# *Systems Thinking in Early Childhood: A Story of Pies, Gears, Light Bulbs, and Stars*

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# Galileo and Copernicus

# *Presentation Overview*

*Part I:     The Roots and Rationale for Systems Thinking: A Pie*
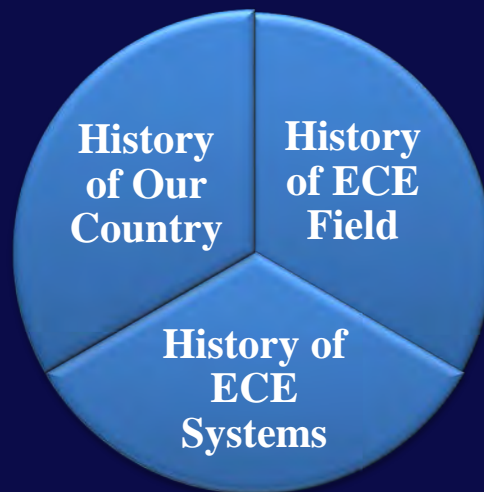
*Part II:    The Status of Systems Thinking and Work: The Gears*

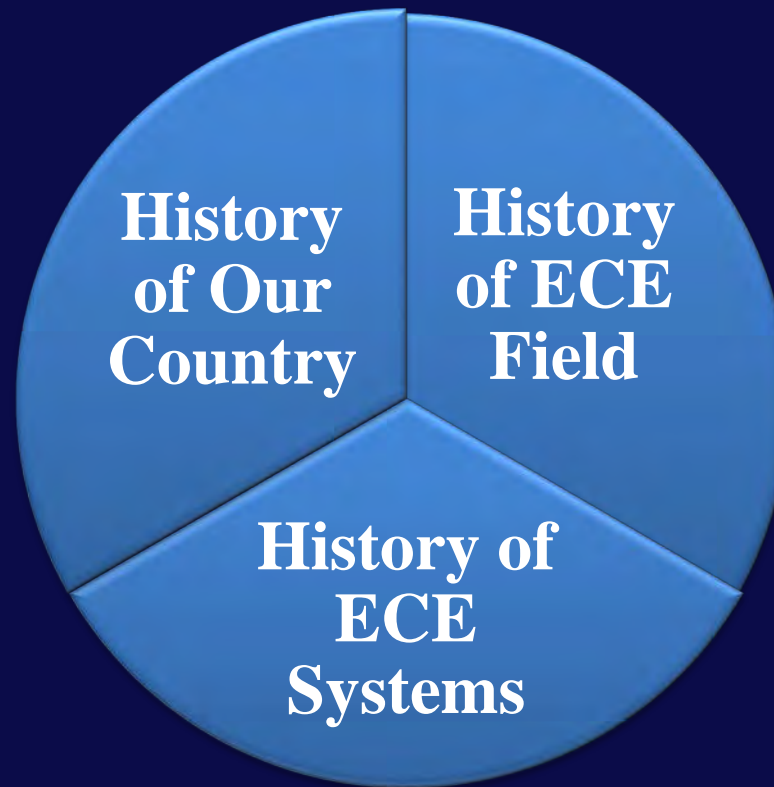*Part III:   Biggie Challenges We Need to Consider: The Light Bulbs*

*Part IV:   Moving Forward: Aiming for the Stars*

# *Part I:*

## *The Roots and Rationale for Systems Thinking: A Pie*



History of Our Country

History of ECE Field

History of ECE Systems

# *Systems Thinking Roots: Our History*

# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Country*



History of Our Country

History of ECE Field

History of ECE Systems
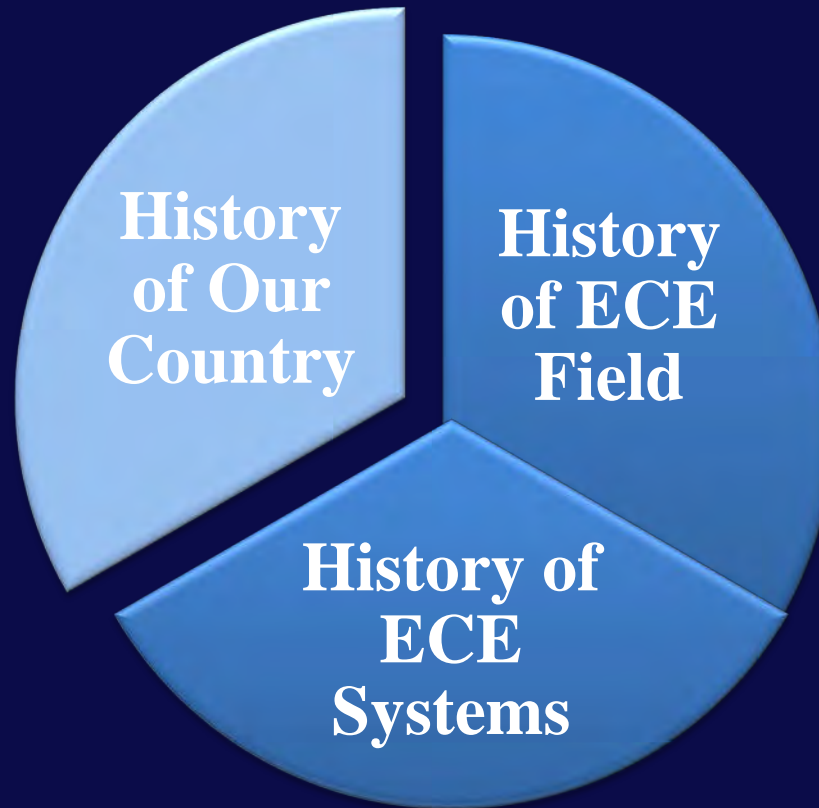
# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Country*

- *The history of our country is based on a tripod of values:*

- *Value I – Independence*
  - To escape governmental tyranny, founding fathers committed to self sufficiency and autonomy of the family.
  - Privacy and primacy of the family produced ethos of limited government, with government intervening when:
    - Families "failed" and couldn't make it on their own (Orphans, Widows)
    - National Crises:
      - WWI
      - Great Depression
      - War on Poverty
  - Government intervention in family life designed to end when personal or governmental crises ended

# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Country*

- *Value II – Localism*
  - Keep the power at the local level so that it could be monitored
  - Could be inclusive and allow democratic voice (limited communication then). New England states traditionally have town meetings and small local communities (168 towns in CT)
- *Value III – Entrepreneurialism*
  - Tremendous belief in personal industry and hard work: Horatio Alger ethic
  - Pull yourself up by the boot straps
  - Be financially independent and innovative

# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Field*
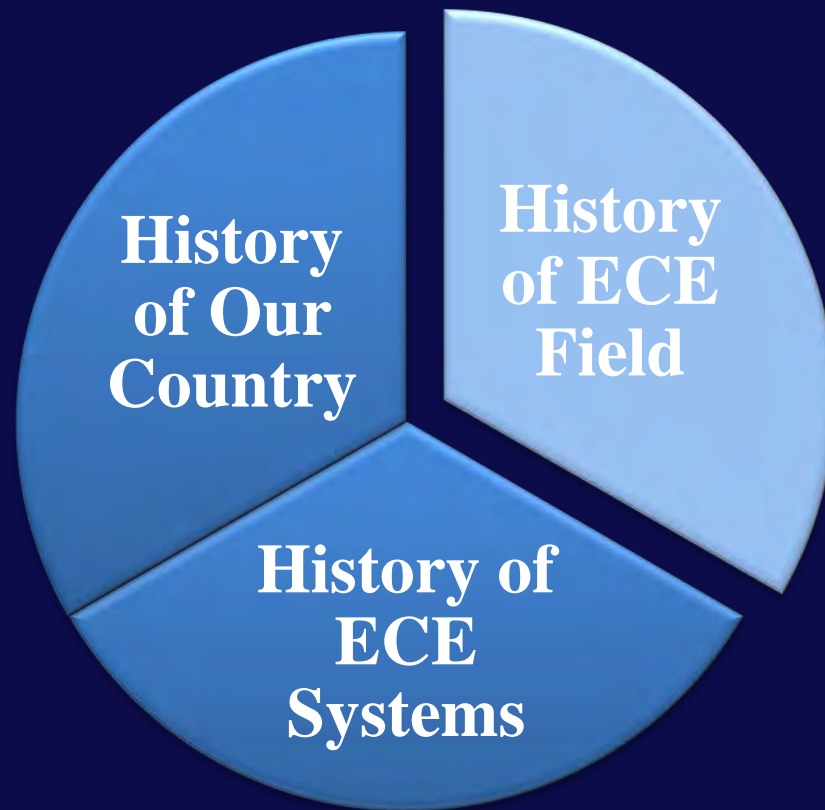
# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Field*

- *Value I – Independence*
  - Hands off of family matters meant recurrent debate regarding how much should government be involved
  - And if so, under which department should services for young children be housed (HHS, DOE, DOL)
- *Value II – Localism*
  - Mixed Funding Streams
    - Public and Private
  - Multiple Public Programs
    - Head Start, Child Care, Pre-Kindergarten
- *Value III – Entrepreneurialism*
  - Mixed Sector Delivery System
    - Profit, Non-Profit

# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Field*

- *National history has shaped services to young children, leaving three indelible legacies:*

  - **<u>Inequities</u>** in access;

  - **<u>Inconsistencies</u>** in quality; and

  - **<u>Inefficiencies</u>** in administration (resources, governance, and accountability)

# Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Field



- History of Our Country
- History of ECE Field
- History of ECE Systems

→ Inequities in access

→ Inconsistencies in quality

→ Inefficiencies in administration

# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Field*



- History of Our Country
- History of ECE Field
- History of ECE Systems

→ **Inequities in access**

→ **Inconsistencies in quality**

→ **Inefficiencies in administration**
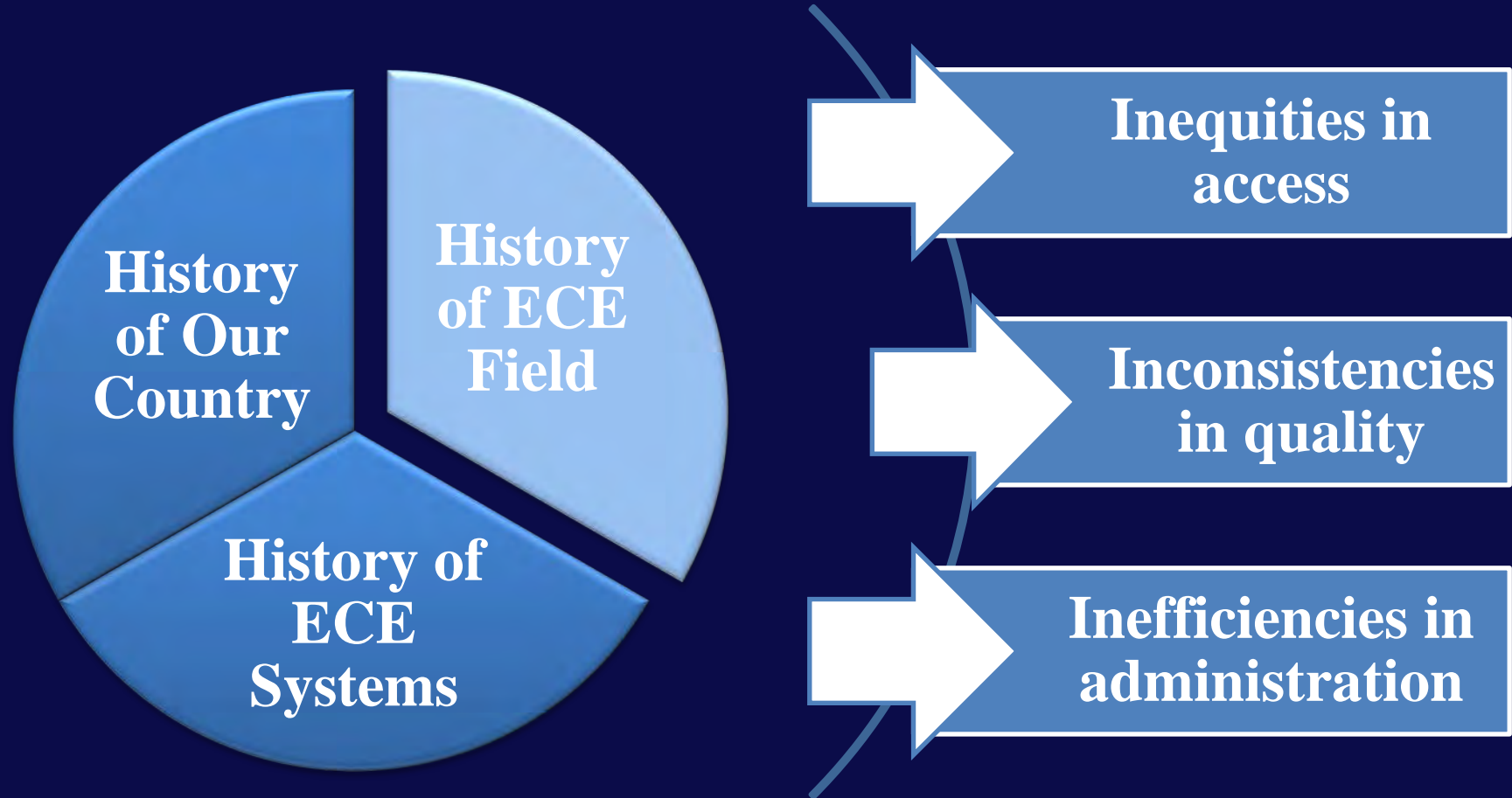
# *Inequities in Access*

- *Inequities exist by Race:*
  - In 2010-2012, more than half (54%, or 4.3 million) of 3- and 4-year-olds were NOT enrolled in preschool
  - The 54% includes:
    - 63% of Hispanic 3 and 4 year-olds
    - 59% of Native American 3 and 4 year-olds
    - 51% of African American 3 and 4 year-olds
    - 51% of White 3 and 4 year-olds
    - 48% of Asian American 3 and 4 year-olds
  - Historically, Hispanic children have had the lowest enrollment rates in preschool

Sources: Kids Count Data Center. (2012). Children ages 3 to 4 not enrolled in preschool [Data file]. Retrieved from http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/7188-children-ages-3-to-4-not-enrolled-in-preschool?loc=1&loct=1#detailed/1/any/false/995,932,757,470,116/any/14230,14231

# *Inequities in Access*

- *Inequities exist by Income*
  - Despite the compensatory efforts of government (e.g., Head Start, child care subsidies), children in poverty have the lowest participation rates in center-based ECE
    - Participation rate of children in ***poverty***: 45% of 3 year-olds; 64% of 4 year-olds
  - Children from wealthy families are most likely to attend preschool
    - Participation rate of children whose families earn ***over $100,000***: 83% of 3 year-olds; 90% of 4 year-olds
  - Generally, as family salary increases, so do preschool participation rates

