



# **Maximizing Federal Investments for Young Children Webinar Series:**

## **Big Ideas from the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge**

**December 11, 2017  
3:30-5:00pm Eastern**



# **BUILD Initiative Mission**

## **The BUILD Initiative**

supports state leaders to develop a comprehensive, equitable system (infrastructure, programs, policies and services) that meets the needs of young children and their families.

## **This systems-building approach**

effectively prepares our youngest children for a successful future, while carefully using private and public resources.

# Today's Webinar

- **New series, Maximizing Federal Investments in Young Children**
- **Today's focus: Systems building and the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge**
- **Our approach to today's webinar**

# Our Speakers



**Kristin Bernhard**  
**Georgia Department of**  
**Early Care and Learning**



**Susan Hibbard**  
**BUILD Initiative**



**Cynthia Tate**  
**Illinois Governor's Office**



**Valora Washington**  
**CDA Council for**  
**Professional Recognition**



**Harriet Dichter**  
**BUILD Initiative**  
**[moderator]**

# Georgia: What we did!

- **Innovated in the development of delivery structures/systems**
  - Child Care Subsidy: Quality Rated Subsidy Grants
  - Technical Assistance: Performance Measures for CRRs
- **Dramatically Increased Participation in our TQRIS, Quality Rated**
  - Revised provider and family facing communication
  - Raised \$14M in private funds to support implementation
- **Developed a Kindergarten Entry Assessment**
  - Focused on parent/family communication <http://gkidsreadinesscheck.gadoe.org/>
- **Invested in IT infrastructure**
  - Added data elements and public reports to our Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) <http://www.gacacds.com/>
  - Built a new Professional Development System (PDS) for ECE teachers
  - Modified an existing online payment system for Quality Rated Subsidy Grants
  - Improved Provider Self Service & Portal to increase the usability of our online child care search website, [www.qualityrated.org](http://www.qualityrated.org)

# Georgia: What we learned!

- Only build things that you know you have a funding mechanism **and** a delivery mechanism to sustain
  - Lesson from Quality Rated Subsidy Grants
- “The State” is not always a welcome partner, but can become one through consistent, good faith effort.
  - Lesson from Early Education Empowerment Zones



# Georgia: What we unlearned!

- Funding is **not** the **most** important ingredient to bring community partners to the table for young children
  - Lesson from Early Education Empowerment Zones (E3Zs) Birth-Eight Teams
- The players **never** stay the same
- Don't assume because you've gotten "buy in" once that you're set for the next four years.
  - Lesson from the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS).



# Georgia: What we relearned!

- Communicate early, often, repeatedly, in as many forms, in as many mediums, and to as many audiences as possible
  - Make it someone’s job to communicate; the Facebook page won’t update itself
- Ask people to “show me in the rule/law/statute” where it says it can’t be done
  - Don’t accept “it’s *always* been that way” as a excuse for “it can *only* be done that way”
- Things always look different in implementation than in the application
  - Sometimes, a fire station works when a child care center can’t



# Illinois: Pre-ELC Challenges and Strengths

- **Problems we sought to solve with RTT-ELC**
  - Children with high needs having access to most effective services
  - Parents need a way to determine relative quality of various group EC settings
  - Programs need systemic support for continuous quality improvement
  - Early childhood workforce needs preparation and ongoing support for professional development
  - The State needs information to understand the effectiveness of its investments in early childhood

# Illinois: What We Did!

- Invested in QRIS/ExceleRate
  - Quality Specialists
  - Training and Development
  - Enhanced Quality Supports for Program Improvement
  - Incentives
  - QRIS Validation Study
  - Assessment
  - Public Awareness
  - Infrastructure

# Illinois: What We Did!

- Data Integration
- Workforce—Gateways to Opportunity credential development, scholarships, higher ed alignment
- Community Systems—Innovation Zones in 11 communities
- Coordination and Alignment—OECD, ELC, integration projects
- KIDS—Kindergarten Entry Assessment

# Illinois: Post ELC Challenges and Strengths

- **Strengths**

- Major infrastructure established including ExceleRate, Gateways to Opportunity credentialing system, data system enhancements, community systems development, KIDS

- **Challenges**

- Continued support for ExceleRate including quality specialists, monitoring, incentives; Awards of Excellence coaching and PD; QRIS system updates and revisions based on validation study; workforce development including scholarships and reduced cost credentials, 2 year/4 year higher ed alignment; completion of early childhood data matching in the ILDS; continued support, TA, and data capacity building in community systems development.

