Establishing an Ecosystem for High-Quality Early Learning

July 12 – 14, 2016

Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel
New Orleans, Louisiana
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Access handouts and presentations at  http://qrisnetwork.org/conference/2016-qris-national-meeting/program-agenda

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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 2016 QRIS National Meeting!

We have designed this meeting, “Establishing an Ecosystem for High-Quality Early Learning,” to inform your work in developing, implementing and revising the next generation of quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS). The sessions emphasize an “applying research-to-practice” approach. Many sessions include both researchers sharing the latest studies and promising practices and state leaders who will talk with you about how they translated the study findings into actual practice in their states. Some sessions have been designed to help you think about the possibilities for the next phase of QRIS.

YOU are the leaders of this work. Your voices are critical in these discussions as we work together to assure that high-quality early learning opportunities are available for all children, in every state, territory, Tribe and neighborhood. By leveraging our knowledge and experiences and by sharing ideas, we hope our collective national learning community can move these important systems-building efforts forward.

We particularly want to thank our contributors for making this meeting possible. We appreciate the generous funding from BUILD Initiative supporters and our corporate meeting sponsors (see their names on page 27 of this program). Thanks also to the wonderful partners who played an integral role in developing the sessions for this meeting. Your support makes this fabulous convening possible.

The BUILD Initiative and the QRIS National Learning Network strive to offer you the technical assistance opportunities and the resources that will promote success in your efforts to develop, implement, and revise quality rating and improvement systems. Our QRIS mantra is Continuous Quality Improvement. As you know all too well, the work is unending. It isn’t about checking items off a list; it is about always moving closer to our aspirations of high-quality, accessible early learning opportunities that promote equitable outcomes for our country’s youngest children.

Be intentional about this meeting opportunity. It provides a rare chance to engage with other state leaders, talk with presenters after sessions, meet as a team with others from your state, consolidate your thoughts, and plan how you will share information and develop next steps after the conference. When you complete the final meeting survey, think about the ideas discussed at the meeting. Let us know what resources you need, what technical assistance you seek, and what connections we can facilitate to support your state’s development of the ecosystem for high-quality early learning and your continual QRIS quality improvement process.

High-quality, racially equitable, culturally competent, affordable and accessible early learning opportunities for each and every young child is economically sound policy. It is not too big an ask—it is our mission critical.

Have a great meeting!

Sincerely,

Gerry Cobb    Deborah Mathias
Director, State Services    Director, QRIS National Learning Network
BUILD Initiative

www.buildinitiative.org • www.qrisnetwork.org
Monday, July 11

3:00 – 6:00 p.m. Beat the crowd and register early for the QRIS meeting!
Location: 1st Floor Conference Registration Area

Tuesday, July 12

7:30 a.m.

Conference registration opens for the day.
Location: 1st Floor Conference Registration Area

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Pre-Conference Sessions
The pre-conference sessions below required advance registration. All pre-conference sessions are at maximum capacity and only those that registered in advance will be admitted.

221. QRIS 101: Looking Back to Re-Focus
This pre-conference session is designed for professionals new to the QRIS scene and for seasoned staff looking to hit the reset button. Through a series of facilitated discussions, participants will reflect on the value of QRIS from multiple perspectives, research and wisdom that supports implementation practices and QRIS hot topics. This three-hour session will allow for in-depth exploration and sharing.
Char Goodreau, Laura Johns and Nina Johnson, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance
Location: Grand Salon 9 (1st floor)

222. Early Learning Challenge QRIS Validation Studies: Findings and Lessons Learned
In this pre-conference session, researchers will describe findings from QRIS validation studies in three Early Learning Challenge states: California, Massachusetts, and Minneapolis. State leaders will discuss how they are communicating about the findings and using the results to inform their QRIS work.
Gwen Alexander, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care; Laura Hawkinson, AIR; Erica Maas, Parent Aware for School Readiness; Kelly Maxwel, Child Trends; Mariana Gerena Melia, University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute; Joanne Roberts, Wellesley College; Nara Topp, Minnesota Department of Human Services; Kathryn Tout, Child Trends
Location: Grand Salon 3 & 6 (1st floor)
223. Creating a National Learning Community on Continuous Quality Improvement
How do states structure and support technical assistance, peer mentoring and coaching to create a culture of improvement at all levels of the early learning system? What are we learning in terms of best and proven practices and how can we more rapidly cycle and leverage each other’s good work (or learn from miscues)? How are we using data to improve? How are we supporting and building the cadre of coaches? Come to this session to help create a format for national sharing and learning together.

Location: Marlborough A & B (2nd floor)

Plenary Session
- Welcoming Remarks
- Video Presentation
- Fitting the Pieces Together: Necessary but not Sufficient

*Sherri Killins Stewart, Director of Systems Integration and Alignment, BUILD Initiative*

Location: Grand Ballroom C and D (1st floor)

Break

Breakout sessions

305. Overview of QRIS Finance: System and Services
This session will provide an overview of Early Care and Education Finance and the four key principles for effective QRIS finance. Tools for measuring costs – the QRIS Cost Estimation Model and the Provider Cost of Quality Calculator on-line and linked spreadsheets – will be explained and briefly demonstrated.

*Anne Mitchell and Louise Stoney, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance*

Location: Grand Salon 4 (1st floor)

333. What Does Culturally Competent Care Look and Feel Like to Infants and Toddlers? Establishing Policies and Practices
From the learning environment to family engagement, cultural competence is a critical component of quality early care and learning, especially for infant and toddler caregivers. This session will examine the critical function of cultural competence in the infant-toddler classroom and what it looks and feels like in high-quality infant-toddler care settings. We will also explore policies and program design that best support cultural competence.

*Senta Greene and Deborah Greenwald, State Capacity Building Center/Infant Toddler Specialist Network; Aisha Ray, BUILD Initiative; Michelle Soltero, Infant Toddler Specialist Network*

Location: Grand Salon 24 (1st floor)
505. Building a CQI Culture: Technical Assistance to Prepare Programs and Strengthen Leaders

Explore ways to build change that lasts by moving quality improvement efforts from a focus on external checklists to an internalized understanding of best practices. Principles of adult learning push us toward a participatory and reflective technical assistance delivery model. North Carolina, Oregon, and Pennsylvania share how continuous quality improvement concepts are incorporated into their QRIS systems, including stakeholders involvement, leadership development, shared decision-making, feedback loops and supervision supports.

Rose Manganell, Pennsylvania Key; Robyn Lopez Melton, Western Oregon University; Susan O'Connor, National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment; Lauren Peterson, Western Oregon University; Jenny Vial, Buncombe Partnership for Children

Location: Grand Salon 22 (1st floor)

601. Growing the Next Generation of Early Childhood Leaders: Community and Higher Education Partnerships

With growing attention to the importance of early childhood, the field needs to expand the opportunities to develop a diverse pipeline of leaders. This workshop explores two early childhood leadership higher education programs designed to promote systems change agents and advance racial equity that emerged from community and philanthropic partnerships. It will explore design considerations, lessons learned, and strategies for garnering support and funding for leadership programs.

Julie Nicholson, Mills College; Diana Schaack, University of Colorado; Valora Washington, Council for Professional Recognition

Location: Grand Salon 19 (1st floor)

622. Professional Development Frameworks that Support Inclusion in QRIS: A Four-State Perspective

Relevant professional development for early care and education professionals can result in positive outcomes for all children, including children with disabilities. Join Georgia, Idaho, Oregon, and South Carolina to learn about their innovative professional development and quality improvement frameworks that prepare teachers and administrators in programs participating in QRIS to meaningfully include children with disabilities.

Jennie Couture, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning; Melissa Crist, University of Idaho; Heather Googe, University of South Carolina; Gary Glasenapp, Western Oregon University; Pam Stevens, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Location: Grand Salon 9 (1st floor)

645. Enhancing Child Assessments through Effective Family Engagement

The expansion of kindergarten entry and related comprehensive child assessment use provides an important opportunity to authentically engage families as partners in understanding what children know and can do. This session will explore the benefits of strengthening family engagement as a key part of assessing children’s learning. Existing tools will be examined, current state approaches discussed, and connections to QRIS efforts identified to enhance child assessments through effective family partnerships.