Sources: Barnett, S., and Nores, M. (2012, April). *Estimated participation and hours in early care and education by type of arrangement and income at ages 2 to 4 in 2010.* New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). Retrieved from: http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/ECE%20Participation%20Estimations.pdf

# *Inequities in Access*

- *Inequities exist by Neighborhood*
  - Affluent neighborhoods have more child care centers than do less affluent neighborhoods
  - Middle-income neighborhoods are less able to fill the demand for spaces in their programs than are high- and low-income neighborhoods
  - Families in low-income neighborhoods face unique barriers to access:
    - Lack of transportation to child care centers
    - Centers' hours of operation do not match parents' needs

Hirshberg, D. (2002). Child Care Demand and Supply under CalWORKs: The early impacts of welfare reform for California's children, 1998-2000. Berkeley, CA: PACE; Kagan, S.L., et al. (2012). Young children's early experiences: Examining differences on Long Island. Prepared for The Rauch Foundation. New York: National Center for Children and Families; Wen, P., & Dedman, B. (2002, September 1). Stuck in a day-care dilemma working-class families struggle with shortage. Boston Globe, p. B.1.;

# *Inequities in Access*

- *Inequities exist by Mothers' Education:*
  - Preschool participation rates increase as mothers' education levels increase.  In 2010:
    - 50.2% of 4-year-olds whose mother had a high school degree or less were enrolled in preschool
    - 64.8% of 4-year-olds whose mother had some college or more were enrolled in preschool

- *Inequities exist by Mothers' Employment Status:*
  - As of 2011, preschool participation rates were 55% for 3- and 4-year-olds with employed mothers, compared to 44% for 3- and 4-year-olds with unemployed mothers

Barnett, W. S., & Yarosz, D. J. (2007). Who goes to preschool and why does it matter?  Preschool policy brief, 15.  New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.  Retrieved from http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/15.pdf; Burgess, K., Chien, N., Morrissey, T., & Swenson, K. (2013). *Trends in the use of early care and education, 1995-2011: Descriptive analysis of child care arrangements from national survey data*. Retrieved from http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/EarlyCareEducation/rb_ece.cfm#_Toc373832418; Cascio, E. U., & Schanzenbach, D. W. (2013). The impacts of expanding access to high-quality preschool education. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 127-192. Retrieved from http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Projects/BPEA/Fall%202013/2013b_cascio_preschool_education.pdf

# *Inequities in Access*

- *Inequities exist by English Proficiency and Immigrant Status:*
  - English Language Learners (ELLs) and children of immigrants are less likely to participate in all types of early education programs
  - Immigrant families are often unaware of the availability of, and their children's eligibility for, early education programs
  - 43% of children of immigrants between ages 3 and 5 years are in parental care or do not have a regular care arrangement, compared with 29% of children of U.S.-born citizens

Matthews, H., and Ewen, D. (2010, August). Early education programs and children of immigrants: Learning each other's language. Paper prepared for the Young Children in Immigrant Families and the Path to Educational Success roundtable meeting at the Urban Institute, June 28, 2010.

# *Inequities in Access*

- *Inequities exist by Geographic Locale:*
  - Children in the Northeast have the highest rates of participation in preschool (53%)
    - West: 40%
    - Midwest: 44%
    - South: 45%
  - New Jersey (62%) and Connecticut (63%) have the highest rates of preschool participation
  - Nevada (30%) and Arizona (33%) have the lowest rates of preschool participation

Sources: Barnett, W. S., & Yarosz, D. J. (2007). Who goes to preschool and why does it matter?  Preschool policy brief, 15.  New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.  Retrieved from http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/15.pdf; Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012).  Kids Count data book.  Baltimore: The Annie E. Casey Foundation; Kids Count Data Center. (2012). Children ages 3 to 4 not enrolled in preschool [Data file]. Retrieved from http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/7188-children-ages-3-to-4-not-attending-preschool?loc=1&loct=2#detailed/2/2-52/false/1049/any/14230,14231

# *Inequities in Access*

- *Preschool enrollment in the U.S. pales in comparison to that in other developed countries*
  - The U.S. ranks 28th out of 38 countries for the percentage of 4 year-olds enrolled in preschool, at 69%
  - France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Mexico each enrolls 95% of 4 year-olds

Source: Maxwell, L.A. (2012, September 11). Study finds U.S. trailing in preschool enrollment [Web log post]. *Education Week.* Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/09/11/04oecd.h32.html

# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Field*
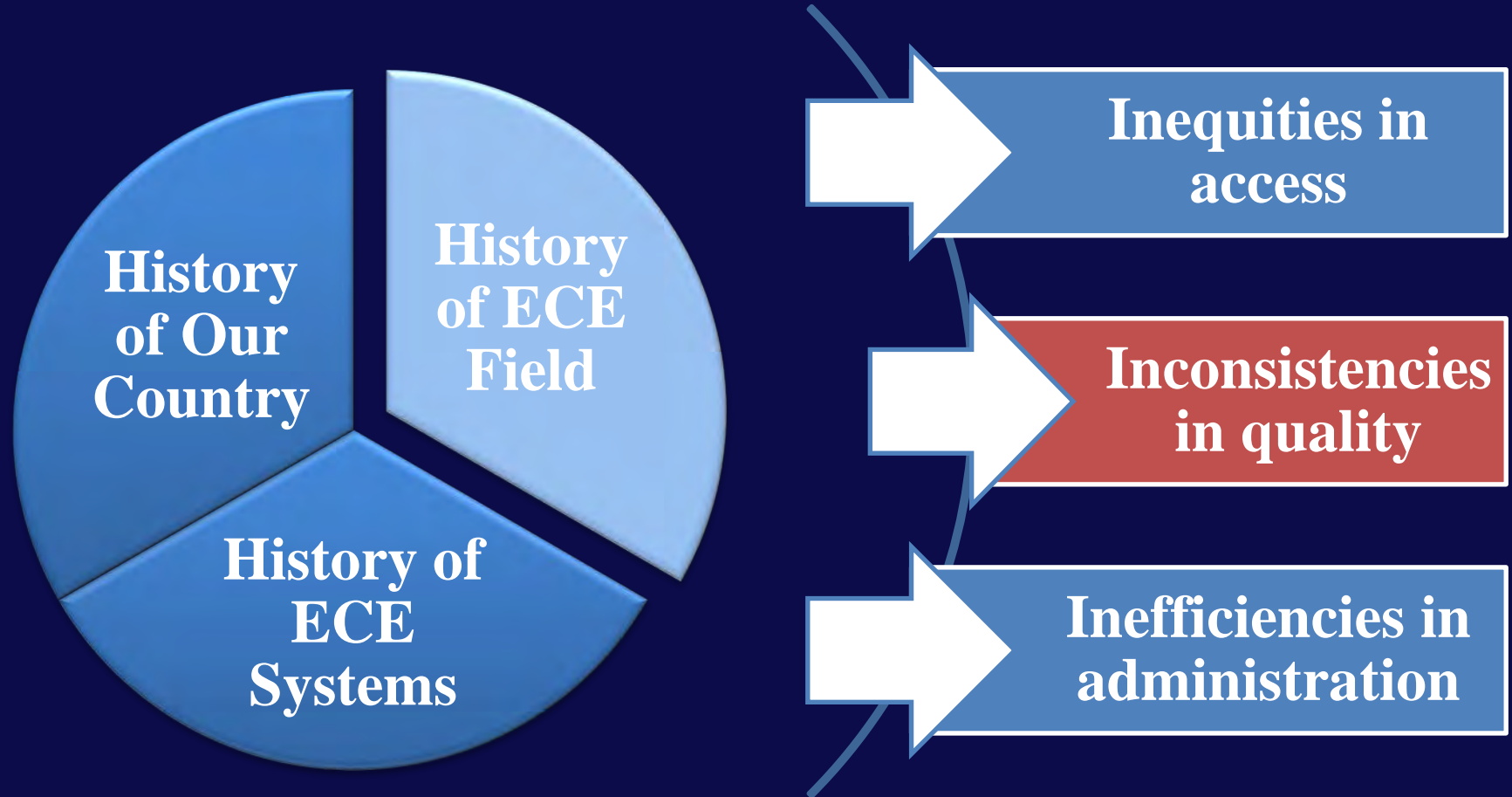
# *Inconsistencies in Quality*

- *Gaps in quality are not distributed equally: low SES and minority children are more likely to experience:*
  - Larger class sizes;
  - Less outreach to smooth the transition to school; and
  - Teachers that have less training, lower compensation, less training, and less stability

- *These differences are particularly harmful, given that high-quality child care has the strongest impact on the developmental outcomes of children from low-income families*

Barnett, W.S., & Whitebook, M. (2011). Degrees in context: Asking the right questions about preparing skilled and effective teachers of young children. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research; Lee, V. E., & Burkam, D. T. (2002). Inequality at the starting gate: Social background differences in achievement as children begin school. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan; Votruba-Drzal, E., Levine Coley, R., & Chase-Lansdale, P. L. (2004). Child care and low-income children's development: direct and moderated effects. Child Development, 75(1), 296-312

# *Inconsistencies in Quality*

- *Required qualifications for teachers vary by state:*
  - 30 states require state-funded pre-k teachers to hold at least a bachelor's degree
  - By 2013, at least 50% of all Head Start teachers nationally were required to have a BA in early childhood or a related field
    - 62% of Head Start teachers nationally met this degree requirement by FY 2012

Sources: NAEYC. (n.d.). Critical facts about the early childhood workforce. Retrieved from http://www.naeyc.org/policy/advocacy/ECWorkforceFacts#CenterTraining; Thornburg, K.R., Harris, T.L., and Hawks, J.S. (2011, January). The state of early childhood programs: 2011. Columbia, MO: Center for Family Policy and Research. Retrieved from http://mucenter.missouri.edu/stateprograms11.pdf; McCann, C. (2013, May 9). Head Start Exceeds Requirement that Half of Teachers Earn BA in Early Childhood [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://earlyed.newamerica.net/blogposts/2013/head_start_exceeds_requirement_that_half_of_teachers_earn_ba_in_early_childhood-83778 Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. (2013). Additional Head Start Program data [Data file]. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/olab/sec2_discre_prog_2014cj.pdf

# Inconsistencies in Quality

- *There are **no** consistent teaching requirements for early educators.*
- *The qualifications of the ECE workforce, as of 2009, are as follows:*

| | High School or Less | Some College | College Graduate |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Family Child Care Providers** | 44% | 38% | 17% |
| **Center Assistants** | 43% | 45% | 12% |
| **Center Teachers** | 20% | 47% | 33% |
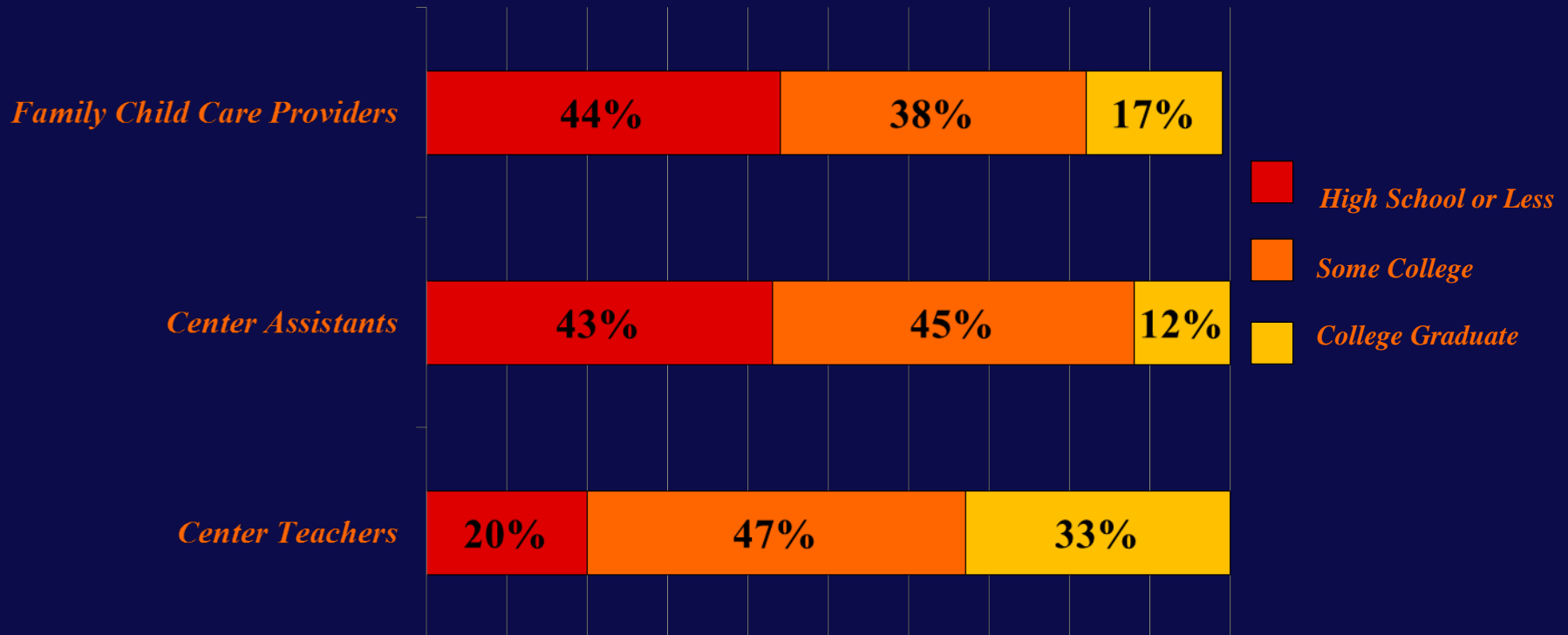
# *Inconsistencies in Quality*

- *Program regulations vary by state:*
  - Only 39 states have specific regulations for center-based facilities
  - In some states, programs are exempt from licensure if they operate on a part-day schedule, thus excluding the majority of state programs
  - Enforcement visitations to programs vary in frequency by state
  - Staff who conduct monitoring visits are generally rarely licensed and have little formal preparation

Cost Quality and Outcomes Study Team. (1995). Cost, quality and child outcomes in child care centers, Executive summary (second ed.). Denver: Economics Department, University of Colorado.

National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2006). Individual States' Child Care Licensure Regulations.  Retrieved August 16, 2006, from http://nrc.uchsc.edu/STATES/states.htm

Ochshorn, S., Kagan, S. L., Carroll, J., Lowenstein, A. E., & Fuller, B. (2004). The effects of regulation on the quality of early care and education (Child Care and Early Education Research and Policy Series Report No. 3). Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.

# *Inconsistencies in Quality*

| | **Child Care** | **Head Start** | **Preschool** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Number of Programs** | N = 46 | N = 40 | N = 39 |
| **% programs operating over 21 years** | 36.6% | 13.5% | 11.1% |
| **% programs providing physical exams** | 22.5% | 79.5% | 30.6% |
| **% teachers who left program in last 6 months** | 12.4% | 32.8% | 6.3% |
| **% assistant teachers who left program in last 6 months** | 23.6% | 13.2% | 11.8% |
| **% teachers with BA degree** | 23.8% | 38.5% | 60.5% |
| **% teachers with MA degree** | 2.4% | 5.1% | 34.2% |
| **Child/Staff Ratio** | 9:1 | 7.8:1 | 9.2:1 |

Layzer, J., Goodson, B., Moss, M. (1993). Life in Preschool. Washignton, DC: US Department of Education.