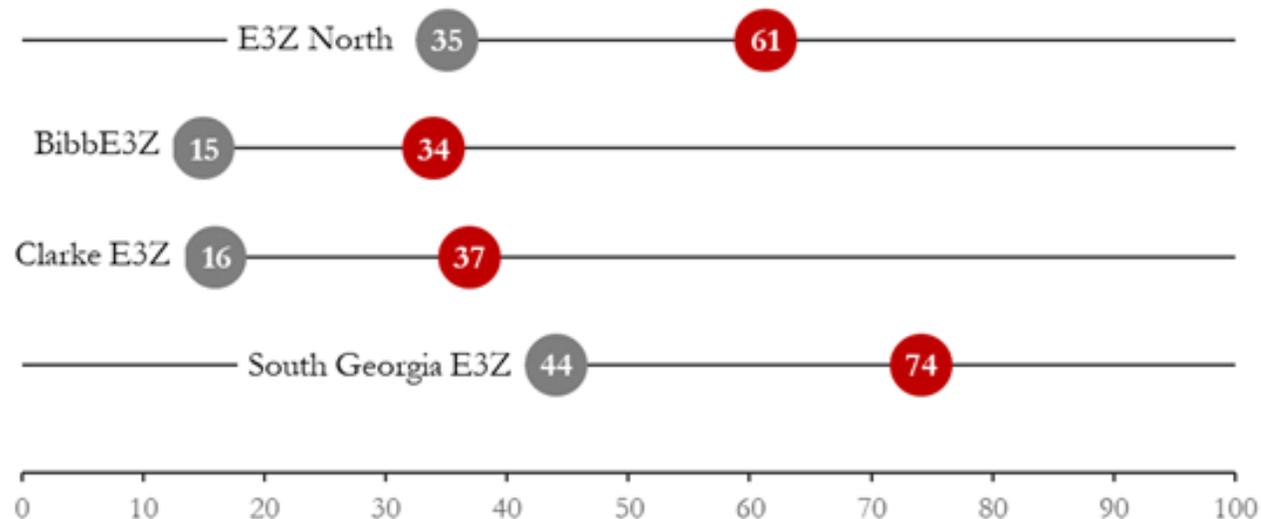
# Thinking about GA ELC Transformation Zones

- Georgia's Early Education Empowerment Zones (E3Zs) drastically increased the percentage of children participating in child care subsidy in Quality Rated
- Local partners learned about and won other substantial new funds and grants at the community level to support B-8 outcomes
- Direct access to known local partners gave the state a “learning lab” and a “go-to” set of stakeholders to test community concepts

# Thinking about ELC Transformation Zones

- GA's E3Zs drastically increased the percentage of children participating in child care subsidy in Quality Rated

The percentage of CAPS-eligible children in Quality Rated child care programs increased between 2015 and 2017.



# Thinking about IL ELC Innovation Zones

- Helped families enroll children more easily
- Developmental screening campaigns helped families receive the services their children need and helped raise awareness of early learning and development programs
- Zones explored a wide range of family and community outreach strategies
- Zones fostered new partnerships and expanded existing ones with traditional and non-traditional partners

# How does systems building help improve services and outcomes for children?

- When done well at the community/local and state level simultaneously, it forces user-centered design
- Systems building forces resource sharing as well as more efficient and targeted use of those resources- concepts that better support families and children and also sell well politically
- Potential to engage families and communities
- Creates deeper levels of synergy
- Offers a framework for seeing dynamic relationships
- Clarifies and reinforces professional development opportunities and career pathways <http://www.cdacouncil.org/white-papers>

# How does systems building help improve services and outcomes for children?

- CDA in Georgia and Illinois 2010 – 2017 (half year)

<b>State</b>	<b>New CDA's</b>	<b>Renewal CDA's</b>	<b>Professional Development Specialists</b>
Georgia	8089	6344	315
Illinois	3876	3906	215

# How does systems building help improve services and outcomes for children?

- Services are more targeted; access increased
- Increased collaboration among early learning professionals
- Stronger community connections
- New approaches to working with families are developed
- Increased screenings and referrals
- Increased enrollment capacity
- Increased focus on priority populations
- Measurement of child-level outcomes is a work in progress with KIDS assessment (the kindergarten readiness assessment developed with RTT funding) just about to be launched