Lindsey Allard Agnamba, School Readiness Consulting; Cindy Bagwell, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Location: Grand Salon 16 (1st floor)

657. Embracing Diverse Perspectives to Strengthen the Foundation of a QRIS Revision

As more states undertake multi-dimensional revisions of their QRIS – standards, monitoring or policies – there is an opportunity to create a system that is not only based on evidence but also reflects their stakeholders’ diverse backgrounds, needs and experiences. This session will look at two states’ experiences in undertaking expanded participation in their revision process.

Peggy Ball, Consultant; Leigh Bolick, South Carolina Division of Early Care and Education; Jennifer Johnson, North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education

Location: Marlborough A & B (2nd floor)
663. Three Approaches to Improving Teacher-Child Interactions
Leaders from three programs located in California, Louisiana and Washington, DC will present on their approaches to improving teacher-child interactions in early childhood classrooms. Each program will address how coaches or administrators use data from CLASS observations as a way to drive individualized professional development for teachers.

Erika Flores, Teachstone; Esteban Morales, CentroNia Institute; Sarah Neville-Morgan, First 5 California; Paula Polito, Beary Cherry Tree; Debra Silverman, First 5 California; Sedra Spano, Teachstone; Sarintha Stricklin, Innovations in Education; Heriberto Velasquez, CentroNia Institute

**Location:** Grand Salon 12 (1st floor)

681. Family Child Care: A Crucial Piece of the Puzzle
Why do families choose family child care? How can we best include family child care in state and tribal systems? This session will address trends in family child care; explore the experiences of advancing family child care through QRIS; discuss the research basis and the quality indicators in the National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation; and connect to opportunities and challenges in the field.

Eric Karolak, Action for Children; Ellaine Miller, Auburn University; Nina Stanton, National Center on Tribal Child Care Implementation and Innovation

**Location:** Grand Salon 21 (1st floor)

682. Family Empowerment Matters
Learn about the nation’s first culturally responsive, culturally relevant and trauma-informed Family Empowerment Program. This strengths-based program helps parents become leaders of their families, equipping them to build the capacity of their children as learners, and advocate for them from birth. Presenters will provide an overview of the program, its current implementation, as well as policy implications.

Danielle Adamson and Georgia Thompson, National Black Child Development Institute; Janis Jones, Black Child Development Institute-Chicago Affiliate

**Location:** Grand Salon 10 (1st floor)

687. Coordinating Early Childhood Developmental and Behavioral Screening, Referral, and Intervention Services Across Sectors
This session will describe strategies in Detroit and San Diego to implement integrated developmental and behavioral screening, referral, and intervention services for young children across a spectrum of coordinated providers. Areas of focus will include utilizing regional screening protocols, tracking results and data, addressing concerns at home and in the classroom, referring to intervention specialists, following up on outcomes, and developing relationships to facilitate alignment and streamlining for families.

Gloria Corral-Terrazas, First 5 San Diego; Pradeep Gidwani, American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 3; Jeffrey Miles and Lisa Sturges, United Way for Southeastern Michigan

**Location:** Grand Salon 13 (1st floor)
708. Linking Development, Implementation, and Evaluation: Continuous Improvement of a QRIS Through Data
This session will focus on the use of data in QRIS to demonstrate how cooperative, data-focused efforts can assist in continuous quality improvement at all levels of the policy system. The presenters will discuss how continuous communication, through direct and indirect methods among the evaluation team, the implementation team and the field, allows for an agile QRIS that can respond to barriers and issues in a timely manner. This workshop will explore an applied conceptual framework of building data capacity, literacy and impact.

Patrick Aldrich, Western Oregon University; Kelsie Curtis, Nick Gillon and Sarah Kelley, Child Care Aware of Washington; Karen Prow, Neighbor Impact of Central Oregon

Location: Grand Salon 15 (1st floor)

713. Key Findings from Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge QRIS Validation Studies
This session will review key findings from recently released validation studies in Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge states.

Laura Hawkinson, AIR; Kelly Maxwell, Child Trends; Mariana Gerena Melia, University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute; Joanne Roberts, Wellesley College; Kathryn Tout, Child Trends

Location: Grand Salon 7 (1st floor)

722. Establishing an Ecosystem for High-Quality Early Learning (EEQEL)
BUILD’s EEQEL project seeks to deepen work in three areas 1) generating Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) models; 2) deepening financing options; and 3) creating communications messaging. Many state QRIS’s are striving to be cross-sector infrastructures built out from an idea that began as a strategy to improve child care. Come to this session for a robust discussion about QRIS models and the important decisions states are making as they create and innovate in building QRIS structures.

Miriam Calderon, Bainum Family Foundation; Harriet Dichter, BUILD Initiative; Theresa Hawley, BUILD Initiative; Sarah Neville-Morgan, First 5 California; Debi Mathias, BUILD Initiative

Location: Grand Ballroom C and D (1st floor)

728. Exploring the Intersection of Health and Early Learning to Promote Health Equity and Child Well-Being
Presenters will engage participants in identifying possible actions towards health equity by exploring these questions: What is your responsibility in promoting child, family, community and workforce health equity? How can states use QRIS to expand their efforts to promote health through existing standards, monitoring and continuous improvement? How can state systems come together to promote a culture of health and well-being in ways that address and reduce disparities so that all children and families can thrive?

Karen Berman, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Hudelaine Deus, Black Child Development Institute-Miami Affiliate; Sherri Killins Stewart and Carey McCann, BUILD Initiative

Location: Grand Salon 3 and 6 (1st floor)

5:15 –7:30 p.m.  Sponsor’s Reception – All registrants are invited to mix and mingle with their peers and our generous sponsors.
Location: Grand Ballroom A (1st floor)
Wednesday, July 13

7:00 a.m.  Continental Breakfast for all registered participants.
Location: Grand Ballroom A (1st floor)

8:30 a.m.  Plenary Session
- Federal Child Care Reform Efforts
  Rachel Schumacher, Director, Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services
- Simple Interaction as the Active Ingredient in Early Care and Education
  Junlei Li, The Fred Rogers Center
- Profiles in Courage: Designing Systems for the Whole Child
  Susan Ochshorn, ECE Policy Works
Location: Grand Ballroom C and D (1st floor)

10:00 a.m.  Break

10:15 – 11:45 a.m.  Breakout Sessions

303. Collective Impact: Fad, Trend, or the Future?
Virtually unsearched on Google until 2011, Collective Impact has since surged in popularity. What does it even mean? Why does it matter to early childhood? This session will dive into collective impact, exploring examples of national collective impact initiatives, identifying risks and rewards of participation, and developing a framework for harnessing Collective Impact to mobilize stakeholders across sectors and create real opportunities for children and their families to succeed.
William Browning, Rebound Solutions Colorado
Location: Grand Salon 9 (1st floor)

309. Think Outside the Box: Generating New Revenue to Support Early Care and Education Services
This session will discuss two innovative strategies that are currently being used to both finance early care and education services and leverage participation in QRIS - Minnesota's Early Learning Scholarships and Louisiana's School Readiness Tax Credits.
Jenna Conway, Louisiana Department of Education; Sarah Ann Kotchian, J.D. Holland Children's Movement; Sandy Myers, Minnesota Department of Education; Louise Stoney, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance; Nara Topp, Minnesota Department of Human Services
Location: Grand Salon 6 (1st floor)
310. QRIS and Public School Pre-K: A Match Made in Heaven or More Like Chalk and Cheese?
As states and communities extend QRIS to public school-based pre-K programs, a number of challenges arise. This session looks at several perspectives on alignment and integration as QRIS is implemented against the backdrop of the culture and characteristics of public schools. In addition to presenting stories from Rhode Island, Nevada, and Cleveland, the panel will look at national trends. Panelists will discuss approaches to measuring quality in public-school-based programs, communication and collaboration, including how they engage families as they build strong public-private partnerships.

Manuela Fonseca, AEM Corporation; Lisa Hildebrand, Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children; Cindy Johnson, Nevada Office of Early Learning and Development; Katie Kelly, PRE4CLE

Location: Grand Salon 12 (1st floor)

326. Designed to Succeed: Integrating Technology & Data into QRIS Using the Latest Tools
This session will share recommended processes and design for a QRIS through application of instructional design methodology, as well as for using data to support implementation and evaluation using examples from both Maryland and Washington's QRIS. It will also include an exploration of the use of dashboards as tools for management and for communicating program activities to stakeholders through data visualization tools such as Tableau.