# *Inconsistencies in Quality*

- *Even the very best group of early childhood programs – state funded pre-schools – are not high-quality.  As of 2013:*
  - Only 5 state programs met all 10quality standards benchmarks identified by NIEER
    - Benchmarks take into account teacher qualifications, class size, student/teacher ratio, and development/use of learning standards
  - 15 states met at least 8 out of 10 benchmarks
  - More than half a million children, or 41% of nationwide enrollment, are served in programs that met fewer than half of the benchmarks

*Source: Barnett, W. S., Carolan, M.E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J.H. (2013). The state of preschool 2013: State preschool yearbook. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.*

# *Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Field*

History of Our Country

History of ECE Field

History of ECE Systems

Inequities in access

Inconsistencies in quality

Inefficiencies in administration
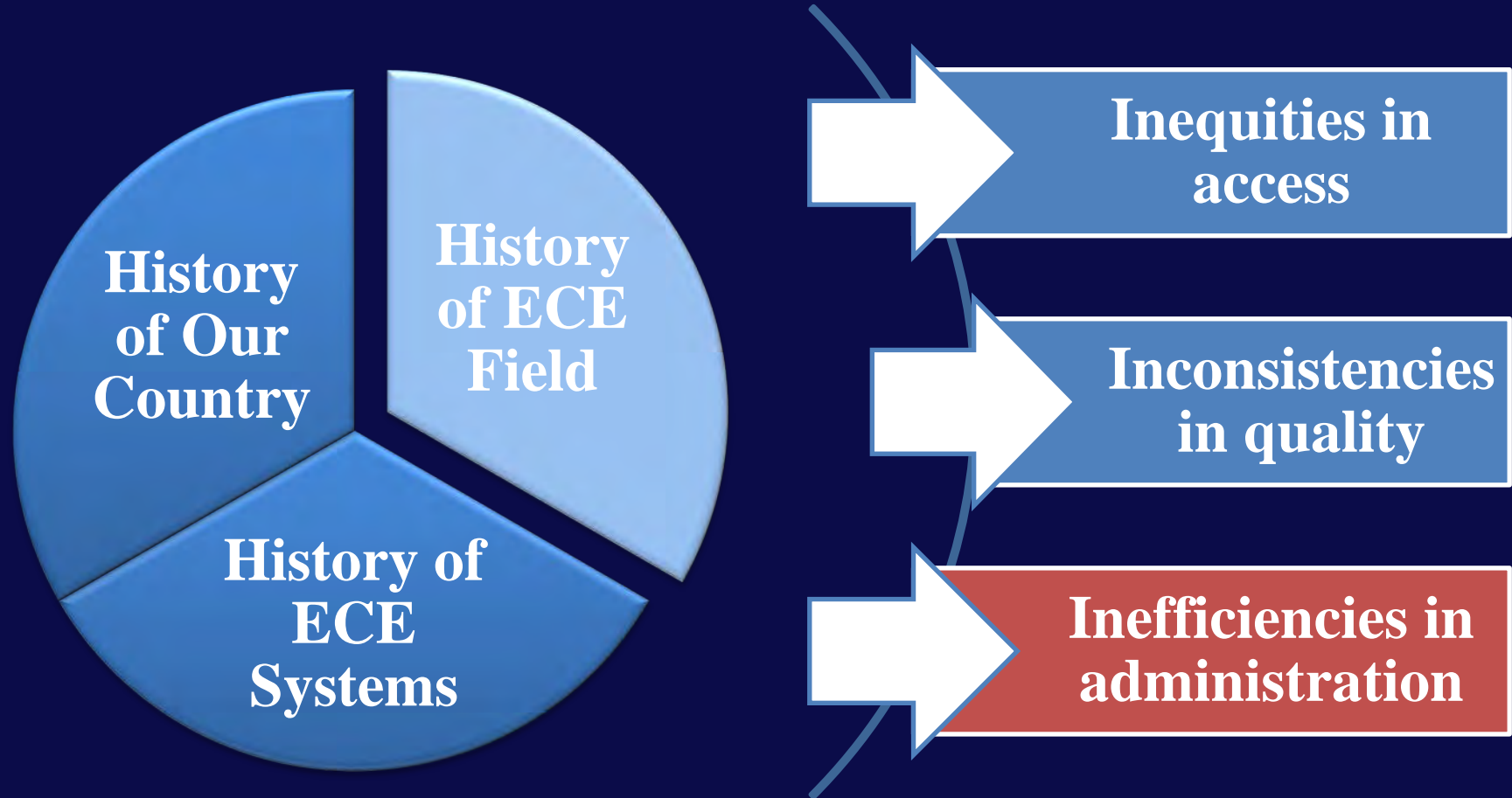
# *Inefficiencies in Administration: Federal Resources*

- *Revenues from the federal government are inconsistent and not guaranteed*

- *Head Start allocations vary widely per state.  In 2013,*
  - CA was allocated over $907 million
  - CT was allocated over $55 million

- *States vary widely on the amount of federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds that are directed to early childhood.  In 2012,*
  - MA spent 26% of its TANF funds on child care
  - CT spent 7% of its TANF funds on child care

Office of Head Start.  (2014, February). Head Start program fact sheet, fiscal year 2013.   Retrieved from http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/data/factsheets/2013-hs-program-factsheet.html; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.  (2014, January).  State fact sheets: How states have spent federal and state funds under the TANF block grant.  Retrieved from http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=3809

# *Inefficiencies in Administration: State Resources*
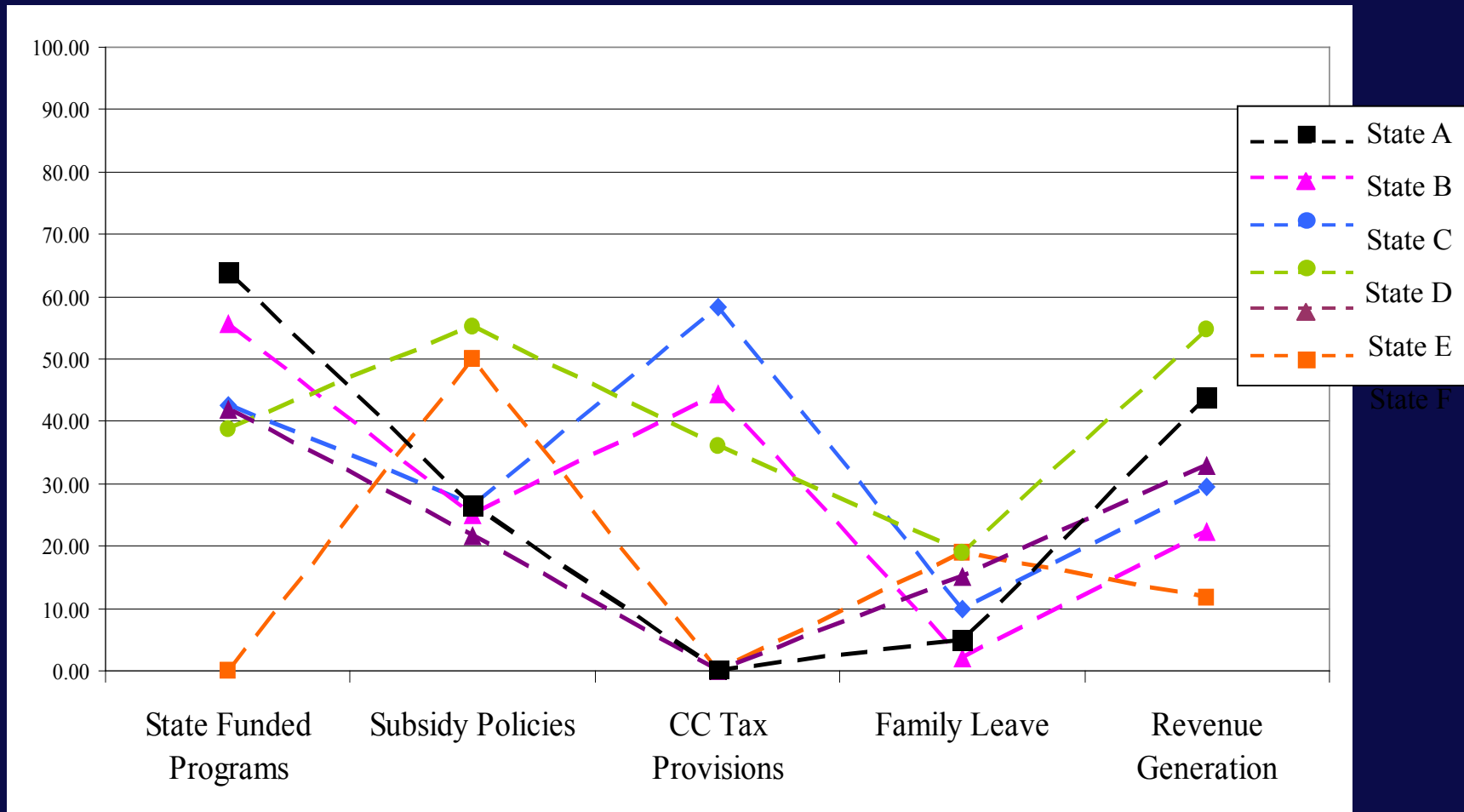
# *Inefficiencies in Administration: Federal and State Resources*

- *Long-term fiscal planning is almost non-existent*

- *Revenue generation strategies are multiple, but not systematically planned*

- *Financing schemes tend to focus on quantity, not quality*

- *The **durability** of state investments also vary*
  - Funding decisions are highly inconsistent and episodic

# *Inefficiencies in Administration: Governance*

- *Because there are so many disparate funding streams, no single entity governs early childhood at the federal or state level*

- *Federal Level have funding in Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Labor, with 72 separate programs.*

- *State level, equal variety*

- *Programs are constantly changing*

# *Inefficiencies in Administration: Accountability*

- *States vary in their approaches to accountability*
  - Child population information (i.e., the status of all children in the state);
  - Program population information (i.e., the quality of all early education programs);
  - State program evaluation (i.e., the quality of child outcomes in specific state early childhood programs); and
  - Local agency quality (i.e., the quality of services in local agencies)
- *Only a few states have ongoing mechanisms for early childhood data collection over time – a crucial element of an accountability system*
- *No state has an adequate data system that includes information on all young children from birth through entry to school*

# *Inefficiencies in Administration: Accountability*

- *Early learning standards – the foundation of an accountability system – vary by state and reflect widely different expectations for young children*
  - Some states focus on cognition and language development primarily, while others focus more broadly
  - Some states have standards for all children; some for only those enrolled in certain programs
- *All states have learning standards for preschool, and increasing numbers of states have learning standards for infants and toddlers*

Scott-Little, C., Kagan, S. L., & Frelow, V. S. (2005). Inside the content: The breadth and depth of early learning standards. Executive Summary. Greensboro, NC: SERVE; National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative. (2010, December). Infant/toddler early learning guidelines factsheet. Retrieved from http://main.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/Infant-Toddler_Early_Learning_Guidelines_Factsheet.pdf

# *Inefficiencies in Administration: Accountability*

- *Within States:*
  - Different child outcome standards/expectations for different programs
    - Most child care programs abide by state standards
    - Head Start programs have their own Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework
    - Some programs are not required to meet any child standards
  - Different data systems
    - Most elaborated tends to be in Departments of Education
    - Other departments have unlinked data systems
    - Typically, no unified child identifier so impossible to track children across programs when multiply enrolled or across the age span

# *THE BOTTOM LINE*

- *Bottom Line 1:*
  - Our national history, coupled with inequities, inconsistency and inefficiencies in federal and state policies and practices have left a chaotic, uneven non-system of early care and education in the United States

- *Bottom Line 2:*
  - This non-system is unlike any of the countries with whom we are routinely compared

- *Bottom Line 3:*
  - It is unlike what exists for elementary and secondary education. Early childhood systems can not be understood as baby school systems; more like higher education

# Bottom Line 3: ECE is NOT K - 12

| | Pre-K/ECE | K-12 |
|---|---|---|
| *Governance* | Nothing formalized | State Boards of Ed. Local Boards of Ed. |
| *Finance* | Multiple, chaotic funding (72 federal streams) | Guaranteed tax base |
| *Professional Certification* | None universally required | Required to teach |
| *Regulation* | Base is state required; all else is voluntary | Required accreditation |

# *Systems Thinking Roots:*
# *History of Our Systems Efforts*
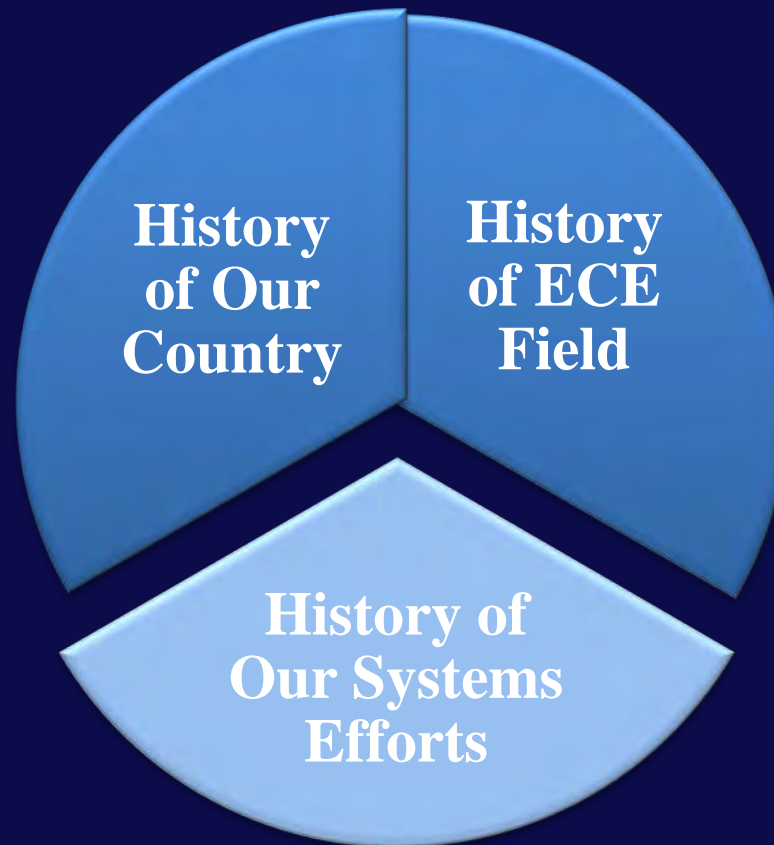
# Systems Thinking Roots: History of Our Systems Efforts