# Systems Building



- Clarify direction—common goal
- Build local capacity—learn from local innovation
- Boost quality; improve access
- User-friendly for family and child—maternal health into early elementary grades
- Prepare workforce, support teachers and leaders
- Engage families
- Measure impact

# Where should we be heading in terms of ECE systems building?

- ☑ Establish guiding principles
- ☑ Focus on the workforce
- ☑ Balance future priorities
- ☑ Serious attention to equity
- ☑ Emphasize results, not structures

For more information see Washington and Gadson:  
<http://www.cdacouncil.org/GuidingPrinciples>

# Where should we be heading in terms of ECE systems building?

- **Illinois:**
  - Continued work to assure cross-systems alignment in policy, operations, professional development, workforce development, and community systems development
  - Alignment in outcomes management and data collection
  - Capacity building in 0-3 system (including Infant-Toddler credentialing and quality improvement and alignment of home visiting)

# Where should we be heading in terms of ECE systems building?

- Georgia:
  - Data, data, data
  - Add a systems lens to any new work/project/initiative/grant/rule
  - Children and families who fall outside our systems
  - Consider the demands on the different workforces throughout the system
  - A shared vision for families across sectors

# Forward Ever

- Vision
- Values
- Goals
- Inputs
- Outcomes
- Impact



- Program to system to systems...we are better together
- Strategy to impact
- Experiment to learn
- Collect and analyze data
- Revise or repeat

# What are you doing now to realize an ECE systems vision?

- **Build and Strengthen Partnerships**
  - States and registries
  - Higher education articulation
  - National, state, local organizations
  - Career and technical vocational schools
- **Leverage CDA as “the best first step”**
  - National competencies
  - Multilingual
  - Portable
  - Trusted by employers and staff (over 43,000 new and renewed CDAs in 2017)
- **Create A “Gold Standard”**

The CDA® Credential Provides a Career and Education Pathway

For four decades, the Child Development Associates® (CDA) competencies have set the standard for entry level education. The CDA® has shaped the development of competency frameworks that are designed to align professional development in early childhood education (ECE) in the context of its historic commitment to the early care and education workforce, since 2013 the Council has been working throughout the United States that provide CDA® training as part of their curricula high schools (CTE).

The high school-based CDA® curriculum is designed to provide students with the training needed to prepare any professional for early childhood education and delivers the experience and academic training needed to meet the Council's standards. Submit a CDA® application, pass a proctored exam, and succeed through an on-site observation.

The CDA® standardized training requirements are an industry leading quality and consistency in performance.

These CTE high school CDA® candidates are required to meet all of the qualification standards, including 120 hours of education, 400 hours of work experience, a family questionnaire, direct observation by a Council-constructed Professional Development Specialist.

**Why CDA?**

The Child Development Associates™ (CDA) National Credential represents the crosswalk where education and experience meet. This credential recognizes competence and is a pathway to learning best teaching practices for young early educators. Includes:

- A lead teacher who already holds an academic degree, but needs to gain hands-on practical skills and competency in early care and education.

**Why CDA?**

- An excellent teacher title for educators
- A family child care improvement that quality meet licensing need
- A high school student career in working

The CDA helps early educators and national professional employers are competent in vital knowledge and skills. It has won the trust of more than 100 CDAs awarded since the year 2000 and 18,000 renewals!

But there's more.

1. The CDA online proctored exam is available in 50 states, the District of Columbia, commonwealths and the military.
2. The CDA is portable, 50 states, the District of Columbia, commonwealths and the military.
3. The CDA is the only credentialing system in the language of the workforce.

Be sure to keep up with Council news by subscribing to CouncilLINK, our monthly newsletter. CouncilLINK is our primary means to provide you with the most current information. To sign up, please visit [www.cdcouncil.org/newsletter](http://www.cdcouncil.org/newsletter).

**The CDA® Gold Standard Training Certification**  
White Paper

**Introduction**

For more than 30 years, the Council for Professional Recognition has promoted improved performance and recognition for professionals in the early childhood education of children aged birth to five years old. Through our comprehensive assessment of educator knowledge and classroom competence, the prestigious Child Development Associates® (CDA) credentials have set the standard for what early childhood educators should know and be able to do.

Simply put, in early childhood education, the CDA is a symbol of quality and trust.