Christine Hughes, WELS Systems Foundation; Jacqueline Nunn, Chris Swanson, and Tonya Wright, Johns Hopkins School of Education

Location: Grand Salon 21 (1st floor)

605. Outdoor Learning Environments: Breakthroughs in Quality
The outdoor learning environment is a forgotten resource in most quality rating systems, even though a growing body of research associates rich, natural outdoor learning environments with positive outcomes in child nutrition, learning, physical activity, and mental health. The session will review research on child development benefits of outdoor learning environments, best practice indicators for outdoor learning environment design, and policy innovations from North Carolina, Texas, and Pennsylvania.

Allen Cooper, National Wildlife Federation; Cari Browning, Texas Department of State Health Services; Anna Carter, Child Care Services Association; Linda Hestenes, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Location: Grand Salon 19 (1st floor)

609. From All to Each and Every: Building State Systems that Support Children who are Culturally, Linguistically, and Individually Diverse
This session will share how two states are making strides toward the goal of equitable access to high-quality early childhood programs for each young child. Presenters will share how they have 1) developed guiding principles to support both equity and quality and 2) incorporated an emphasis on children who are culturally, linguistically, and individually diverse in measurable QRIS criteria and professional development efforts.

Camille Catlett, Consultant; Brenda Kofahl, New Mexico Public Education Department; Kate Rogers, Vermont Agency of Education; Terri Tapia, University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability; Kathy Whaley, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

Location: Grand Salon 24 (1st floor)

648. Supporting Effective Teaching and Learning: The Lead Learn Excel Process
Instructional leadership and job-embedded professional development are proven drivers for achieving instructional excellence in the classroom. Learn about a cross-sector, statewide professional development initiative in Illinois that helps change the mindsets and behaviors of leaders and alter organizational structures and processes to transform teaching and learning in the classroom. This
innovative model ensures that investments in leader professional development are effective and sustained and that they truly change practice.

Melissa Casteel, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership; Marsha Hawley, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Jenny Metcalf, Illinois State Board of Education; Gail Nelson, Illinois Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development, Abigail Sylvester, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Location: Grand Salon 22 (1st floor)

658. A Tale of Three Registries: Working Collaboratively with QRIS to Achieve Quality
A competent early learning workforce is fundamental in improving child outcomes. Understanding the dynamics of the workforce to know whether current strategies are effective is paramount. This session examines the relationship of three professional development registries that are member registries of the National Workforce Registry Alliance and how they support the work of their state or region’s quality rating improvement systems to achieve their mutual goals.

Phyllis Kalifeh, National Workforce Registry Alliance; Dasiely Marrero, Miami-Dade Registry-Children’s Forum; Jill Soto, University of Oklahoma; Joellyn Whitehead, Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Location: Grand Salon 13 (1st floor)

709. Building a Statewide System of Intentional Coaching: How Increased Awareness of Instructional Practices Develops Reflective Practitioners
Florida has built a statewide network of over 300 certificated Early Childhood Coaches who are improving quality across programs. Learn about the evidence-based training model and discover job-embedded professional development strategies that support practitioners as they learn and implement new teaching practices and skills a coach needs to scaffold practitioners through the stages of competency. Hear from Miami-Dade’s QRIS team and how it used these professional development opportunities to transform the practices of its field staff.

Fiorella Altare Christie and Paloma Lopez-Barcena, Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe; Raquel Diaz, Valerie Mendez-Fariñas, Alexandra Prinstein and Abby Thorman, University of Florida; Rachel Spector, The Children’s Trust

Location: Grand Salon 16 (1st floor)

714. Using Research to Support QRIS Implementation
This session will highlight the different data sources, data collection strategies, and analyses that can be conducted to inform decision-making about QRIS implementation. Panelists will share findings from Delaware, Georgia and Minnesota and will address topics such as learning what motivates providers to join QRIS, understanding providers’ experiences in QRIS, and developing technical assistance models and strategies that match the needs of QRIS participants. Many of the research strategies can be used with existing administrative data or low-cost data collection. Panelists will offer practical recommendations for how to engage in implementation research activities.

Jennifer Cleveland, Child Trends; Rena Hallam, University of Delaware; Bentley Ponder, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Location: Grand Salon 15 (1st floor)

723. QRIS Communications: Advocacy Frameworks
Creating a drumbeat for your QRIS is critical to its short- and long-term success and there is a diversity of audiences to engage. We’ll focus on policy audiences, presenting a new BUILD and Child Trends study on public policy QRIS messaging, as well as messages that states can tailor and implement. We also will hear from states about their messages and messengers as they seek to increase state investment in QRIS. Come and engage in this important topic that is so critical to sustaining and building QRIS.

Christina Bath-Collosi, VIVA Strategy + Communications; Harriet Dichter, BUILD Initiative; Frank Walter, Child Trends; Barb Yates, Think Small

Location: Grand Salon 18 (1st floor)
730. The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework and the Next Generation of Measures on Family Engagement for QRIS

Developing an intentional framework that supports family involvement must begin with hearing from families directly in understanding what they want and need for their children. Learn more about the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework and quality family engagement indicators within the quality improvement systems around the country and what is working or not. Provide input into a dialogue on what is needed for the next generation of measures on family engagement in QRIS.

Sherri Killins Stewart, BUILD Initiative; Manica Ramos and Jhumur Saeed, National Center for Parent, Family and Community Engagement; Darlene Walker, Catapult Parent Education, LLC

Location: Grand Salon 3 (1st floor)

798. Reforming Child Care at the Federal, State and Local Level - Discussion with the Director of the Office of Child Care

Talk with Rachel Schumacher and hear the latest plans from the Office of Child Care (OCC). This is your opportunity to ask questions of the OCC Director, clear up any misconceptions about current policies and discuss the new statutory purposes and opportunities in the CCDBG reauthorization like increasing the number of low-income children in high-quality care and engaging families in the development of their children. Share with the director your own challenges with improving the quality of early learning in your state or community and discuss what could be done differently to remove barriers to your success.

Rachel Schumacher, Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services

Location: Grand Salon 10 (1st floor)


Why is it important to develop Black leadership in early childhood systems? What is the value-added of developing this particular leadership? What are the systemic obstacles to the development of Black leaders, where are the opportunities, and are there effective models of Black leadership development? These questions and others will be explored in a conversation between session organizers and the audience. Participants will gain greater understanding of critical issues, strategies and challenges in developing Black leadership for service in early childhood systems.

Lea Austin, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment; Nakeshia Knight-Coyle, Oregon Early Learning Division; Aisha Ray, Erikson Institute

Location: Grand Salon 4 (1st floor)

801. The Results are in: The State of CLASS 2015

We surveyed almost 3,000 CLASS users - teachers, observers, coaches, and administrators - about how they’re using CLASS. During this interactive session, you’ll have the opportunity to take your best guess at the findings, hear what we learned, and build your own action plan for implementing (or enhancing your implementation of) CLASS in your organization. We’ll also find out what else you want to know about CLASS so we can uncover those findings in our next survey and report.

Rebecca Berlin and Lisa Rogoff, Teachstone

Location: Grand Salon 7 (1st floor)
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

**Buffet lunch available for all registered participants.**

**Location:** Grand Ballroom A (1st floor)

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

### Breakout Sessions

#### 337. Integrating and Financing Compensation in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: An Overview of Status and Strategies

Explore the state of the Early Childhood Workforce Index, a new resource providing state-by-state data on early childhood compensation and working conditions. Learn about efforts to frame measurable policy goals. Review the advantages and limitations of current compensation strategies. Share your ideas about how various financing and compensation strategies are working or could work in your state to create the work environments necessary for teachers to help children succeed.

*Lea Austin, Caitlin McLean and Marcy Whitebook, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment; Sue Russell, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center*

**Location:** Grand Salon 18 (1st floor)

#### 338. Shared Services as a Framework for Early Care and Education Finance

This session will describe how intermediary organizations in five states have used a Shared Services framework to support cost-effective business management and help early care and education providers access a broader range of funding streams, tools and resources for quality improvement. Panelists will discuss how a Shared Services framework not only helps expand and deepen QRIS participation but also makes it possible for QRIS Technical Assistance staff to work more effectively and efficiently.