*The field recognized the need for a system and began working on systems development with four threshold efforts:*
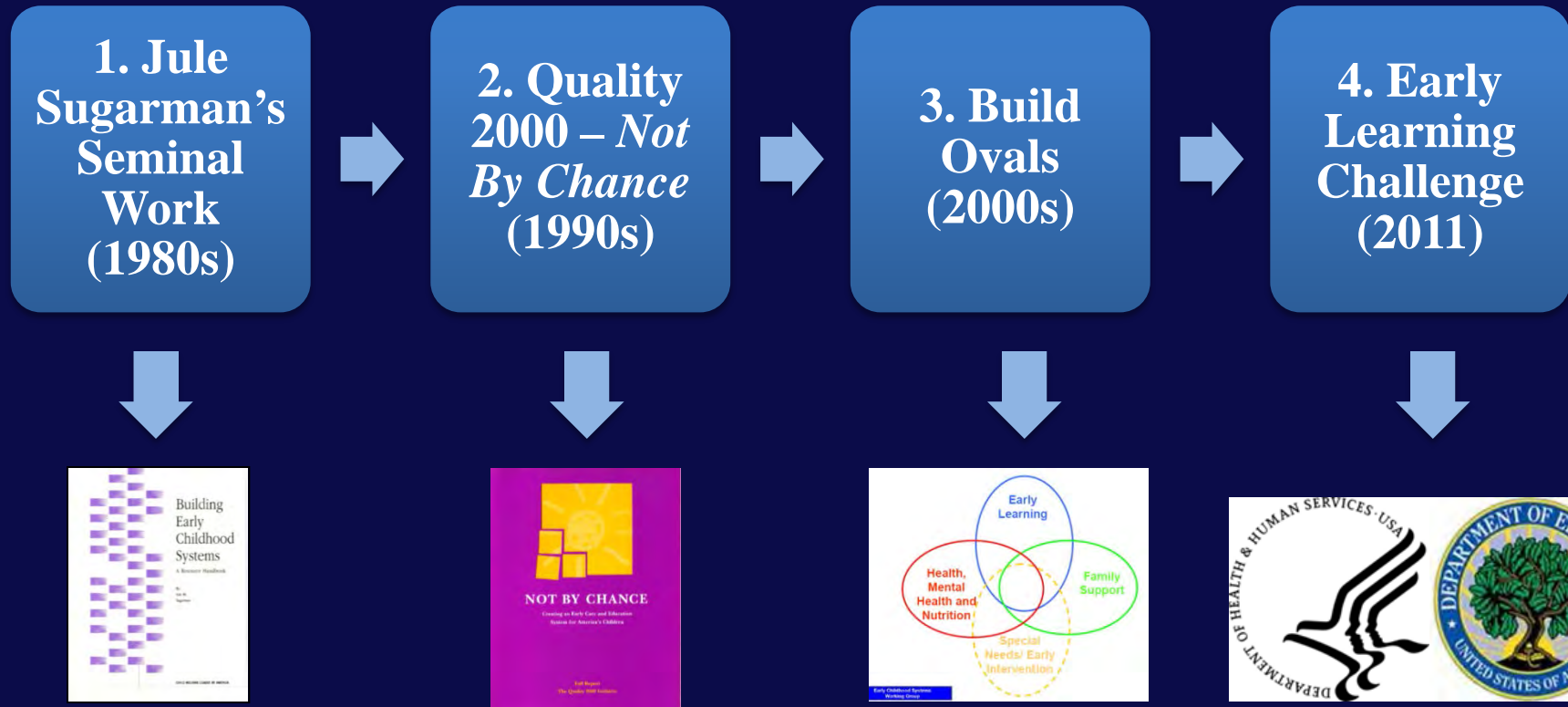
| 1. Jule Sugarman's Seminal Work (1980s) | → | 2. Quality 2000 – *Not By Chance* (1990s) | → | 3. Build Ovals (2000s) | → | 4. Early Learning Challenge (2011) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Jule Sugarman*

| 1. Jule Sugarman's Seminal Work (1980s) | → | 2. Quality 2000 – *Not By Chance* (1990s) | → | 3. Build Ovals (2000s) | → | 4. Early Learning Challenge (2011) |



Building Early Childhood Systems
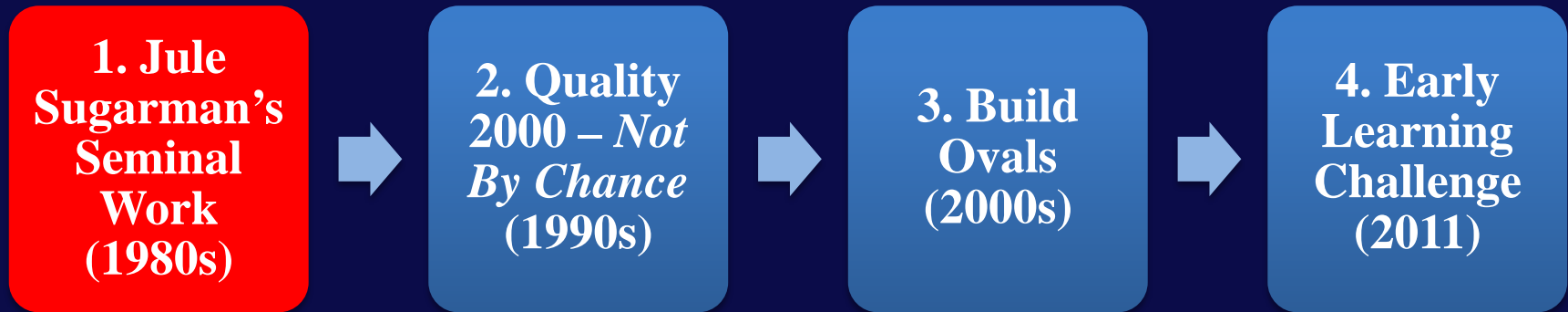
# History of Our Systems Efforts: Jule Sugarman

- *Sugarman's* Building Early Childhood Systems: A Resource Handbook, *Child Welfare League of America, 1991.*
  - **Defined a system**: A set of arrangements under which individual programs and activities work with one another
  - **Suggested effectiveness parameters that included:**
    - Government support from administering agencies
    - A coordinator
    - "Complementary, back up" services
    - Common standards for programs
    - Planning across program providers
  - **Bottom line:**
    - Focus on coordination of separate programs: No sense of new or separate government agency

# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Quality 2000*

**1. Jule Sugarman's Seminal Work (1980s)** → **2. Quality 2000 – *Not By Chance* (1990s)** → **3. Build Ovals (2000s)** → **4. Early Learning Challenge (2011)**



NOT BY CHANCE

Creating an Early Care and Education System for America's Children

Full Report
The Quality 2000 Initiative
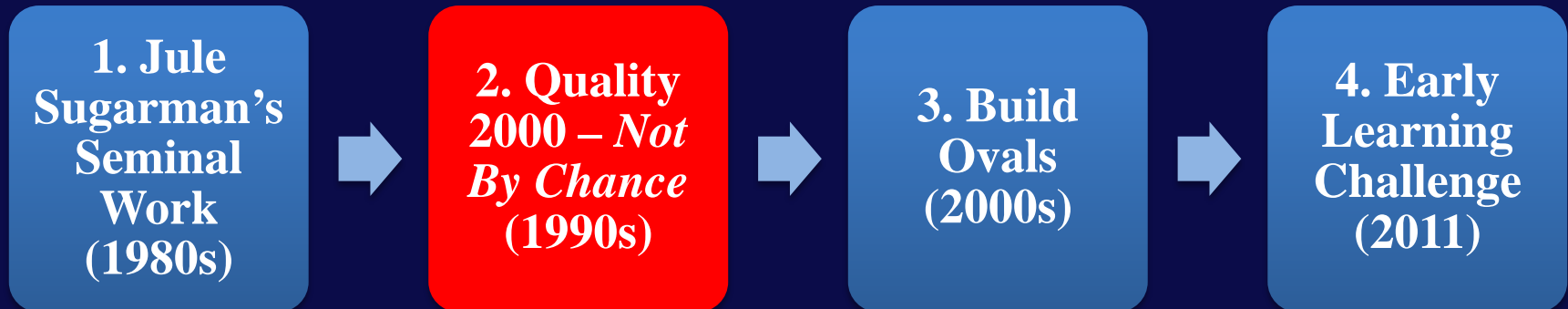
# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Quality 2000*

- *Quality 2000 (Not By Chance)*
  - Premised on the thinking that the field was stuck: insufficient access, quality and equity
  - Need for a bold rethink
  - One conceptualization, advanced in the late 1990s by the *Quality 2000* Initiative, built on the work of 350 experts in the field
  - It focused on *EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION*.
  - It was graphically represented as a *GARDEN*

# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Quality 2000*

**Programs:**

HQ
FS/FL

HQ
HS

HQ
CC

HQ
PK

HQ
FPCC

**Infrastructure**
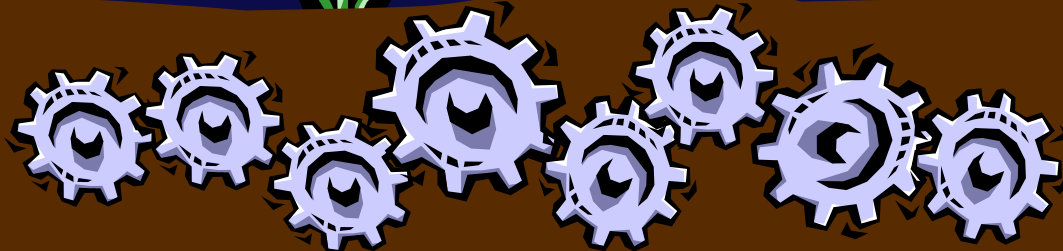
Source: Kagan, S. L., & Cohen, N. E. (1997). Not by chance: Creating an early care and education system. New Haven, CT: Yale University Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy.

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

Regulations and Program Quality

Governance

Parent, Family and Community Engagement

Data Systems

Financing Mechanisms

Professional Development

Early Learning Standards and Assessments

Linkages to K-12 and Others Services

# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Quality 2000*

- *It advanced two major propositions, each framed as a formula:*

### SYSTEMS

### =

### Programs + Infrastructure

**and**

### 8 – 1 = 0

# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Quality 2000*

- *Contribution of* Quality 2000
  - Was a consensual and inclusive process
  - Saw collaboration as a process, a means; *NOT* an end
  - Focused on the infrastructure and clearly identified its elements
  - Established criteria for achieving each of the infrastructure elements
  - Was clearly focused on governance and finance as essential elements of the infrastructure
  - Needed governance mechanisms that had authority and accountability
  - Was clear on the need for standards and results
  - Distinguished between early care and education system and ECE System

# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Build Ovals*

| 1. Jule Sugarman's Seminal Work (1980s) | → | 2. Quality 2000 – *Not By Chance* (1990s) | → | 3. Build Ovals (2000s) | → | 4. Early Learning Challenge (2011) |
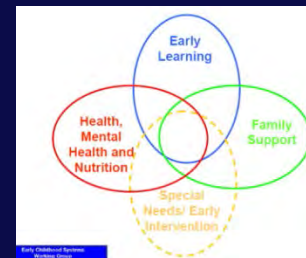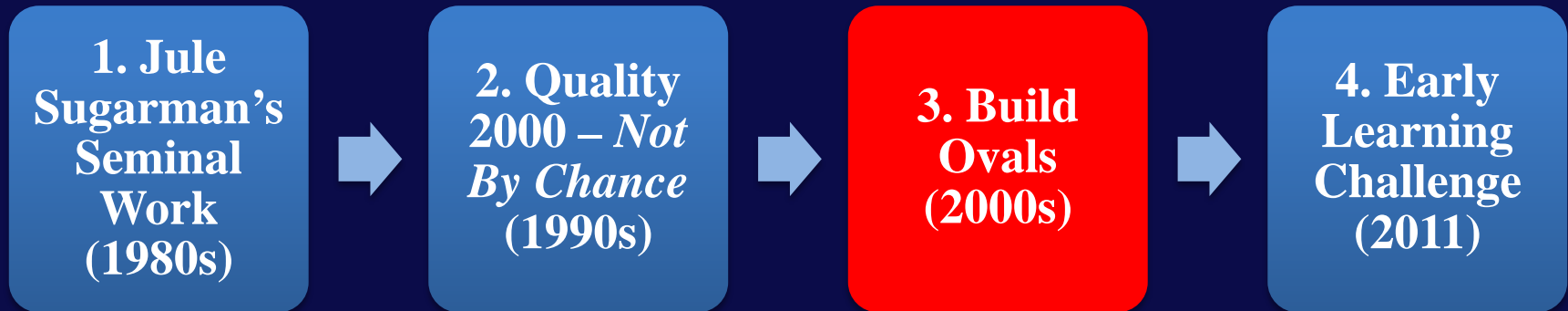
# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Build Ovals*

- *Some felt that we also needed a broader approach to systems building and developed another that addressed all service domains for young children*

- *No right or wrong way, but points out how we have been diligently grappling with systems issues over a period of time*

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# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Build Ovals*



**Comprehensive health services that meet children's vision, hearing, nutrition, behavioral, and oral health as well as medical health needs.**

**Early care and education opportunities in nurturing environments where children can learn what they need to succeed in school and life.**

**Early Learning**

**Health, Mental Health and Nutrition**

**Family Support**

**Special Needs/ Early Intervention**

**Early identification, assessment and appropriate services for children with special health care needs, disabilities, or developmental delays**

**Economic and parenting supports to ensure children have nurturing and stable relationships with caring adults.**

**Early Childhood Systems Working Group**

9

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# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Build Ovals*

*Systems of Services for Young Children*

# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Early Learning Challenge*

**1. Jule Sugarman's Seminal Work (1980s)** → **2. Quality 2000 – *Not By Chance* (1990s)** → **3. Build Ovals (2000s)** → **4. Early Learning Challenge (2011)**
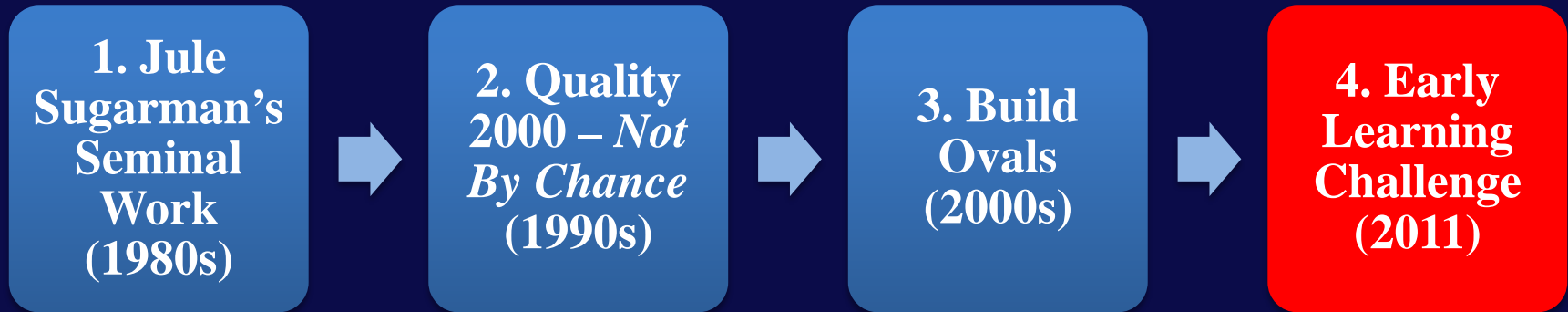
# *History of Our Systems Efforts: Early Learning Challenge*