The Council wants to ensure all CDA students can obtain the high-quality training they are seeking from the variety of education providers. That's why we are now conducting a pilot study of the new CDA Gold Standard Training Certification for organizations that provide professional development to CDA candidates. The Gold Standard Training Certification is an earned recognition that demonstrates qualified organizations have met our rigorous criteria for student services, sound business practices and professional development – all designed to prepare students for the CDA certification exam and verification visit.

**Challenges**

The need for the CDA Gold Standard Training Certification is clear. Early childhood educators and home visitors have historically come from a wide range of backgrounds – some of which require formal education and some that do not. The evidence is strong: the Council's decades of experience and scores of research both demonstrate that students working to become early childhood educators don't necessarily have the assurance that the courses or training in which they are participating will adequately prepare them for teaching and caring for young children.

"As indicated by the ubiquitous 'early childhood-related' label widely used to describe the educational backgrounds of teachers of young children, there is no accepted and agreed-upon standard for what constitutes a high-quality program of study for ECE practitioners," wrote the authors of *Default or By Design? Variations in Higher Education Programs for Early Care and Education Teachers and Their Implications for Research Methodology, Policy and Practice*, a 2012 report from the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment. "Too often, highly diverse higher education programs are assumed to produce equivalent results."

One example of more recent efforts to improve teacher preparation standards began in 2009, when the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) started working to give early educators some guidance on higher education programs that meet the association's Standards for Initial and

# What are you doing now to realize an ECE systems vision?

- Georgia:
  - Data, data, data
  - Reinvigorating existing coordinating bodies
  - Continue work supporting communities with state resources and expanding the reach of our “zones”
  - Insuring lessons learned from RTT-ELC are not lost, but incorporated into new grants and funding opportunities (CCDF research grant, Striving Readers)

# What are you doing now to realize an ECE systems vision?

- Illinois:
  - Focusing work of Early Learning Council and its committees on cross-system goals around access, integration, alignment, data support, quality, etc.
  - Implementing cross-systems legislation (e.g. Suspension and Expulsion legislation including cross-system development of ECMHC and Pyramid Model)
  - Cross-system work on developmental screening
  - MIECHV and Prevention Initiative Home visiting infrastructure collaboration
  - EC Workforce Children's Cabinet project
  - Continued support of community systems development work through Preschool Expansion grant

# What are you doing now to realize an ECE systems vision?

- BUILD supports state leaders to:
  - Think systemically
  - Commit to equity
  - Act collectively
  - Take action, study impact, revise/plan & act again
- Partner States
- Equity Leaders Action Network
- Health Equity
- 50-state Learning Community



# Can you talk specifically about where equity fits into your vision?

- **Illinois**
  - We are embarking upon Racial Equity work with the Early Learning Council—Executive committee
  - Bringing an equity lens to the child, family and community level, workforce, and provider communities
  - Focusing equity work on statewide implementation of legislation to prevent suspension and expulsion
  - Building capacity at the pre-school level for program and school-based PFA administrators
- **Georgia**
  - Data, data, data
  - For states like Georgia, it's also important to not forget geographic equity and the problem of “two Georgias”

# Can you talk specifically about where equity fits into your vision?

## **Equity lens is built into the DNA of the CDA**

- focus on specific support for all languages and cultures, geographic communities, and abilities

**Distinguish:** Reality, Equality, Equity

**Possibilities:** We help realize both personal growth and Social Justice

**Focus:** Impact, not intentions. Well done is better than well said.

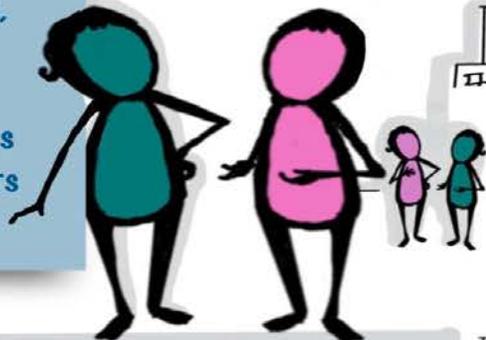
# Racial Equity in Early Childhood Systems

## Four Levels of Change



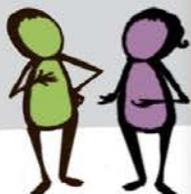
### PERSONAL

The individual consistently works alone and with others, to understand their own values, beliefs, implicit biases, unconscious racism, actions and relative privileges that contribute to racial inequities and equity; the individual acts to advance racial equity.