*Emily Marsia, Vermont Birth to Five; Janet Masterson, Community Coordinated Child Care; Grace Reef, Early Learning Policy Group; Carol Scott, Child Care Aware of Missouri; Judy Williams, Early Learning Ventures*

**Location:** Grand Salon 6 (1st floor)

#### 408. The Power of Peer Learning Teams: A Continuous Quality Improvement Approach

Imagine an experience where teachers feel safe, comfortable, and eager to share their insights, struggles, and goals with one another and where the joy of learning and continuous quality improvement unfolds. This session will provide peer learning team strategies that lead to deeper understanding of assessment tools such as the Environment Rating Scales as well as state early learning standards. The result puts teachers and program leaders “in the driver’s seat” of continuous quality improvement, by building team capacity to improve quality through integrated and meaningful use of the assessment tools and learning standards.

*Ann Hentschel, Branagh Information Group; Krista Murphy, Orange County Department of Education*

**Location:** Grand Salon 15 (1st floor)
410. Recruiting and Supporting Diverse Leadership as Drivers for System Sustainability and Continuous Quality Improvement: A Continued Conversation Leading to Action

Last year, this dynamic session offered an opportunity to discuss the lack of diversity in the early care and education field. This follow-up session will engage long respected and emerging leaders in the field of early care and education in a strategy conversation about what is needed to recruit and support diverse leadership at a local, state and national level.

Miriam Calderon, Bainum Family Foundation; Tobeka Green, National Black Child Development Institute; Laura Johns, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance; Joan Lombardi, Early Opportunities; Lisa Obijway, State Capacity Building Center/Infant Toddler Specialist Network

Location: Grand Ballroom C and D (1st floor)

508. Community-Based Approaches to Building Quality through QRIS: One Size does NOT Fit All!

Three states will share the local approaches they are taking to building quality in their state QRIS and the innovations that have been possible through the flexibility provided at the local level. Presenters will particularly focus on how state and local systems are working to expand QRIS participation among providers, improve the quality of early care and education programs and engage families in choosing high-quality programs for their children. Audience members will be invited to share their own community-based approaches and to discuss successes and challenges with such a local strategy.

Christi Balka, City of Philadelphia; Gerry Cobb, BUILD Initiative; Becky Mercatoris, Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning; Janice Moenster, Children's Home + Aid; Leah Pouw, Illinois Action for Children; NaDene Tucker, Wilson County Partnership for Children

Location: Grand Salon 13 (1st floor)

655. Building the Workforce in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: Ways to Support QRIS Efforts

Infant and early childhood mental health consultation is a key component in early childhood systems development. This session will focus on recent efforts to develop competencies for the field as well as training materials to assist consultants, states, tribal nations and communities striving to build up the workforce. The session will also focus in on how this can support QRIS efforts.

Neal Horen, Georgetown University

Location: Grand Salon 12 (1st floor)

666. Creating a Successful Formula for Incorporating School-Age Programs in Quality Improvement Systems

Research shows that quality after-school and summer programs play an important role in positive child outcomes and school success and many states are looking to increase participation in quality improvement systems. Questions often arise about how to engage school-age programs, create standards, select assessment tools, and provide support. Explore national trends, promising practices from Michigan and Washington and share strategies to build a system that works.

Jordan Blough-Orr, Michigan Early Childhood Investment Corporation; Sue Foley, Ellen Gannett, and Susan O'Connor, National Center for After School and Summer Enrichment; Jackie Jainga Hyllseth, School's Out Washington; Nicole Rose, Washington State Department of Early Learning

Location: Grand Salon 21 (1st floor)

700. Bringing License-Exempt Family Child Care into the Quality Improvement System

Data from the National Survey of Early Care and Education shows that a significant portion of young children are in home-based settings, yet most home-based providers are not included in our systems-building frameworks. In this workshop, you'll learn about New Mexico's strategies for including license-exempt homes in their quality improvement system and hear research findings from the Arizona Kith and Kin Project, as well as policy considerations from an equity and national perspective on including home-based providers. The facilitators will also help participants analyze their existing support systems and opportunities for improvement.

Nina Johnson, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance; Alejandra Rebolledo-Rea, New Mexico Office of Child Development; Eva Marie Shivers, Indigo Cultural Center

Location: Grand Salon 10 (1st floor)
703. ECERS-3 One Year In: States’ Experience Implementing ECERS-3 in QRIS
This session will explore the use of the ECERS-3 in several state QRIS initiatives. States will discuss their experience using ECERS-3 and the resulting scores found to date in their state. The session will end with a summary of ECERS-3 across the states and a period of open discussion. Equity in provider types and populations will be discussed.

Richard Clifford, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute; Denise Jenson, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning; Holly Septlocha, William Patterson University; DeEtta Simmons, University of Washington; Megan Showalter, Pennsylvania Key

Location: Grand Salon 3 (1st floor)

715. What Works to Improve Quality? New Approaches and Lessons Learned from Recent Evaluations
This session will highlight recent findings from three quality improvement projects that include approaches such as coaching, training, provision of grants, and use of data and feedback loops to support new practices. Presenters will highlight the important role of program leadership, readiness to change and capacity to engage in continuous quality improvement cycles as drivers of change in early care and education programs.

Anne Douglass, University of Massachusetts–Boston; Laura Hawkinson, American Institutes for Research; Claire Lowe and Mallory Warner-Richter, Child Trends

Location: Grand Salon 9 (1st floor)

729. Sharpening the Focus: QRIS Reforms to Improve Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching
Learn from state policymakers who are revising QRIS standards and supports to empower educators to implement curricula and assessments that facilitate individualized and rich instruction. Hear about specific strategies to embed expectations for the use of developmentally, individually, linguistically, and culturally appropriate instructional tools within QRIS.

Rhonda Clark, Indiana’s Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning; Cecelia Fisher-Dahms, California Department of Education; Alisa Ghazvini, Florida Association of Early Learning Coalitions; Diane Schilder, Education Development Center; Kate Tarrant, BUILD Initiative

Location: Grand Salon 16 (1st floor)

731. QRIS and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Education)
Some of today’s great innovations are being driven by those who marry their creative and strategic thinking with deep knowledge of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Hear from early childhood systems innovators in STEM, learning about how one early childhood center has spearheaded a significant professional development STEM network for early educators, a community-wide collaborative partnership to address STEM from early childhood through high school, a media company focusing on reaching the Latino population through a variety of innovative initiatives, and a QRIS administrator who is redesigning the state’s QRIS and will reflect on the role of STEM in the redesign.

Maryann Marrapodi, Hispanic Information & Telecommunications Network; Michelle Figlar, Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning; Sue Polojaic, Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children; Susan Woods, The Children’s Center at CalTech

Location: Grand Salon 22 (1st floor)
735. How to Leverage Family Leadership and Engagement in Raising Quality: State, Community and Provider Perspectives on the Work
With speakers from the state, community and provider perspective, this session will explore how programs and communities are engaging parents and families as leaders and the impact this focus has on program quality. The three perspectives support shared learning on: family engagement as a statewide movement and implemented through the QRIS, community collaboration advancing family engagement and quality, and program strategies and their impact on family leadership, engagement and quality.

Wendy Baysmore, Maryland State Department of Education; Aminah Wyatt-Jones, North Lawndale Innovation Zone

Location: Grand Salon 19 (1st floor)

793. Quality Right Before Our Eyes – Capturing and Growing Simple Interactions as the Active Ingredient of Early Childhood Education
What is deep and simple in the work of early childhood? From orphanages to impoverished neighborhoods, caregivers’ intuitive yet powerful human interactions can be recognized by four essential characteristics: connection, reciprocity, progression, and participation. By capturing and learning from what ordinary people do extraordinarily well in simple, everyday moments, we can grow communities of practice, nurture intuition into intention, and plant the seeds for sustainable systems change. Join us for a “simple interactions” workshop based on authentic field videos, followed by a moderated discussion on how current QRIS systems may support or hinder such interactions.

Junlei Li, Fred Rogers Center

Location: Grand Salon 24 (1st floor)

1:00 – 4:15 p.m.  3-hour Breakout Sessions

407. Getting Results for Diversity and Equity in your QRIS
Apply practices and strategies that support a plan to enhance diversity and equity for programs/early educators engaged in your state QRIS system. Led by two national experts, this session will offer a range of resources and the opportunity to learn from case studies built from experiences in various states and communities. Using multimedia approaches, this workshop will support participants to both understand and facilitate equity and diversity.