- *Understood that we needed to support the infrastructure if we wanted to eliminate inequities, inconsistencies, inefficiencies*

- *Building on work of the past, the Federal Government created competitive grants for states:*
  - Phase One:  9 states awarded grants, 2011
  - Phase Two: 5 states awarded grants, 2012
  - Phase Three: 5 states awarded grants, 2013

# An Integrated System:
# A System of Sub-systems
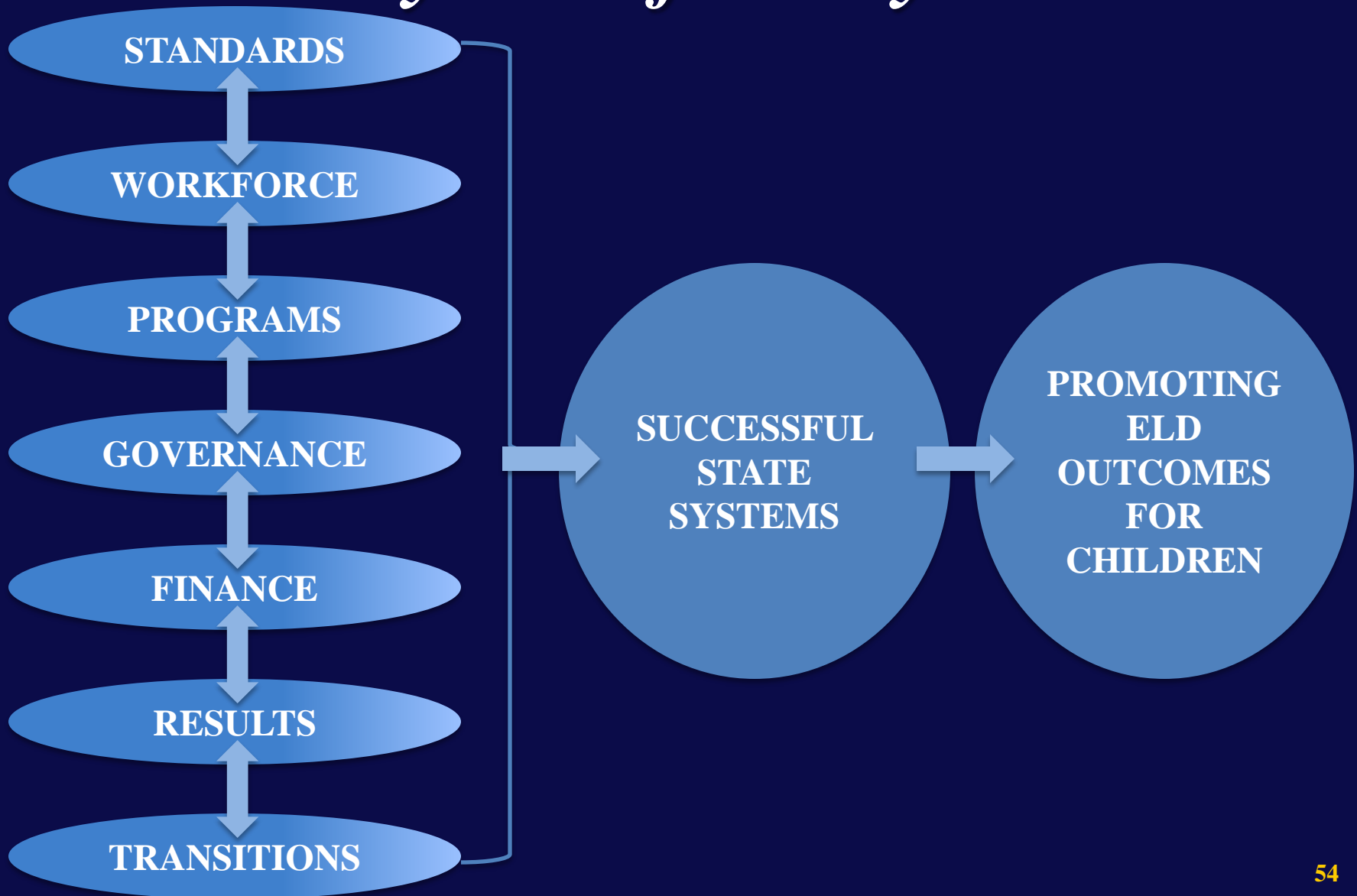
STANDARDS

WORKFORCE

PROGRAMS

GOVERNANCE

FINANCE

RESULTS

TRANSITIONS

SUCCESSFUL STATE SYSTEMS

PROMOTING ELD OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

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# An Integrated System:
# A System of Sub-systems

**STANDARDS** → **Early Learning Standards and Assessments**

**WORKFORCE** → **Professional Development**

**PROGRAMS** → **Regulations and Program Quality**

**GOVERNANCE** → **Governance**

**FINANCE** → **Financing Mechanisms**

**RESULTS** → **Data Systems**

**TRANSITIONS** → **Parent, Family and Community Engagement**

**Linkages to K-12 and Others Services**

55
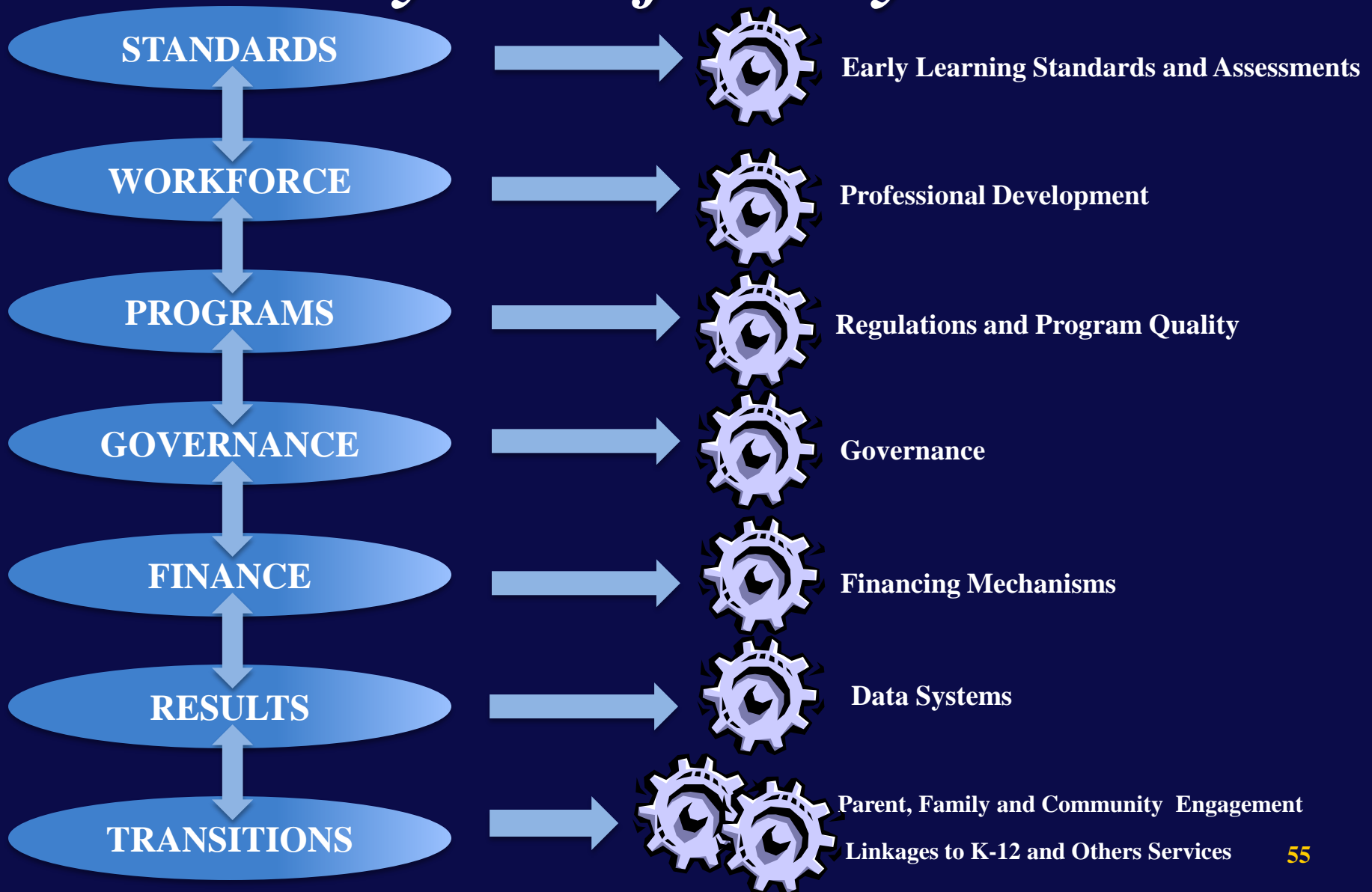
# Part II:

## *The Status of Systems Thinking and Work: The Gears*
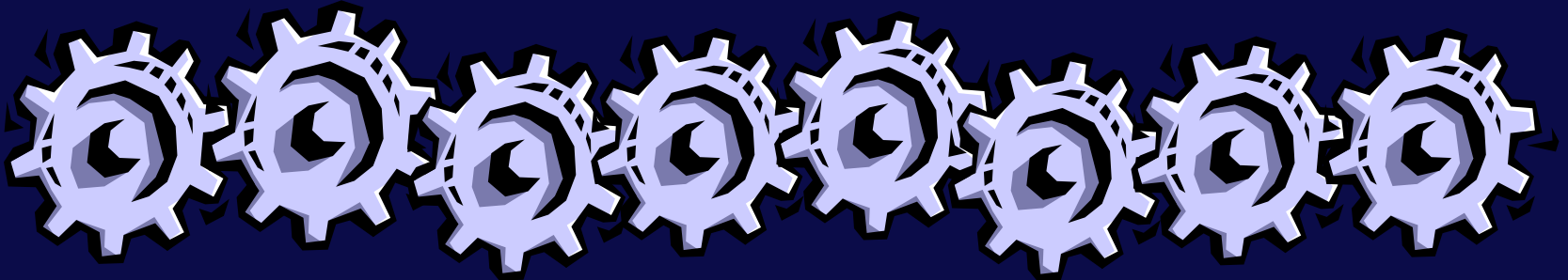
# *The Status of Systems Thinking*

- *WE HAVE AN UNEQUIVOCAL NEED*

- *WE HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE*

- *WE HAVE THE KNOW-HOW*

# *The Unequivocal Need*

- *Agreement that ECE is important*
- *Agreement the ECE is a worthy investment*
- *Agreement that we are not doing the job and that the US is severely lacking when we are looked at internationally*

# Starting well
## Benchmarking early education across the world

A report from the Economist Intelligence Unit

Commissioned by

LIEN foundation
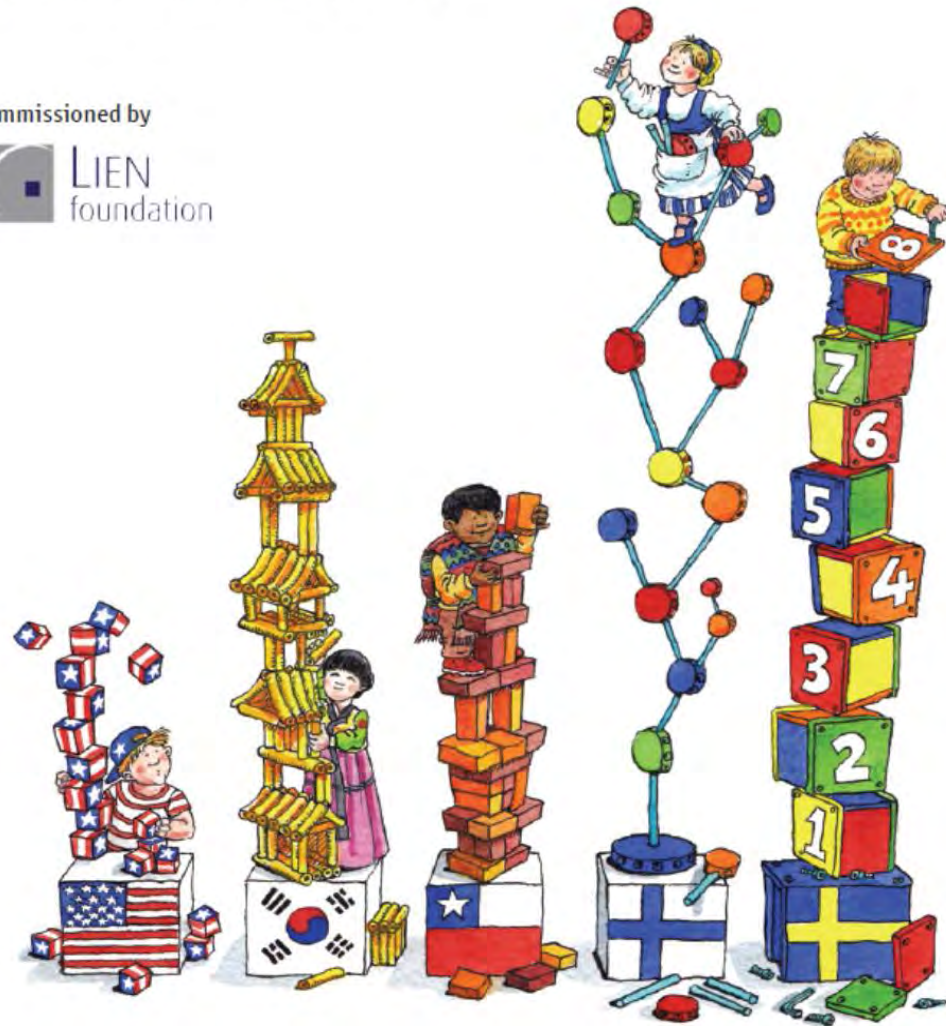
# *The Need: Top Ten Scorers*

| | Overall Score | | | 1) Social Context | 5% | | 2) Availability | 25% | | 3) Affordability | 25% | | 4) Quality | 45% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Finland | 91.8 | = 1 | Australia | 100 | 1 | Belgium | 99.7 | 1 | Norway | 32.4 | 1 | Finland | 93.5 |
| 2 | Sweden | 91.7 | = 1 | Belgium | 100 | 2 | Norway | 98.6 | 2 | Denmark | 89.8 | 2 | Sweden | 90.2 |
| 3 | Norway | 88.9 | = 1 | Czech Republic | 100 | 3 | UK | 97.7 | 3 | Sweden | 86.7 | 3 | UK | 86.9 |
| 4 | UK | 87.9 | = 1 | Denmark | 100 | 4 | Sweden | 97.5 | 4 | Finland | 64.2 | 4 | Norway | 80.4 |
| 5 | Belgium | 84.7 | = 1 | Finland | 100 | 5 | Finland | 94.9 | 5 | Belgium | 78.5 | 5 | Belgium | 78 |
| 6 | Denmark | 83.5 | = 1 | France | 100 | 6 | France | 91.3 | 6 | UK | 77.6 | 6 | New Zealand | 77.3 |
| 7 | France | 81 | = 1 | Germany | 100 | 7 | Spain | 90.5 | 7 | France | 76.6 | 7 | Netherlands | 76.6 |
| 8 | Netherlands | 75.6 | = 1 | Greece | 100 | 8 | Germany | 88.6 | 8 | Italy | 75.6 | 8 | Denmark | 76.3 |
| 9 | New Zealand | 73.9 | = 1 | Hong Kong | 100 | 9 | Denmark | 87 | 9 | New Zealand | 71.9 | 9 | France | 75.5 |
| 10 | South Korea | 72.5 | = 1 | Hungary | 100 | 10 | Portugal | 85.8 | 10 | Netherlands | 70.7 | 10 | South Korea | 69 |

