG Consortium.

Next Steps

- Evaluating TSG pilot
- Decision to continue in MD/OH Consortium
- Enhance infrastructure and professional development related to KEA
- Identify common tool that measures all domains for statewide implementation

Questions?



Discussant



Dr. Thomas Schultz
Senior Scientist, CEELO
Director of Early Childhood Initiatives, CCSSO



Beyond NC & NV: State KEA Initiatives

- Snapshot of KEA Initiatives
- Signs of Progress
- Challenges & Questions

State KEAs Are on the Move

- 14 states have passed KEA legislation since 2010
- 20 RTT/Early Learning Challenge states are developing KEA efforts
- 17 states have joined 3 Enhanced Assessment Grant projects to develop new KEA tools

KEA Signs of Progress

- Aligning KEAs to state standards
- Training teachers/establishing reliability on comprehensive observational KEAs
- Training administrators and engaging parents
- Teacher surveys & focus groups
- First-ever state-led ECE assessment development projects
- Many teachers like comprehensive KEA scope

KEA Challenges: Assessment Overload

- #1 teacher concern is KEAs take too much time.
- Many teachers also administer grade-level reading, teacher evaluation, & local assessments
- Many teachers lack experience with comprehensive observational tools
- Many teachers haven't been trained/don't have time to study and use KEA data
- Using KEA data to “individualize instruction” is not simple/easy

Challenges: Overloaded Expectations?

- KEA policies assume multiple audiences and uses:
 - Report to state policy makers on all children
 - Report to teachers to inform curricula and teaching
 - Report back to early childhood programs
 - Report to parents
- KEAs are 1 element of comprehensive assessment system, but being rolled out separately
- How do we avoid overloading KEAs with too many expectations - but avoid overloading teachers with too many separate assessments?

Questions & Answers



Dr. Jacqueline Jones



Dr. Thomas Schultz



Mr. John Pruetto



Ms. Anna Severens

Thank you for joining us!

**For a recording of this webinar and associated resources,
please go to <http://relnw.educationnorthwest.org>**

Please complete the feedback survey, which will be emailed to you by Concord Evaluation Group (Sharon Carroll) after the event. A “certificate of completion” is available from the survey link.

For more information



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