Sherri Killins Stewart, BUILD Initiative; Valora Washington, The Council for Professional Recognition

Location: Grand Salon 4 (1st floor)

411. Powerful Interactions among Adults Lead to Increased Intentionality and Quality: How Arkansas is Linking Practice to Child Outcomes
For sustainable quality improvement, leaders need to advance educators’ effectiveness. This means improving their pedagogy and also ensuring that practitioners feel supported and appreciated. Using Powerful Interactions at all levels within a system builds a more competent, knowledgeable, and confident workforce by articulating effective instructional practices and linking them to child outcomes. This session focuses on how Powerful Interactions is supporting quality improvement in Arkansas.

Diana Courson, Arkansas State University; Judy Jablon, Judy Jablon & Associates; Nichole Parks, Arkansas State University

Location: Eglinton Winton (2nd floor)

2:30 – 2:45 p.m.  Break
Breakout Sessions

313. Early Childhood Quality Improvement Pathway System: A New Tool to Measure Program Quality in QRIS
This workshop is intended to provide updates about the Early Childhood Quality Improvement Pathway System (EQuIPS) project, the goal of which is to develop a new measurement system to evaluate early childhood program quality within a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. The measurement system will examine quality at the program level and consist of information from classroom observation, document review, and interviews with teachers and directors.

Rena Hallam, University of Delaware; Linda Hestenes, Karen La Paro, Sharon Mims, Mary Lee Porterfield, and Yudan Wang, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Location: Grand Salon 10 (1st floor)

340. Putting It All Together: The San Francisco Approach to Understanding Costs & Reforming Finance Using a QRIS
San Francisco recently completed a comprehensive fiscal analysis focused on understanding the actual costs of providing quality care in center-based and family child care settings, and made recommendations for building a financing system that reaches all children, is fair to providers, and makes efficient use of funding. This session will describe the fiscal analysis and explore how a QRIS framework will be used to inform, structure and leverage funding.

Barbara Carlson, San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education; September Jarrett, San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education Citizens’ Advisory Committee; Anne Mitchell, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance; Simon Workman, Center for American Progress

Location: Grand Salon 6 (1st floor)

501. Systems Building in an Era of Program Funding
We will explore systems building in a time of great focus on program funding. How are state and local leaders advancing systems thinking and systems work in this new and changing context? What does it mean to advance a pre-K agenda and a systems agenda? Likewise, what does it mean to advance an infant-toddler agenda and a systems agenda? Where do concepts of equity fit in the continuum of supporting services and systems?

Harriet Dichter, State Capacity Building Center; Elizabeth Groginsky, Office of the District of Columbia State Superintendent for Education; Bill Jaeger, Colorado Children’s Campaign; Karen Ruprecht, Early Learning Indiana

Location: Grand Salon 18 (1st floor)

506. Classroom Quality Assessment Tool Users: Round Table Discussion
Do you use one or more of the many classroom quality assessment tools or the results from those assessments in your work with programs? Ever wonder how others use the tools and results in their states/QRIS? This session will provide a round table discussion on all things assessment. Through guided small group discussion and report, participants will gain ideas and learn from one another.

Kelly Brennan, Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children; Denise Jenson, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning; Megan Showalter, Pennsylvania Key

Location: Grand Salon 3 (1st floor)
616. Communities Leading for Equity - One Data Point at a Time!
Leading for equity to make a measurable difference for children requires effective use of data to leverage the collaborative efforts of diverse individuals at a community level. This experiential workshop will explore: (1) how communities can utilize leadership skills to focus on collective results, and (2) strategies for eliminating racial disparities through the alignment of work across organizations and systems.
Jean Squier, Hoke County Partnership for Children and Families; Diane Umstead, North Carolina Partnership for Children
Location: Grand Salon 16 (1st floor)

629. CCDF Reauthorization: Ready, Set, Implement!
This session will examine how states are implementing the new requirements and goals in CCDF Reauthorization. By exploring three distinct areas - criminal background checks, emergency preparedness, and leveraging partnerships for professional development - the audience will learn about the different implementation challenges faced by states as well as their strategies for meeting Reauthorization requirements in a way that continues to promote quality, health, and safety of children.
Jim Bates and Bob Frein, National Center on Child Care Subsidy Innovation and Accountability; Leigh Bolick, South Carolina Department of Social Services; Jennifer Johnson and Lorie Pugh, North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education; Debbie Johnston and Carla Rogg, Partnerships ProSolutions Training
Location: Grand Salon 15 (1st floor)

643. Family-Focused QRIS Criteria: Designing Meaningful Criteria to Support Family Engagement
We will look at how QRIS can support family-sensitive care in infant-toddler settings. We will highlight the work in states as an example of what family-centered care might look like in practice as well as describe the research that supports the benefits of providing services that encourage family engagement.
Laura Johns, State Capacity Building Center/Infant Toddler Specialist Network; Mindy May, National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement
Location: Grand Salon 24 (1st floor)

660. Preventing Children's Exposures to Environmental Health Hazards in Early Care and Education
Many of our nation's youngest children spend 40+ hours every week in an early learning environment, and may be routinely exposed to a variety of environmental health hazards. The Children's Environmental Health Network, in partnership with the National Association for the Education of Young Children and state QRISs, are working to reduce children's exposures to environmental toxicants commonly found within early care and education settings.
Robin Joseph, Children's Environmental Health Network; Monica Prince, National Association for the Education of Young Children
Location: Grand Salon 19 (1st floor)

The first three years of life is one of the most sensitive periods of rapid development. Yet, nationally, infant-toddler educators have the fewest professional supports to help them optimize children's learning opportunities during this period. Explore strategies that address this untenable situation, including ZERO TO THREE’s new Critical Competencies, Pennsylvania’s pilot of these competencies as part of developing a credential, and Illinois’ combination of credential training with higher education supports. Raise your specific challenges and strategize how you could address them in your QRIS and professional development system.
Beth Knight and Joni Scritchlow, Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies; Sarah LeMoine and Jadi Whiteman, ZERO TO THREE; Michelle Zitsch, Pennsylvania Key
Location: Grand Salon 7 (1st floor)
665. Strengthening the Support and Supervision Framework for Technical Assistance Providers Working with School-Age Programs

Research indicates that training is more effective when combined with technical assistance; therefore, states have been rapidly building technical assistance and coaching capacity. Explore strategies with national leaders and exemplar states on ways to recruit, prepare, and support seasoned school-aged coaches as well as current early childhood trainers and coaches. Ensure effective technical assistance that responds to unique needs of the diverse range of school-age programs.

*Gwen Alexander and Phil Steigman, Massachusetts Department of Early Care and Education; Sue Foley, Ellen Gannett, and Susan O’Connor, National Center for After School and Summer Enrichment; Jan Sapotichne, Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children*

**Location:** Grand Salon 21 (1st floor)


QRIS are increasingly including indicators to tap the use of curriculum and assessment practices in early care and education programs. What strategies are states using to measure curriculum use? What are the lessons learned and promising practices? What new measurement tools can help address these questions? The session will be interactive and encourage sharing of examples and experiences.

*Sarah Daily and Danielle Hegseth, Child Trends; Lauren Rae Michael, University of New Mexico*

**Location:** Grand Salon 13 (1st floor)

726. Racial Disparities in Expulsion Rates and Implications for Child Care Mental Health Consultation

Join our discussion about racial disparities in discipline practices in ECE programs, the disproportionate impact on children of color, and how early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) is paving the way for new directions in state and federal policies. Arizona and Louisiana will highlight how their ECMHC systems are addressing race. We will engage participants in conversation about what our early childhood systems can do to promote equity and reduce disparities.

*Sherry Heller, Tulane University; Neal Horen, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development; Carey McCann, BUILD Initiative; Eva Marie Shivers, Indigo Cultural Center*

**Location:** Grand Salon 9 (1st floor)

791. Measuring & Assessing Quality for Young Dual Language Learners - What are we Learning?

The population of children who are Dual Language Learners (DLLs) in early learning programs continues to grow, spanning more geographically diverse areas across the country. Yet, many of our observational tools for assessing program quality, either for accountability purposes or to plan professional supports for teachers, were not designed to measure targeted strategies for young dual language learners. In this session, experts will discuss findings from recent studies that have looked at the use of tools like the CLASS alongside tools that specifically measure DLL instructional practices. These experts will offer guidance on measurement of quality in classrooms with DLLs, and discuss implications of this research for quality rating and improvement systems.