# *USA's Status*

| Overall Score | | | 1) Social Context | | 5% | 2) Availability | | 25% | 3) Affordability | | 25% | 4) Quality | | 45% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | Italy | 68.4 | = 1 | New Zealand | 100 | 16 | Austria | 75.8 | 16 | USA | 63 | 16 | Switzerland | 63.1 |
| 17 | Czech Republic | 68.1 | = 1 | Norway | 100 | 17 | Switzerland | 75.6 | 17 | Chile | 62.1 | 17 | Germany | 62.4 |
| 18 | Ireland | 67.4 | = 1 | Poland | 100 | 18 | Mexico | 74.3 | = 18 | Australia | 60.6 | 18 | UAE | 62.3 |
| 19 | Hong Kong | 66.2 | = 1 | Portugal | 100 | 19 | Hungary | 74 | = 18 | Spain | 60.6 | 19 | Taiwan | 62.2 |
| 20 | Chile | 63.6 | = 1 | Singapore | 100 | 20 | Netherlands | 73.9 | 20 | Hong Kong | 60 | 20 | Czech Republic | 61 |
| 21 | Japan | 63.5 | = 1 | South Korea | 100 | 21 | Canada | 70.9 | 21 | Singapore | 59.8 | 21 | Spain | 58.6 |
| 22 | Hungary | 61.6 | = 1 | Spain | 100 | 22 | Greece | 68.5 | 22 | Taiwan | 59.2 | 22 | USA | 57.8 |
| 23 | Israel | 61 | = 1 | Sweden | 100 | 23 | New Zealand | 64.7 | 23 | Israel | 58.8 | 23 | Greece | 57.6 |
| 24 | UAE | 60.3 | = 1 | Switzerland | 100 | 24 | Israel | 64.6 | 24 | Japan | 57.2 | 24 | Australia | 56.4 |
| 24 | USA | 60.3 | = 1 | Taiwan | 100 | 25 | Singapore | 64.3 | 25 | Poland | 56.5 | 25 | Israel | 56 |
| 26 | Canada | 59.9 | = 1 | UAE | 100 | 26 | Hong Kong | 60.9 | 26 | UAE | 55.3 | = 26 | Canada | 54.5 |
| 27 | Greece | 59.4 | = 1 | UK | 100 | = 27 | Argentina | 59 | 27 | Hungary | 54.2 | = 26 | Hungary | 54.5 |
| 28 | Australia | 59.1 | = 1 | USA | 100 | = 27 | Russia | 59 | 28 | Portugal | 53 | 28 | Italy | 53.7 |
| 29 | Singapore | 58.8 | = 29 | Austria | 95 | 29 | Poland | 57.4 | 29 | Ireland | 52.5 | 29 | Chile | 53 |
| 30 | Taiwan | 58.4 | = 29 | Canada | 95 | 30 | Japan | 54.9 | 30 | Canada | 51.9 | 30 | Singapore | 50.6 |
| 31 | Poland | 56.1 | = 29 | Chile | 95 | 31 | USA | 54.4 | 31 | Greece | 45.4 | 31 | Poland | 50.2 |

# *The Knowledge*

- *Most people understand that the results from the lighthouse effects studies were done in small programs of high quality that do not resemble American ECE*

- *Most people understand that we need to address the infrastructure and the programs, not the programs alone, to gin up quality*

# *The Knowledge*

- *An early childhood system:*
  - Promotes positive outcomes for children
  - Is hard to accomplish unless work is done on several fronts simultaneously
  - Needs to be understood as a combination of linked sub-systems
  - Each sub-system is both independent and contingent on the success of all the other sub-systems

# *The Know-How*

- *Throughout the nation, early childhood pioneers have been working on elements of the system*
- *As a result, we have some terrific examples from which to learn*
- *The challenges remain:*
  - Taking from these examples and tailoring them to different states' individual and powerful contexts
  - Discerning where to begin and what to do first, second, third
  - Figuring out which elements of the system impact other elements and how

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

Regulations and Program Quality

Governance

Parent, Family and Community Engagement

Data Systems

Financing Mechanisms

Professional Development

Early Learning Standards and Assessments

Linkages to K-12 and Other Services

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*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

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Linkages to K-12 and Other Services
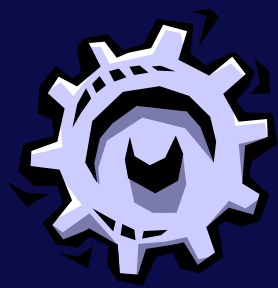
# *Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs*
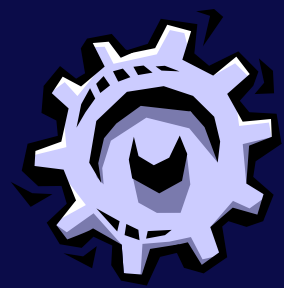
- *What are quality programs?*
  - Provide rich and varied learning opportunities
  - Are bathed in language
  - Actively engage children
  - Provide activities that address children's individual differences (strengths and weaknesses)
  - Are characterized by inquiry, reflection, and curiosity
  - Produce productive outcomes for children

# *Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs*

- *We know that regulations and teacher capacity influence quality more than any other factors*

- *We know that the more stringent the regulations, the higher the quality of service, but regulations vary widely*

- *Major problems are:*
  - Large number of legal exemptions permitted
  - Limited number of licensing specialists
  - Poor enforcement strategies

- *Regulations are a powerful but underutilized tool*

# Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs
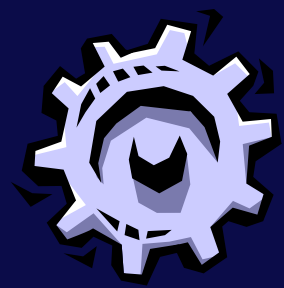
- *Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)*
  - Promising strategy for improving programs and for integrating the ECE system
  - Five key components:
    1. Quality standards;
    2. A process for monitoring those standards;
    3. A process for supporting quality improvement;
    4. Provision of financial incentives; and
    5. Dissemination of information to parents and the public about program quality
  - Establish common program and practitioner standards that can transcend funding streams and link programs
  - Monitor program quality and assign a rating to programs
  - Provide targeted technical assistance and supports to improve programs
  - QRIS is program improvement, public information, quality enhancement effort
  - Is a mainstay of the ELC

# *Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs*
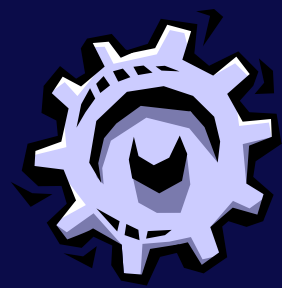
- *Fundamental QRIS Questions*
  - Will the system be voluntary or mandatory?
  - Will the QRIS begin statewide or will it expand statewide from local pilots?
  - What types of early childhood programs will be eligible to participate?
  - What are your state's goals in developing a QRIS?
  - What parts of a QRIS are already in place?
  - Will the QRIS be established through legislation or will it be part of state regulations?
  - How will developing a QRIS impact other state early childhood policies moving forward (i.e., subsidies/rates, pre-k, infant/toddler initiatives)?

- *Questions Related to the Process*
  - Who should be involved in the planning process for a QRIS?
  - Who are the main opponents and proponents of a QRIS?
  - Who should be involved in the planning process for a QRIS?

# *Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs*
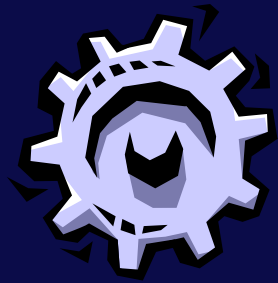
- *Major Issue 1:*
  - How do we link the QRIS to the achievement of more positive outcomes for young children?
    - Very clear standards for children, programs, and teachers
    - Suitable mechanisms for assessing standards' achievement
    - Appropriate data system for collecting and analyzing data
    - Agreed upon reporting and dissemination timelines and "reach"

# *Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs*

- *Major Issue 2:*
  - How do we assure all programs included in the QRIS?
    - Can make QRIS participation mandatory
      - Usually, the first step is equivalent to licensure and is given one star
    - Incentivize participation
      - If a program is to receive or receives any public funds, must participate
      - If a program wants quality "bonus" funds, must both participate and show improvement

# *Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs*
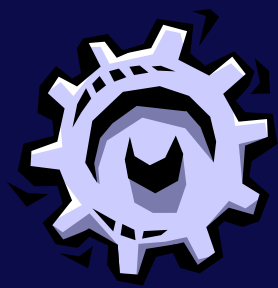
- *Major Issue 3:*
  - Given limited funds, how do we customize support to programs?
    - Consider phasing in support over time
    - Consider support criteria
      - Most needy programs
      - Rotating support on annual basis
    - Consider innovative models of support
      - Use technology to enhance support spread
      - Design an approach where "many star" programs mentor "fewer star" programs in the process and in the improvement support

# *Gear 1: Regulations and Quality Programs*
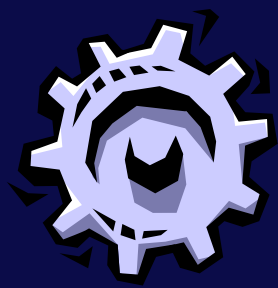
- *Major Issue 4:*
  - How do we fund this, when taken to scale?
    - Need to consider a big picture funding scheme
    - Include pre-kindergarten children in the school funding formula
    - Social Bonding Mechanisms
    - Combine funds from related revenue streams
      - Department of Labor
      - Department of Health
      - Department of Justice

**Regulations and Program Quality**

**Data Systems**

**Financing Mechanisms**

**Governance**

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

**Parent, Family and Community Engagement**

**Professional Development**

**Early Learning Standards and Assessments**

**Linkages to K-12 and Other Services**

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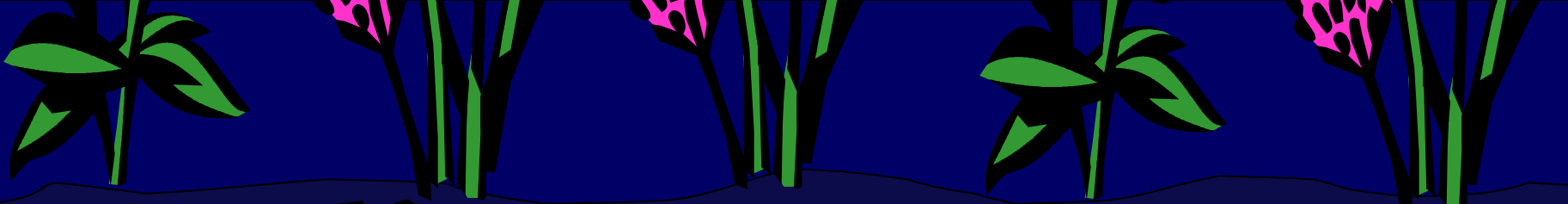
# *Gear 2: Data Systems*

- *When considering the development of data systems, need to think about three parts:*
  - Conceptual Part:
    - Decide what you want to use the data for
  - Practical Part:
    - Therefore, what data to collect, from and by whom, and with what regularity
  - Operational Part:
    - Set up the mechanisms to collect and report the data

# *Gear 2: Data Systems*
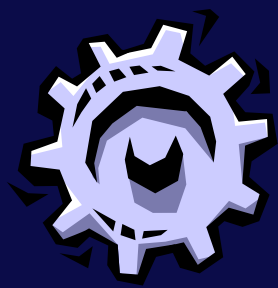
- *Conceptual Part:*
  - Decide what you want to use the data for
    - Children's Status and Progress
      - Screening
      - Instructional Improvement
      - Evaluation
      - Accountability
    - Workforce Status and Progress
    - Program Status and Progress
    - Systemic Status and Progress

# *Gear 2: Data Systems*
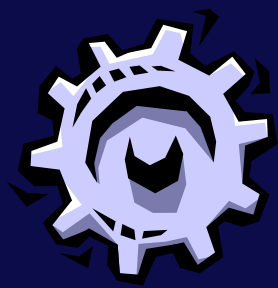
- *Practical Part:*
  - Therefore, for each purpose, we need to discern:
    - *WHAT:* The content of what must be collected (e.g., all domains);
    - *FROM:* Must we really need data from all children, or—given each distinct purpose—could sampling (of items and children) be done?
    - *BY WHOM*: Who are the best people to collect the data to assure reliability and validity?
    - *WHEN:*  How often must the data be collected to assure fidelity to the stated purpose?

