

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) supports the work of state education agencies (SEAs) on issues of standards, instruction, assessment, data systems, and program design and accountability for children from birth to grade 3. We know that high-quality early education programs can improve outcomes, narrow achievement gaps, and convey long-term benefits for children in school and life, and the ECE SCASS is dedicated to supporting states' efforts to ensure their early childhood programs are of the highest quality.

2016-2017 Achievements:

- Supporting chief state school officers and their SEAs in implementing recommendations of the Council's [Equity Starts Early](#) policy framework including strengthening family and community engagement, connecting early childhood programs and elementary schools, accelerating improvement in early childhood programs, building a high performing workforce and increasing investment in high quality early childhood programs.
- Addressing early childhood mandates and opportunities as SEAs develop state plans for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), including use of ESSA funding to expand and improve early childhood programs, linking efforts to build a highly effective early childhood and K-12 workforce and engaging early childhood leaders and experts in the ESSA planning process.
- Building state capacity to improve children's literacy and language development across the PreK-3rd grade years through a new partnership with the English Language Arts (ELA) SCASS and the Council's Implementation College and Career Standards (ICCS) Early Literacy Workgroup. The partnership will enable cross-state efforts on grade level reading initiatives, PreK-3rd grade formative and diagnostic literacy assessments, and how SEAs should lead efforts to implement PreK-3rd grade standards for students and pedagogy/classroom quality. Activities will include a joint meeting of SEA Chief Academic Officers, literacy and language arts specialists and early childhood program leaders, webinars on topics of shared interest and a resource summarizing shared learning across the workgroups.

In 2017-18, the ECE SCASS will support participating states on issues and challenges including the following:

- Supporting chief state school officers and their SEAs in implementing recommendations of CCSSO's [Equity Starts Early](#) policy framework including strengthening [family and community engagement](#), [connecting early childhood programs and elementary schools](#), accelerating improvement in early childhood programs (Early Learning State Network Improvement Communities -Engaging Stakeholders in Evidence-Based Action Plans to Strengthen Statewide Early Childhood and Early Literacy and Math Strategies (planned)), building a high performing workforce, and increasing investment in high quality early childhood programs.
- Addressing, in collaboration with the [Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes \(CEELO\)](#), early childhood mandates and opportunities as SEAs develop state and local plans for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), including use of ESSA funding to expand and improve early childhood programs, linking efforts to build a highly effective early childhood and K-12 workforce, and engaging early childhood leaders and experts in the ESSA planning process.
- Building state capacity to improve children's literacy and language development across the PreK-3rd grade years by partnering with the English Language Arts (ELA) and English Learners (EL) SCASSs. The partnership enables cross-state efforts on grade level reading

initiatives, PreK-3rd grade formative and diagnostic literacy assessments, and SEA leadership efforts to implement PreK-3rd grade standards for students and pedagogy/classroom quality.

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