*Miriam Calderon, Bainum Family Foundation; Veronica Fernandez, University of Miami; Carola Matera, California State University; Jennifer Park, Teachstone*

**Location:** Grand Salon 22 (1st floor)
802. Why Can't We All Just Get Along? QRIS as a Component of an Early Childhood Integrated Data System

This session will provide participants with an informal, interactive discussion about how states are integrating early childhood data in meaningful ways that support informed policy and management decisions. In addition, the session will give participants time to comment about their early learning information technology wish lists.

_Nicole Norvell, Indiana Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning; Michelle Thomas, former Indiana State Child Care Administrator and current Senior Early Education Policy Advisor for TCC Software Solution_

**Location:** Grand Ballroom C and D (1st floor)

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4:15 – 4:30 p.m. | Break

4:30 – 5:30 p.m. | Breakout Sessions

319. We Can't Just Translate Everything! Rethinking Equitable Access to QRIS through Culturally Relevant Translation Processes

This hot topic discussion will focus on the process of creating culturally relevant QRIS materials and processes for providers and communities who speak languages other than English. Successes and challenges will be shared in the processes used to create translated versions of the field test materials developed. The subsequent discussion with participants will explore the timeliness and appropriateness of translation regarding equity.

_Monica Esquivel Kahn, Community Action Child Care Resource & Referral; Robyn Lopez Melton, Western Oregon University; Nathan Winegartner, Western Oregon University_

**Location:** Grand Salon 13 (1st floor)

320. Building a High-Quality, Unified, Early Childhood Education System: Lessons from Louisiana

Louisiana recently embarked on an ambitious effort to overhaul the state's fragmented early care and education landscape, provide all children with high-quality early childhood learning opportunities, and help parents identify high-quality care options. This session will provide an “insiders” look at the reform from the perspective of state leadership from the Louisiana Department of Education, local leaders from New Orleans and researchers who are studying the reform. The session will describe a large-scale effort to build cohesion across a diverse and fragmented early childhood landscape through a focus on quality improvement.

_Daphna Bassok, University of Virginia; Jenna Conway, Louisiana Department of Education; Elizabeth Kief, Agenda for Children_

**Location:** Grand Salon 10 (1st floor)
321. State Policy Options that Support Infant and Toddler Access to High-Quality Child Care
This session will engage participants in a discussion about how child care state policy can support improving access to high-quality infant and toddler care. Discussion will include subsidy policy options, specific strategies on how subsidy policy can support Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, QRIS, building an infant and toddler supply, and highlights of efforts in Georgia.
Kristin Bernhard, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning; Bob Frein, National Center on Child Care Subsidy Innovation and Accountability; Carey McCann, BUILD Initiative
Location: Grand Salon 9 (1st floor)

323. School Readiness Standards in QRIS: Sharpening the Focus
This hot topic session will explore the role of QRIS in supporting states’ school readiness approach. After a brief review of the research that links quality standards to positive outcomes for children, participants will explore whether the focus for QRIS in cross-sector programs should shift to school readiness. We will consider the standards that may lead to that outcome and how they could be measured.
Sue Mitchell, AEM Corporation
Location: Grand Salon 3 (1st floor)

327. Crowdsourcing QRIS
What if there were a different way of creating a quality rating system that draws upon the experience of individuals like teachers and families? A crowdsourcing approach to rating early learning programs, using a set of items rated by families of children enrolled and by teachers employed at a program, is an intriguing solution to the many expensive, complex programs that currently exist.
Christine Hughes, WELS Systems Foundation
Location: Grand Salon 7 (1st floor)
Are early childhood programs meeting the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals and their families? As leaders in the field, technical assistance providers, coaches, mentors, and quality improvement specialists are in a unique position to empower early childhood programs to implement culturally competent practices regarding LGBT issues. Join us as we explore the changing face of cultural competence regarding LGBT people, their children and their families.

_Stacey Lutz-Ovies and Jenny Vial, Buncombe Partnership for Children_

**Location:** Grand Salon 16 (1st floor)

This session will describe the Early Care and Education Provider Cost Model and highlight examples of how states have used provider cost modeling to better understand the cost of delivering services at each level of their QRIS, as well as to inform rate-setting and financing policy. The discussion will explore the impact of various factors on the provider’s bottom line, including: operational practices, such as enrollment levels and fee collectability; QRIS and subsidy requirements; the relationship between market prices; and cost.

_Libbie Poppick and Louise Stoney, Opportunities Exchange_

**Location:** Grand Salon 6 (1st floor)

612. Success! Sustaining Washington State’s RTT QRIS investment at Scale and Navigating the Post-Grant Landscape
In June 2015 the Washington State Legislature and Governor Jay Inslee signed into law the Early Start Act (ESA). The ESA represented the conversion of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge into a sustained commitment to support high-quality early learning opportunities as a key path to improving educational outcomes in young children. The program will focus on keys elements of ESA and how Washington State is navigating the post-grant landscape.

_Nicole Rose, Washington State Department of Early Learning; Chris Strausz-Clark, Third Sector Intelligence_

**Location:** Grand Salon 12 (1st floor)

634. Coming Together on Online Tools for Early Care and Education Systems-Building and Continuous Improvement
E-Learning has the power to make systems-building and continuous improvement efforts scalable and sustainable, and many states are engaged in this work to reach a diverse audience of practitioners. In this session, consider the body of innovative e-learning tools available to support these efforts. Discuss how communities of practice models, used alongside e-learning, help practitioners put knowledge into action. Hear how organizations have adapted tools, based on user data.

_Kara Lehnhardt, North Carolina Partnership for Children; Jodi Whiteman, ZERO TO THREE_

**Location:** Grand Salon 4 (1st floor)

671. Links in a Chain: Linking Data, Technical Assistance, and Continuous Quality Improvement to Strengthen Quality in Infant and Toddler Classrooms
Illinois has taken an innovative approach to bringing program administrators and infant-toddler teachers together to focus on quality improvement based on statewide assessment data. This session will explore a dynamic training concept designed to assist directors and teachers in linking data, assessment and teaching strategies to improve quality of care in infant-toddler classrooms. Participants will have opportunities to discuss how this training concept might support quality care in their state.

_Barbara Volpe, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership_

**Location:** Grand Salon 21 (1st floor)
785. Enhancing NAEYC Accreditation to Better Support Your QRIS
Over 30 states leverage NAEYC accreditation to anchor and scale-up their QRIS. Like programs seeking and maintaining accreditation, NAEYC is committed to continuous quality improvement and the use of data to enhance practice. Learn about enhancements under way to ensure that NAEYC accreditation can better support and expand your QRIS.

Marica Cox Mitchell, National Association for the Education of Young Children

Location: Grand Salon 24 (1st floor)

786. Putting the Whole Child at the Center of the Early Childhood Ecosystem
Early childhood is ground zero in the quest to strengthen public education. Yet the foundation is still not stable. The early care and education ecosystem needs loving attention - from all sectors and stakeholders, including early childhood professionals, who must be actively engaged in shaping policy. This interactive session will focus on the critical need for ecological systems-based models that link educators, families, and communities in fostering academic achievement. Join a conversation with a veteran thought leader and strategize on collective impact for children.

Susan Ochshorn, ECE PolicyWorks

Location: Grand Salon 15 (1st floor)

790. Healthy Children Are Ready to Learn
Strengthening the linkages between health and early childhood systems is an area bursting with innovation. Sometimes programs/providers miss the mark in health and safety approaches to licensing, meeting QRIS guidelines or other standards. Once the basics are met, they could use support taking next steps to implement continuous quality improvement cycles that promote a culture of wellness. Join this interactive session to share your examples and advance best practices. A variety of innovative health and safety resources and approaches will be shared in the discussion.

Kimberly Clear-Sandor and Nancy Topping-Tailby, National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

Location: Grand Salon 22 (1st floor)

5:45 – 7:30 p.m. Teachstone Featured Sponsor Reception – Open to all registered participants.

Location: Grand Ballroom A (1st floor)
Continental Breakfast for all registered participants.

Location: Grand Ballroom A (1st floor)

Breakout sessions

317. Meeting the Needs of Children, Families and Practitioners: The Integration of Three Targeted Supports in Miami-Dade’s QRIS

Miami-Dade’s QRIS incorporates three services into the Program and Professional Development Supports system - communities of practice, school readiness enhancements, and short-term mental health intervention. Speakers will share how they are implementing these services, including how the new services intersect with the larger early childhood system in the county to support children, parents, teachers and directors. The presentation includes a focus on “The Jonathan Project” - a locally developed pilot with a race and equity focus to combat preschool expulsion on the local, state and national level. Lessons learned and results from the first year, including child outcomes for mental health supports, will be discussed.