# *Gear 2: Data Systems*
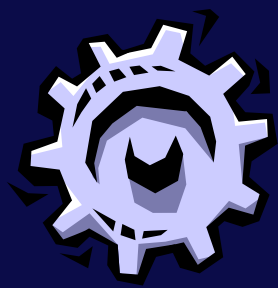
- *Operational Part:*
  - Set up the mechanisms to collect and report the data
  - Data Quality Campaign has ten points for their data systems work:
    1. Unique statewide child identifier
    2. Child-level demographic and program participation information
    3. Child-level data on child development
    4. Ability to link child-level data with K–12 and other key data systems
    5. Unique program site identifier with the ability to link with children and the ECE workforce
    6. Program site data on structure, quality and work environment
    7. Unique ECE workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children
    8. Individual ECE workforce demographics, including education, and professional development information
    9. State governance body to manage data collection and use
    10. Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies

# *Gear 2: Data Systems*

- *Extra Thoughts Related to ECE:*
  - Need to consider how these data systems will link with k-12, human services, and other data systems
  - As data systems mature, we will move toward collective or shared accountability with greater ease
  - Collective/Shared Accountability demands:
    - Shared vision of the desired outcomes across delivery systems
    - Shared language
    - Distributed actions among players (state departments, public and private sectors, local partners/agencies)
    - Consolidated agreement on
      - Data to be collected
      - How data will be used
      - Protective safeguards
      - Distribution methods and timelines

**Regulations and Program Quality**

**Governance**

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

**Parent, Family and Community Engagement**

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# *Gear 3: Financing Mechanisms*
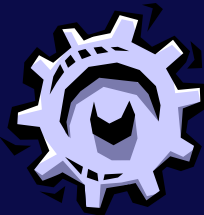
- *Financing Principles*
    - Systemic, not Programmatic Financing
    - Financing for Programs and the Infrastructure (e.g., Focus on Quality and Quantity)
    - Financing that Provisions for Durability and for Innovation
    - Financing that is equitable may not be financing that is equal

# *Gear 3: Financing Mechanisms*
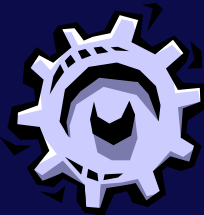
- *Financing Realities*
  - Need to accept the reality that ECE will have multiple financing streams
  - Need to find ways to link the funding at the state level, so local providers do not have to do this program by program, site by site
  - No one correct approach, but are inventive efforts going on from which we can learn
  - Need to plan for financing with phase-ins, staged strategies

# *Gear 3: Financing Mechanisms*
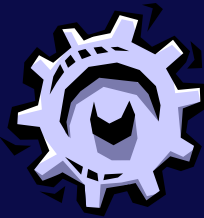
- *For sustainability, must look at revenue generation schemes:*
  - Taxing Strategies
    - Tax Strategies, Sin Taxes, Tax Credits, Lotteries, K-12 Funding
  - Conditional Cash Transfers
    - Performance Based Payments: incentivize behaviors with cash; used by World Bank
  - Social Impact Bonds
    - Raises funds from the private sector
    - Money aggregated by social impact bond issuing group who also distributes funds to service providers
    - Government pays the issuing agent if the services providers meet their targets
    - Bond issuing organization then repays the private investors, with a return on their investment
  - Sustainable Financing Model
    - Reallocating funds to reduce future costs
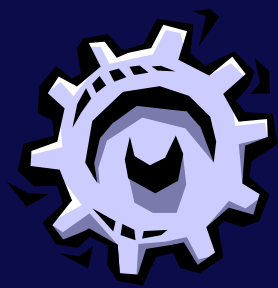
# *Gear 3: Financing Mechanisms*
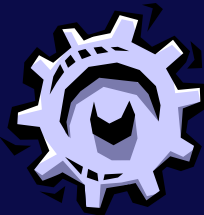
- *Sustainable Financing Model:*
  - Model for high quality preschool for at-risk children
    - Reallocate state education funds into high quality preschool programs to reduce the need for long-term special education
  - Results:
    - Some special education eligible at-risk children who receive high quality early education can overcome special education eligibility and remain in general education
    - Reinvest that savings (once they are achieved) into more high quality ECE programs for at-risk children
    - *As more children are served, more money is saved*

Source: Dolce, L. & Dubno, J. (2011, July 21-22). A Sustainable Financing Model for High Quality Preschool for At-Risk Children. National Business Leader Summit on Early Childhood Investment. Early Learning Ventures. Voices for Utah Children. Boston, MA.

**Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure**

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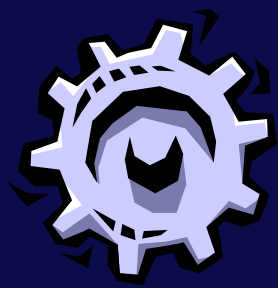
Linkages to K-12 and Other Services

# *Gear 4: Governance*

- *Any effective organization or effort has a clear and transparent approach to governance*
  - Non-profit organization
  - Fortune 500 company
  - Democratic governments
  - European Union
- *All have different approaches to governance, so there is no one governance structure that fits all efforts, all states, or all early childhood systems*
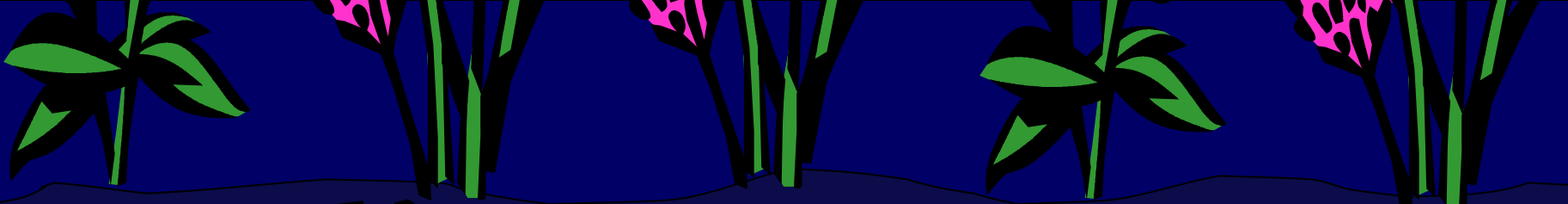
# *Gear 4: Governance*

- *Governance Systems are important because they:*
  - Provide visibility to the effort/entity
    - Via their collective strength and via the personal strength of the members
  - Provide the ability to coordinate across structures
  - Provide the ability to exert influence and direction
  - New governance theory suggests that governance structures can also blend the distance between for-profit and non-profit sectors
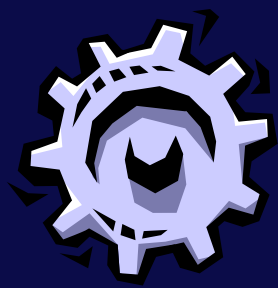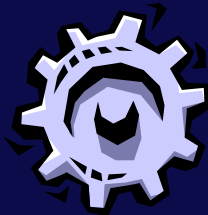
# *Gear 4: Governance*

- *As different as governance efforts can be, they all share the following three characteristics:*
  - Accountability
    - For money and its allocation
    - For rule making
    - For results
  - Authority
    - For decision making
    - For enforcing rules and decisions
  - Durability
    - Over time, place, and governmental administrations

Regulations and Program Quality

Governance

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

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Linkages to K-12 and Other Services

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# *Gear 5: Professional Development*

- *Quality of any institution is predicated on quality of staff*

- *Uneven requirements to teach young children across the states and within the states*

- *No single standard to teach (as in K-12) exists in ECE*

- *Current hot debate in field is the actual requirements necessary (AA or BA) to teach*
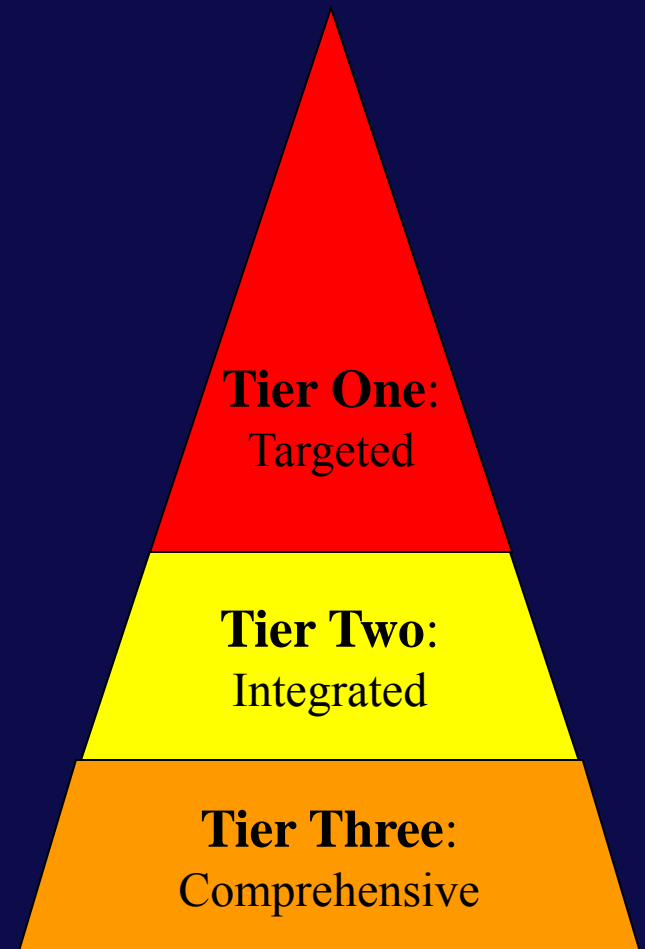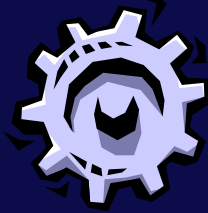
- *Rampant turnover of personnel*
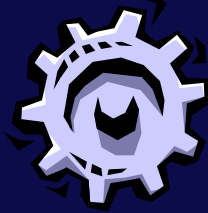
# Gear 5: Professional Development

*States are doing this very differently, so need some way to understand all that is and might be going on*
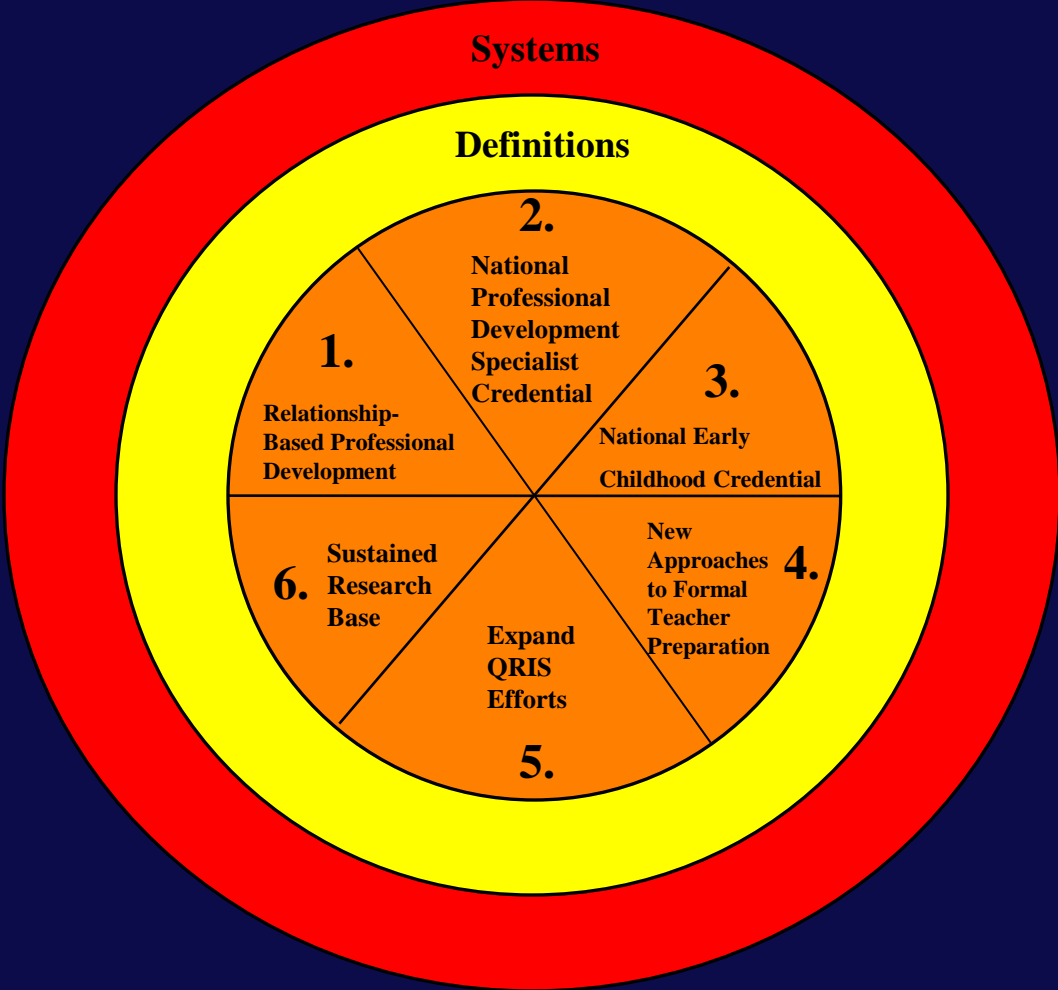
A typology of policies and practices:

1. Targeted efforts focus on one major issue

2. Integrated efforts focus on more than one issue

3. Comprehensive efforts focus on coordinating policies and practices for all teachers

**Tier One**: Targeted

**Tier Two**: Integrated

**Tier Three**: Comprehensive

# *Gear 5: Professional Development*

Systems

Definitions

**2.** National Professional Development Specialist Credential

**1.** Relationship-Based Professional Development

**3.** National Early Childhood Credential

**4.** New Approaches to Formal Teacher Preparation

**5.** Expand QRIS Efforts

**6.** Sustained Research Base

**Regulations and Program Quality**

**Governance**

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

**Parent, Family and Community  Engagement**

**Data Systems**

**Financing Mechanisms**

**Professional Development**

**Early Learning Standards and Assessments**

**Linkages to K-12 and Other Services**

# *Gear 6: Standards and Assessment*

- *Most confused domain*
  - Confusion about standards
    - Early learning standards, program standards, etc.
  - Confusion about program assessment vs. child assessment
    - Program assessment common in ECE; perceived as sufficient
  - Confusion about different kinds and purposes of child assessment
- *Most controversial domain*
  - Associated with high-stakes testing
  - High-stakes testing particularly detrimental to young children
  - Perceived as antithetical to good ECE pedagogy
  - Requires mind shift and fear decontamination