### INTERPERSONAL

Individuals and groups are effective in relating to others not like themselves, actively include those typically excluded, share power, surface issues of racial inequality in interpersonal relationships, act to support positive change, and work to reduce interpersonal conflict.



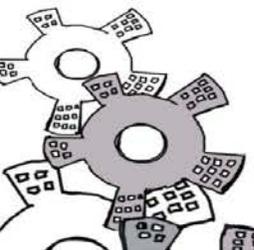
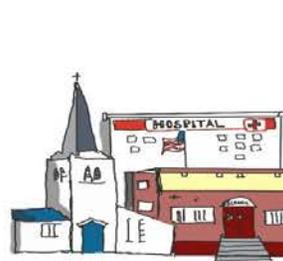
### INSTITUTIONAL

Apply a racial equity/economic justice lens to their policies, practices, regulations and work culture to dismantle policies that perpetuate inequality and design/develop policies and practices that advance opportunities, fairness, access to resources, and other factors for those most effected by racial inequality.

### STRUCTURAL

Individuals and groups recognize that structural arrangements are interconnected and resist change; they develop approaches to advance equity that offer new or reconstituted structural arrangements; they build shared leadership and collective power that leads to change.

Model adapted from Kirwan Institute. Illustration design by Chrissie Bonner and Montréal Morant. c 2017