Fiorella Altare Christie, Pamela Hollingsworth and Paloma Lopez-Barcena, Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe; Silvia Nino and Rachel Spector, The Children’s Trust

Location: Grand Salon 10 (1st floor)

341. Business Metrics and Industry Standards

This session will introduce the concept of business metrics as a strategy to inform finance decisions both within the early care and education industry as well as among public and private funders, with special emphasis on QRIS as a cost driver and market differentiator. Metrics used by non-profit and tax-paying early care and education businesses to ensure that they stay financially on track will be described, followed by a facilitated conversation on the links between key metrics, public policy and finance.

Anne Mitchell and Louise Stoney, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance; Libbie Poppick, Opportunities Exchange

Location: Grand Salon 6 (1st floor)

403. The Missing Link in QRIS: Approaches to Cultivate Supportive Teaching Conditions

Supportive teaching conditions promote a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, and sustained professional learning in which teachers and children thrive. In recent years, several tools have been developed that assess teaching conditions. This session brings the leading experts to describe their research and explore strategies for integrating teaching conditions within states’ QRIS policies. We will engage in a rich discussion to assist leaders in crafting the most effective policy-to-practice supports in this area.

Lea Austin and Marcy Whitebook, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment; Debra Pacchiano, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Teri Talan and Jill Bella, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership; Kate Tarrant, BUILD Initiative

Location: Grand Salon 19 (1st floor)
Continuing the Conversation: Contributions by QRIS to Early Care and Education Becoming a Recognized Profession

A budding movement has emerged in response to the early care and education (ECE) crisis of fragmentation - a drive to organize ECE as a professional field of practice. QRIS is an important building block in advancing this movement. Introduced during last year’s QRIS National Meeting, this leading edge discussion explores the intersection at a deeper level.

Stacie Goffin, Goffin Strategy Group

Location: Grand Salon 4 (1st floor)

Staying Relevant and Effective: How States are Leveraging the Early Learning Challenge to Strengthen Their QRIS

During this highly interactive session, states will share examples of how they have used funding from Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge to refine and strengthen their QRIS to ensure that it remains relevant and effective for the future. States will talk about the process they used to decide what to change in the QRIS, the stakeholders included, communications strategies, use of evaluation studies and future plans to ensure the ongoing viability and sustainability of the QRIS.

Kenley Branscome and Gladys Wilson, Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance; Ariel Ford and Carmen Gallagher, Delaware Department of Education; Annette Scarfoss, Delaware Stars; Nicole Rose and Rachael Brown-Kendall, Washington State Department of Early Learning

Location: Grand Salon 13 (1st floor)

Setting Standards for Technical Assistance

This workshop will present findings from a recent review of standards and best practices in providing technical assistance to child care facilities. The presentation will focus on best practices in technical assistance including frequency, intensity, curricula, documentation and assessments, and technical assistance staff qualifications or credentials.

Sarah Heinemeier, Compass Evaluation and Research; Mary Payson, North Carolina Partnership for Children

Location: Grand Salon 3 (1st floor)

Building a Partnership that Works: Lessons Learned in Collaboration between Professional Development Systems and QRIS

Research shows teacher education and preparation positively affects the quality of the program in which teachers work. In the recent Institute of Medicine “Transforming the Workforce” report, teacher qualifications are likely to increase in the future and, in many states, QRIS is a driving force. To be successful, the professional development system and the QRIS must work together. Learn about what is working in Illinois within the Gateways to Opportunity Professional Development System and in Rhode Island, where the two systems work in collaboration to rate programs and then provide the tools, supports, and resources they need to improve quality.

Lisa Hildebrand, Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children; Brenda Potter, Center for Early Learning Professionals; Joni Scriblow and Joelyn Whitehead, Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Location: Grand Salon 15 (1st floor)

Integrating Health and Wellness into QRIS: A Childhood Obesity Prevention Strategy

This presentation will address ways states are promoting healthy eating, breastfeeding, physical activity, and limited screen time in early care and education settings through QRIS. A brief national overview of how states have embedded childhood obesity prevention standards and implementation strategies into QRIS will be presented. South Carolina, Maryland and Idaho will highlight their efforts. Participants will learn how their states can use QRIS to expand their childhood obesity prevention strategies.

Melissa Crist, University of Idaho; Carrie Dooyema, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Beverly Hunter, South Carolina Department of Social Services; Jena Smith, Maryland State Department of Education; Misty Pearson, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Location: Grand Salon 21 (1st floor)
651. What Does the Data Tell Us? The Evolution of Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Use Within QRIS
QRIS uses classroom assessment tools to gather data on quality daily practices that support better child outcomes, which can inform professional development, technical assistance/coaching, and program policy. Three states will explore how ERS data has informed practices and policies, uncovered areas of unmet need, and signaled changes should be considered through their QRIS journeys. Challenges, lessons learned, and considerations for preparing early learning programs for QRIS changes will be shared.
Kelly Brennan, Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children; Denise Jenson, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning; Megan Showalter, Pennsylvania Key
Location: Grand Salon 24 (1st floor)

690. Family Child Care and QRIS: How States are Ensuring a Good Fit
Designing a QRIS that is equally responsive to the needs of family child care and center-based providers is an art. This session will feature states that have made an intentional effort to make their QRIS responsive to the unique needs of family child care providers seeking to pursue high levels of quality.
Laura Johns, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance; Pattie Ryan, State Capacity Building Center
Location: Grand Salon 7 (1st floor)

698. Tailor-Made: Creating Individualized Professional Development that is Responsive to Our Diverse Workforce
Developing and maintaining a competent and confident workforce is vital to sustaining high-quality environments for young children. How can we ensure our professional development opportunities meet the needs of diverse populations within our QRIS? During this session we will explore innovative strategies to meet early care and education professionals at their individual levels of professional growth and provide scaffolding and support as they move towards skill maturity and mastery.
Nichole Parks and Susan Remfrey, Arkansas State University
Location: Grand Salon 9 (1st floor)

704. Taking Quality to Scale from the Bottom Up: California’s QRIS Expansion
California’s common QRIS framework is locally implemented with $100 million in annual state funding, allowing every county in the state to join the QRIS movement. State-level resources support this locally driven model in areas including systems development, outreach and communications, and evaluation. Local and state leaders will share how they are leveraging the CA-QRIS Framework to take quality to scale and build a coherent system in the world’s eighth largest economy.
Cecelia Fisher-Dahms, California Department of Education; Kathleen Guerrero, First 5 El Dorado; Ingrid Mezquita, First 5 San Francisco; Sarah Neville-Morgan, First 5 California; Gerrit Westervelt, WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies
Location: Grand Salon 22 (1st floor)

717. Coordinated Monitoring Systems in Early Care and Education
This session will offer ideas for coordinating monitoring across various funding streams, highlighting a recent report and tool designed to help states better understand their current monitoring systems and develop coordination plans. Ohio will describe its efforts to coordinate monitoring, and participants will be encouraged to discuss monitoring issues in the context of the CCDBG reauthorization.
Char Goodreau, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance; Kelly Maxwell, Child Trends; Jeffrey Van Deusen, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Location: Grand Salon 12 (1st floor)
725. Making Higher Education Work for Working Family Child Care and Center-Based Teachers
Family child care and center-based child care educators and program directors routinely report many higher education barriers that make it difficult to gain new early childhood degrees and credentials. Change is possible! Dialogue with forward thinking leaders who have successfully and systematically worked to support family child care and center-based educators in higher education.

Pamela Deardorff, Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care & Education; Harriet Dichter, BUILD Initiative; Anne Douglass, University of Massachusetts at Boston; Diane Hodges-Hunter, Family Child Care Provider; Sue Russell, T.E.A.C.H.® Early Childhood National Center

Location: Grand Salon 18 (1st floor)

736. Research to Practice: Dual Language Learners from Infancy to Age Three
The increasing attention on supporting young dual language learners (DLLs) often focuses on preschool-aged children and less so on infants and toddlers. In this session, research on the development of the youngest DLLs (infancy to age three) will be presented. In addition, presenters will share innovative approaches for applying this research to early childhood practice, in both family child care and center-based care programs.