# *Gear 6: Standards and Assessment*

*Different Types of Standards Related to School Readiness*

**I.**

Early Learning & Development Standards

**II.**

Family Standards

**III.**

Teacher Standards
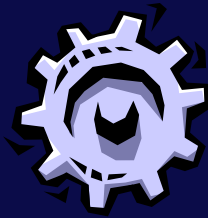
**IV.**

Program/School Standards

**V.**

Access to Services Standards

**VI.**
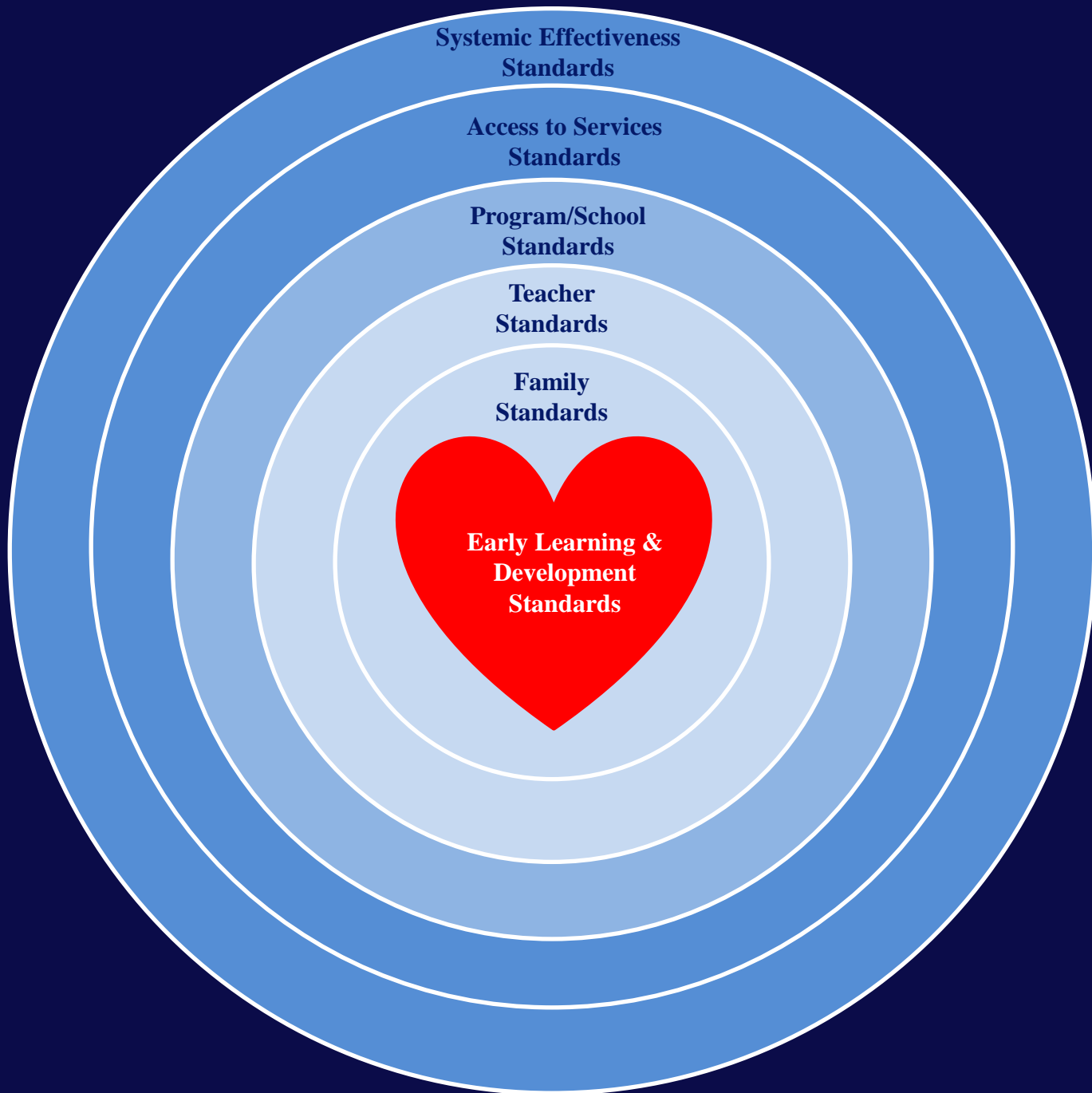
Systemic Effectiveness Standards

# *Gear 6: Standards and Assessment*
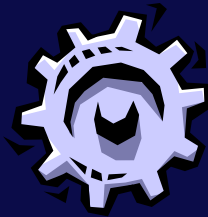
- *Four characteristics of ELDS*
  - Must be comprehensive:
    - Physical Health, Well-Being, and Motor Development
    - Social and Emotional Development
    - Approaches Toward Learning
    - Language, Literacy, and Communication
    - Cognition and General Knowledge
  - Must be observable, measurable statements of what we expect children to know and do
  - Must be conceptualized as the heart of the ELD System

*Early Learning &*
*Development*
*Standards*
*Are the Heart of*
*Readiness*

Systemic Effectiveness Standards

Access to Services Standards

Program/School Standards

Teacher Standards

Family Standards

Early Learning & Development Standards

# *Gear 6: Standards and Assessment*

Evaluate Programs and Monitor National Progress

Improve Instruction

Improve Parenting Skills and Behaviors

**Early Learning & Development Standards**

Basis for QRIS

Improve Teacher Preparation

Improve Curriculum

Improve Public Knowledge of Children's Development

100

# *Gear 6: Standards and Assessment*

- *ELC has pushed ECE Assessment, calling for four kinds of measures:*
  - Screening Measures
  - Formative Assessments
  - Measures of Environmental Quality
  - Measures of Quality of Adult-Child Relationships
- *Presently, no agreement on ECE assessment strategies or tools*

Regulations and Program Quality

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

Governance

Parent, Family and Community Engagement

Data Systems

Financing Mechanisms

Professional Development

Early Learning Standards and Assessments

Linkages to K-12 and Other Services

# *Gear 7: Parent, Family and Community Engagement*

- *Major commitment to family engagement in*
  - Programs
  - Decisions
  - Governance
- *Helps keep programs responsive to parental needs*
- *Could build an advocacy base for social change*
- *Problem is that families "outgrow" ECE and no broad constituency for public support – key benefit of universal preschool*

# *Gear 7: Parent, Family and Community Engagement*

- *As the tide for community schools and community responsiveness grows, communities are looking to early childhood for guidance on how to meaningfully engage parents*

- *As the press for greater cultural diversity grows, because this has been a key strength/commitment of ECE, folks are turning to ECE for guidance*

*Gears: Need to work in all areas to move the infrastructure*

Regulations and Program Quality

Governance

Parent, Family and Community Engagement

Data Systems

Financing Mechanisms

Professional Development

Early Learning Standards and Assessments

Linkages to K-12 and Other Services

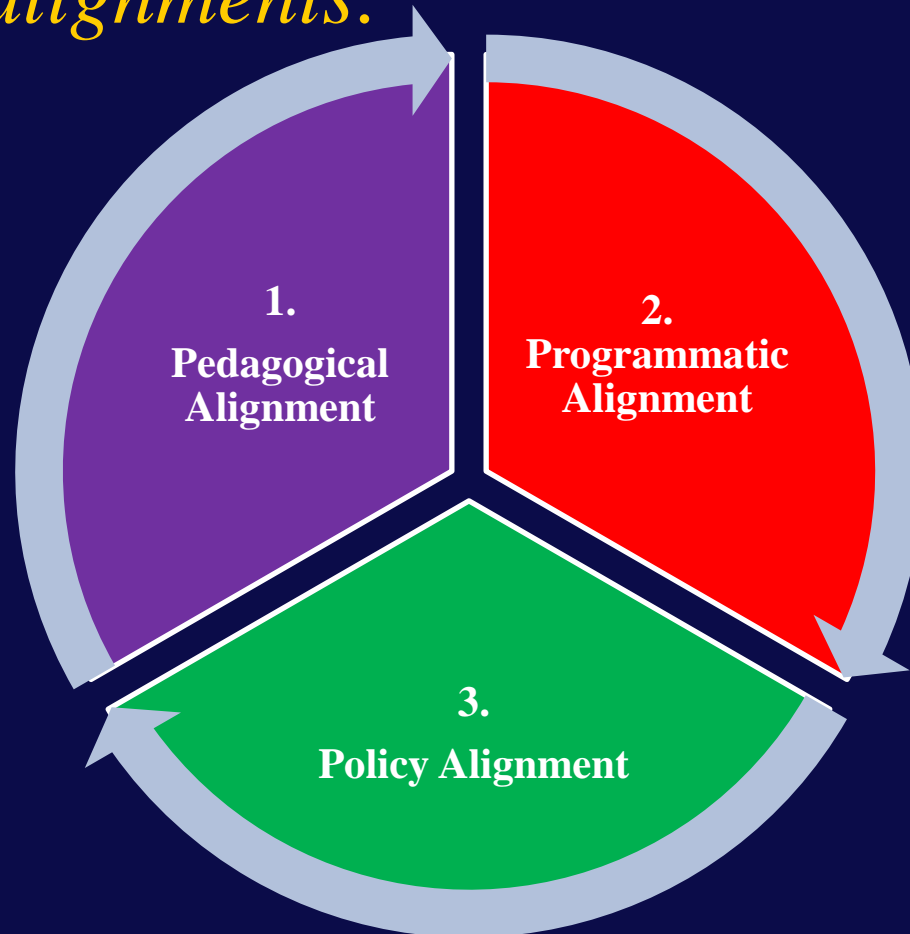# *Gear 8: Linkages to K-12 and Other Services*

- *For decades, research has indicated that it is critical for preschools to be linked to schools, to promote continuity for children*

- *Transition activities have focused on:*
  - Preschool visiting days to kindergarten for children and parents
  - Exchange of records from pre-K to K
  - Joint training for pre-K and K teachers
  - Visits by K teachers to pre-K

- *Limited link in looking at how standards, curriculum, and assessments are aligned*

*Sources:* Kagan, S. L., & Neuman, M. J. (1998). Three decades of transition research: What does it tell us? *Elementary School Journal*, *98*(4), 365-380.; Love, J., Logue, M. E., Trudeau, J., Thayer, K. (1992). Transitions to kindergarten in American schools: Final report of the National Transition Study. Portsmouth, NH: US Department of Education.

# Gear 8: Linkages to K-12 and Other Services

- *Transitions can be described through three different alignments:*



1.
Pedagogical Alignment

2.
Programmatic Alignment

3.
Policy Alignment

# *Gear 8: Linkages to K-12 and Other Services*

- *Alignment Type I: Pedagogical*
  - Alignment from the perspective of pedagogy and instruction (or aligning what goes on in the instructional interchange and setting)
    - Standards and assessment
    - Curriculum
    - Joint professional development
    - Parenting education curriculum

# *Gear 8: Linkages to K-12 and Other Services*

- *Alignment Type II: Programmatic*
  - Alignment from the programmatic perspective goes beyond instruction, encompassing the entire program, including families and communities:
    - Community schools initiatives
    - Child friendly schools
    - Parenting education/family support programs
    - Ready schools efforts
    - SPARK initiative
    - School-based reform initiatives

# *Gear 8: Linkages to K-12 and Other Services*

- *Alignment Type III: Policy*
  - Providing continuity in the policies that impact many programs and many ECD settings:
    - **Governance**
      - Establishing joint administrative/ministerial units
    - **Finance**
      - Equalizing fiscal investments between early education and K-12 education
      - Equalizing compensation and benefits for staff working in pre and primary settings
    - **Professional Certification**
      - Requiring comparable certification for all who work with children, birth to age 8
    - **Equalizing access for preschool children**

# Part III:

## Challenges We Need to Consider: The Light Bulbs
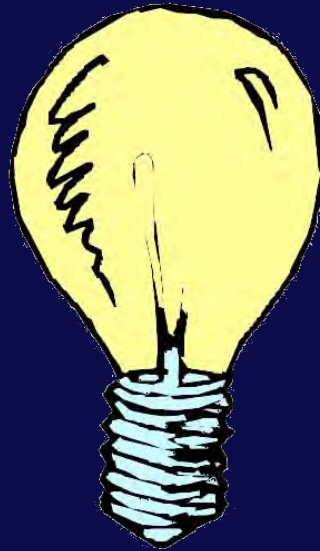
# *Biggie 1: ECE as the Social Penicillin?*

- *How do we deal with the over-promising and the under-delivering on ECE?*

- *Need a much stronger press on the importance of quality and developing understandings of what constitutes quality*

- *Need to have a forward think plan*

  *to stave off the coming criticism*

- *Need to be certain that we emphasize underinvestment, despite the growing investments*

# *Biggie 2: Schoolification*

- *What is "Schoolification" doing to ECE?*
  - ECE is being "schoolified"
    - Standards
    - Assessments
    - Teacher Quality
    - More ECE is moving into Departments of Education
  - What are the long term consequences?
  - What is being gained and what is being sacrificed?

# *Biggie 3: ECE - Promoting or Preventing Equity?*

- *Have promoted ECE on basis that it prepares children for school and therefore decreases population differentials:*
  - Access to ECE
  - Segregated programs despite data
  - Programmatic quality differentials
  - Staff quality differentials
  - Infrastructure differentials
  - Investment differentials

# *Biggie 4: Federalism*

- *What is the federalist stance doing to ECE?*
  - OLD STANCE: Federally funded; nationally cohered; locally implemented
    - Feds: Head Start, CCDF, Food Programs
    - National: Organizations took transcendent positions to bind/establish a field
    - States: Program Regulation
  - NEW STANCE: States Bowling Alone
    - RTT-ELC, Own Standards, Own Assessments
- *What does a 50-state focus do to a nascent field that is just beginning to cohere?*
- *How cost-efficient/effective is this?*

# *Biggie 5: Scale Up – Fact or Fiction?*

- *Dominant approach to ECE policy has been to try it small and scale it up*
  - Prudent, "slow down" strategy for a nation reluctant to commit to full scale ECE services
  - Too little consideration given to the fact that scaling up is a separate, complex process
  - Not many effective scale-ups in a 50 state country
- *Focus on the winners, not the strugglers [ELCF]*
  - Systemic endorsement of equity divide

# *Biggie 6: Linking ECE and CWD*

- *Funded ECE and IDEA as though they are separate worlds*

- *Limited ability to learn from one another at the leadership/policy/advocacy level*
  - IDEA has much to teach ECE about individualized educational planning, meeting individual needs, linkages with parents, attention to integration
  - ECE has much to teach IDEA about inventive governance, financing, standards
  - *Need more communication vehicles!!*

# Part IV:

## *Moving Forward: Aiming for the Stars*

# *Considering What We Do Next: The Stars*

★ *FOCUS*

★ *PLAN*

★ *REACH*

# *Star I: Focus on Quality and Quantity*

- *Historically, increasing the <u>quantity or the number</u> of services has been the goal*
  - Did this because we're concerned about providing equitable access, and it's easier to garner public dollars for poor children

- *Misdirected Emphasis: Not one study shows any positive impact, and some show negative impact, of low quality or mediocre programs*
  - Vast majority of all programs in the country are low or mediocre in quality because we are not investing in quality
  - Wasting resources and raising false expectations without a quality emphasis

# *Star II: Focus on Systems, Not Programs*

- *Historically, we have funded programs (e.g., Head Start, Pre-kindergarten), the direct services for young children*
  - While absolutely necessary, this is not sufficient to imbue long-term change for all young children
  - Without funding the infrastructure, we are undermining quality programs and quality outcomes for all children

# *Star III: Focus on All Ages, Not Some/One*

- *Historically, the focus has been on funding one age group, usually 4-year-olds in centers*
  - Did this because we could visualize it and because it didn't challenge our values about not intervening too early

- *Need to respect these values and the research that says:*
  - 80% of our brains are formed by age 3
  - Much of brain development happens in the earliest months of life

- *Means conceptualizing a birth to 8 system with optional and diverse services*

# *Star IV: Focus*

- *Focus on <u>governance and finance</u>*
  - Imbue it with durability, accountability, and authority
  - Figure out which agency is responsible for what
- *Focus on <u>rewarded professional development</u>*
  - Across all programs and personnel
- *<u>Get standards right</u>*
  - Innovate and respect the child

# *Star V: Plan Well*

- *Develop a collaborative and operationally realistic plan for all children*
  - Vision the ideal
  - Vision for policy, practice, and research
  - Start when children are very young
  - Plan for the long-term
  - Build in regular review of the plan

# Star VI: Reach

**ALWAYS AIM FOR THE HIGHEST STAR!**