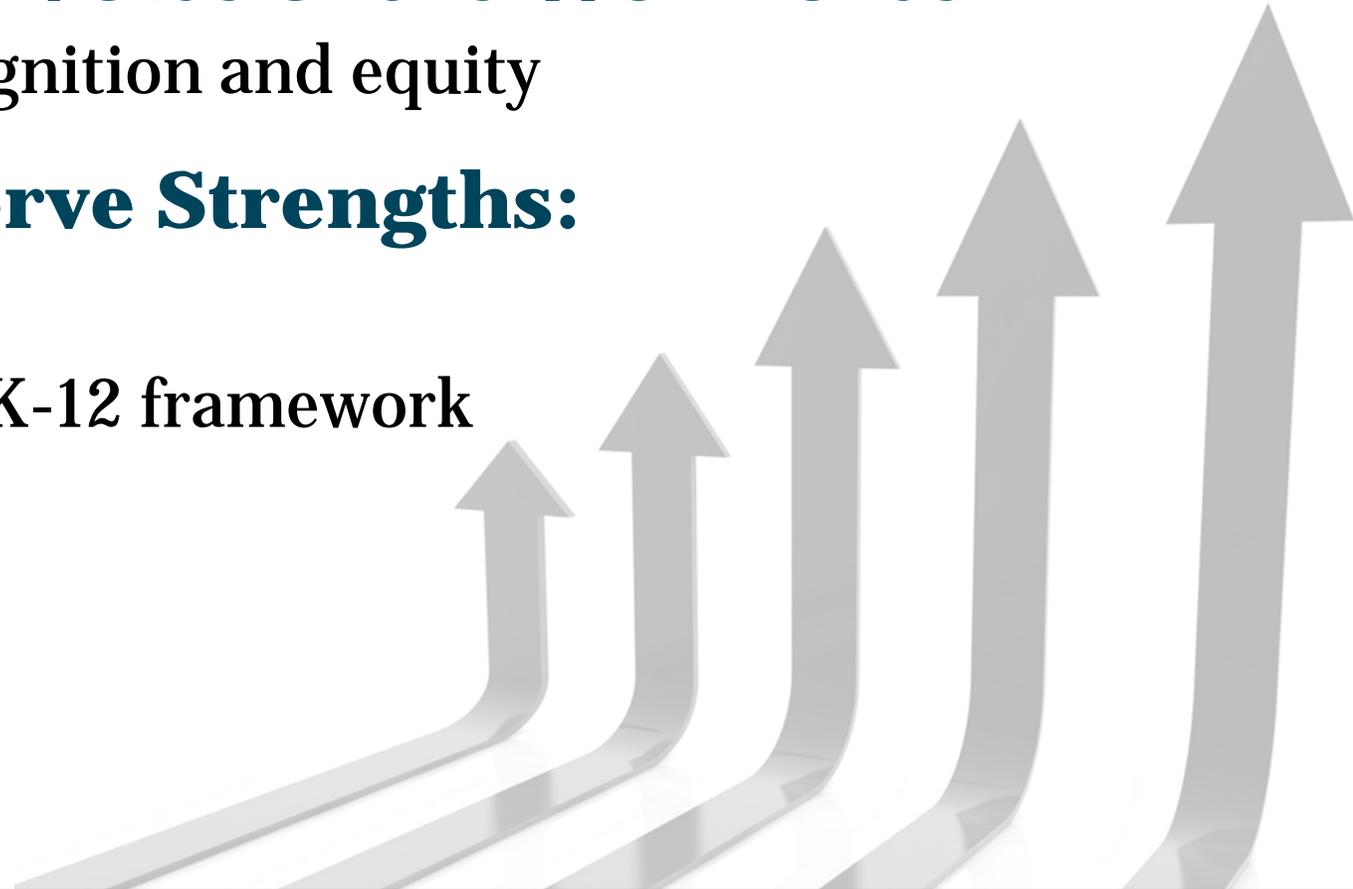


# How does the workforce fit into your vision? What is your systems vision for this group?

- **Illinois**
  - Workforce development is central to system building
    - Children's Cabinet Workforce project
  - Our vision is an aligned system of credentials, education, and licensure that builds a seamless pathway from entry into the workforce to the highest levels of education and licensure and is affordable at each level of attainment
- **Georgia**
  - Data, data, data
  - Thinking beyond the ECE workforce but into all of the workforces who are part of the early childhood system, who may face similar challenges and need similar support

# How does the workforce fit into your vision? What is your systems vision for this group?

- **Elevate and Respect the Voice of the Workforce**
  - Opportunity, pathways, recognition and equity
- **Acknowledge and Preserve Strengths:**
  - Ask: what's worth keeping?
  - Consider: role of traditional K-12 framework
- **Strive for Balance**
  - How: Teacher leadership
  - Examine the context



# What role do you see for state leaders?

- **Illinois**

- State leaders have to hold a vision of an integrated, aligned, high quality, equitable system of early care and education
- State leaders have to make determinations about resource allocation in a resource-constrained environment
- State leaders have to be committed to working collaboratively and look for systems building opportunities within their own mandated service delivery systems

- **Georgia**

- Individual state leaders have a unique opportunity to admit they don't know it all and can't do it all in a systems approach
- State leaders also have the unique opportunity to educate themselves, their teams and elected officials/policy makers about the “other ovals” of the system.



# What role do you see for state leaders?

- Connect the dots
- Understand asymmetrical challenges
- Shared understanding among key stakeholders
- “Intangibles drive performance”
- Responding to system failures

# State Leaders & Leadership at all Levels

- Role(s)
- Authority
- Capacity
- Actions
  - Individual
  - Collective



# **We often talk about leadership at all levels in early childhood. Thinking about systems work, what does this mean?**

- **Illinois**
  - This means developing leadership at the community and school district levels
  - Developing leadership among parents and care-givers
  - Exercising leadership within state government and with its partners (advocates, providers, educators)
  - Being intentional about developing leaders within middle management
- **Georgia**
  - Maintaining, increasing, and deepening partnerships with communities and their leaders interested in early childhood that began under RTT-ELC.
  - Georgia has also made investments in Professional Learning Communities, which is a leadership strategy both internally for the state agency as well as the broader ECE community of teachers, directors, etc.

# We often talk about leadership at all levels in early childhood. Thinking about systems work, what does this mean?

- How to unify with systems thinking
- Avoid and manage unintended consequences
- Leadership without authority

If you were to have an opportunity to advise the federal government about how they could best advance systems at the state and local level that best meet the early childhood needs of children and families, especially those most at risk, what would you have them do?