Miriam Calderon, Bainum Family Foundation; Peter Mangione, WestEd; Pilar Torres, Fathum Learning Solutions

Location: Grand Ballroom C and D (1st floor)

788. Thinking about the Functions of a Comprehensive Early Learning System across the Sectors
As early childhood systems are developing, states are striving for cross-sector coherence and alignment. This session will provide opportunities to discuss practices and common language to further improve our work. Bring your ideas and experiences to help inform future thinking in this area.

Debi Mathias and Karen Ponder, BUILD Initiative

Location: Grand Salon 16 (1st floor)

10:00 – 10:15 a.m.

10:15 – 12:00 p.m.

Plenary Session
• Future Think: Where are We Headed in QRIS and the Early Learning Ecosystem?

Miriam Calderon, Senior Adviser for Early Learning at the Bainum Family Foundation; Susan Hibbard, Executive Director of the BUILD Initiative; Ross Hunter, Director of the Washington State Department of Early Learning; Joan Lombardi, Director of Early Opportunities

• Closing Remarks

Location: Grand Ballroom C and D (1st floor)
Miriam Calderon is the senior director of early learning for the Bainum Family Foundation and directs the Bainum Family Foundation’s investment in early learning in the District of Columbia. She is also a consultant to the BUILD Initiative, particularly supporting BUILD’s efforts to maximize federal initiatives, advance racial equity and support dual language learners. Prior to this work, Miriam served as a political appointee in the Obama Administration, advising on early learning policy at the Domestic Policy Council at the White House and at the Department of Health and Human Services. Miriam also served as the director of early childhood education at DC Public Schools, where she oversaw Head Start and prekindergarten programs serving nearly 5,500 children in 84 elementary schools throughout the city. Miriam was also associate director of education policy at the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic civil rights organization. There she focused specifically on early education policy for Hispanic and dual language learner children. Miriam began her career in early education, working as a mental health consultant in Head Start programs in Portland, Oregon.

Susan Hibbard, executive director of the BUILD Initiative, has more than 20 years of experience in the areas of early learning, early childhood systems, and social change with a focus on research and analysis, strategic planning, project management and skills training. As BUILD’s executive director, she oversees its daily operations, directs the BUILD staff team, coordinates governance and financial management with fiscal sponsor Third Sector New England and leads all fundraising efforts for BUILD. Susan also designs a vibrant learning community of state leaders that fosters peer-to-peer networking and information sharing on a wide range of early childhood topics. In addition, she oversees BUILD’s research and evaluation efforts, and manages the publication and dissemination of the BUILD Initiative’s research and policy briefs. Susan did her undergraduate work at Bryn Mawr College and received her Master’s Degree from the New School University. She resides in Portland, Maine with her partner, Mary, and her two rambunctious boys, Max and Miles.

Ross Hunter was appointed director of the Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL) by Governor Jay Inslee in 2015. Ross’ focus is on improving outcomes for all children, and especially on eliminating race as a predictor of progress and success for young learners. Prior to taking his position, Ross served as state representative from the 48th District of Washington from 2003–2015. Rep. Hunter chaired the Appropriations committee from 2010 through 2015 and was responsible for negotiating the state budgets. Ross served on the Washington Learns K-12 Advisory Committee and the Joint Task Force on Basic Education Finance and led the effort to re-write the definition of Basic Education in Washington, as well as the successful effort to fund it. Ross began his career at a small software company that expanded beyond all expectations. He was at Microsoft for 17 years and holds several patents for database and user interface design. Ross earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science from Yale University in 1983.

Sherri Killins Stewart is the director of systems alignment and integration for the BUILD Initiative. She previously served as the commissioner of early education and care for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and designed and implemented a statewide QRIS. Sherri helps private-sector organizations and state agencies, including public health, housing and child welfare, embrace a child development lens that encompasses learning and healthy development across the continuum from informal to formal, family to neighborhood to state, practice to policy. She also now leads BUILD’s racial equity work, including the Equity Leaders Action Network, which includes 36 leaders from 19 states and the District of Columbia and Guam. Over her career, she has worked as an advocate for children and families as a provider of direct care and in leadership roles on issues related to children and families. Sherri holds a nursing degree from the University of Pittsburgh, a Master’s Degree in Administrative Science from Johns Hopkins University, and a Ed.D in Counseling Psychology from the University of Sarasota. She resides in New Haven, Connecticut with her husband and is the mother of three daughters.
Junlei Li is the Co-director of Fred Rogers Center and the Rita M. McGinley Endowed Professor of Early Learning and Children’s Media at Saint Vincent College. He seeks to understand and apply Fred Rogers’ philosophy and approach to serve children and their helpers. Continuing in Fred Rogers' legacy, the Center strives to find and communicate what is “simple and deep” and matters most in service of children and their families. The Center, with its many partners and students, strives to enhance the quality of human relationships surrounding children, promote children’s “growing on the inside,” and gives positive meaning to the use of technology in children’s learning and growing. Across all projects, Junlei believes that real and lasting change starts with finding what ordinary people do extraordinarily well with children in everyday moments. His work respects, honors, and supports all of children's helpers – parents, caregivers, teachers, and neighbors. Junlei has had the opportunity to learn from children’s helpers across many diverse and low-resource developmental settings, including orphanages, child care, classrooms, and community programs.

Joan Lombardi is a leading international expert on child development and social policy. She currently serves as director of Early Opportunities LLC, as a senior advisor to the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, and as a senior fellow at the Bernard van Leer Foundation. Over the past 40 years, Joan has made significant contributions in the areas of child and family policy as an innovative leader and policy advisor to national and international organizations and foundations and as a public servant. She served in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the deputy assistant secretary for early childhood development (2009-2011) in the Obama Administration; as the deputy assistant secretary for policy and external affairs in Administration for Children and Families; and as the first commissioner of the Child Care Bureau, among other positions (1993-1998), during the Clinton Administration. Outside of public service, she served as the founding chair of the Alliance for Early Success and as the founder of Global Leaders for Young Children. She currently serves on the Save the Children Board of Trustees.

Susan Ochshorn is the founder of the consulting firm ECE PolicyWorks and the author of *Squandering America’s Future: Why ECE Policy Matters for Equality, Our Economy, and Our Children*. For nearly two decades, she has worked in a broad range of settings at the local, state, and national levels to bridge research, policy, and practice, to integrate early childhood into the larger education reform conversation, and to catalyze social change. Ochshorn has served in a number of advisory positions, including on the council of the Early Learning Initiative at the Education Commission of the States and in the Early Childhood working group at CGI America. She is the author of numerous briefs, reports, and other publications, as well as a frequent speaker and moderator of policy forums on critical issues in early care and education. A former journalist, she has written for CNN.com, the Los Angeles Times, Parenting, and other publications. Ochshorn blogs at the Huffington Post and ECE Policy Matters, the go-to place for early childhood teachers, those who train them, and the decision makers who determine their professional course.

Rachel Schumacher is the director of the Office of Child Care and leads the Office of Child Care’s work to implement the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 and enhance the quality and continuity of infant and toddler child care, including through collaboration with the Office of Head Start for Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships. Before coming to the Office of Child Care, Rachel was an independent early childhood policy consultant. She has advised and conducted policy analysis on behalf of national organizations and public agencies to identify and amplify strategies to enhance the lives of young children and their parents by strengthening early childhood systems and services. Rachel’s previous positions include senior fellow in child care and early education at the Center for Law and Social Policy, early childhood policy analyst at the Children’s Defense Fund and legislative aide in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Rachel has a Bachelor’s degree from Brown University and a Master’s in Public Policy from the Irving B. Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago.
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Susan Hibbard, Executive Director
BUILD Initiative
About the BUILD Initiative

The BUILD Initiative helps states create comprehensive early childhood systems – coordinated, effective policies that address children's health, mental health and nutrition; early care and education; family support; and early intervention. BUILD’s vision is at the center of an emerging and vibrant state-based policy movement in the early childhood development field. We work with those who set policies, provide services and advocate for our youngest children to make sure that they are safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed in school.

About the QRIS National Learning Network

The Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) National Learning Network was formed by a coalition of states and organizations. Network members are united in the desire to use rating and improvement strategies to elevate the quality of care in state early care and education systems and to support and improve children’s development. Staffed by the BUILD Initiative, we provide information, learning opportunities and direct technical assistance to states that have a QRIS or that are interested in developing one.