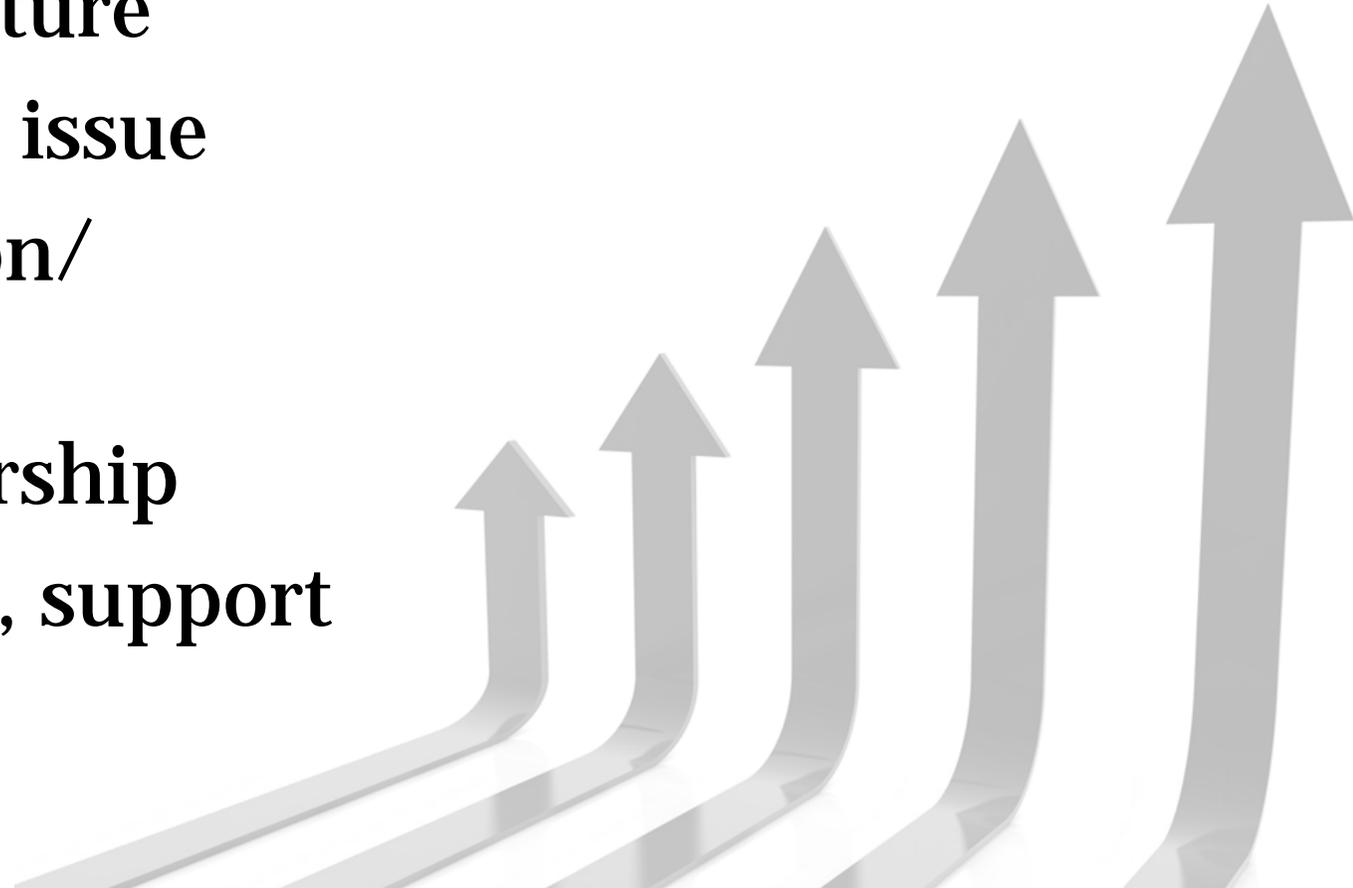
- **Georgia:**
  - Data, data, data.
  - Require evidence that states have maintained and expanded RTT-ELC initiatives with any new funding opportunities.
  - Continue jointly funded/monitored grants between multiple federal agencies, particularly HHS and Ed.
  - Don't invest in access without first investing in governance.

# Advice to Federal Government

- **Illinois:**
  - Continued support for QRIS implementation, refinement, and incentives to address resource-gap between child care and preschool
  - Continued support for community systems development (TA, capacity building, community-level data systems.
  - Invest in development and implementation of best practice strategies for family engagement of high risk families
  - Provide TA and support for cross-systems data management
  - Fund higher education competency-based assessment and alignment of competencies with credentialing

# Advice to Federal Government

- **Focus on results not structure**
- **Elevate the compensation issue**
- **Support career progression/  
articulation**
- **Facilitate the field's leadership**
- **Offer incentives to recruit, support  
and retain staff**



# Advice to federal government

- Build on what exists
- Support adults to support children
- Invest in infrastructure, connections & programs for efficiency & effectiveness

Benjamin Franklin was right!

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

# Thank you!



- Join us for the next webinar in this series: Kindergarten: From KEA to Whole Child
- January 8, 2018  
2:00pm Eastern
- [More Info & Register](#)

# BUILD Initiative

**For more information:**  
**[www.buildinitiative.org](http://www.buildinitiative.org)**

