How States Are Using the ECTA and DaSy System Frameworks and Self-Assessment to Improve State Systems

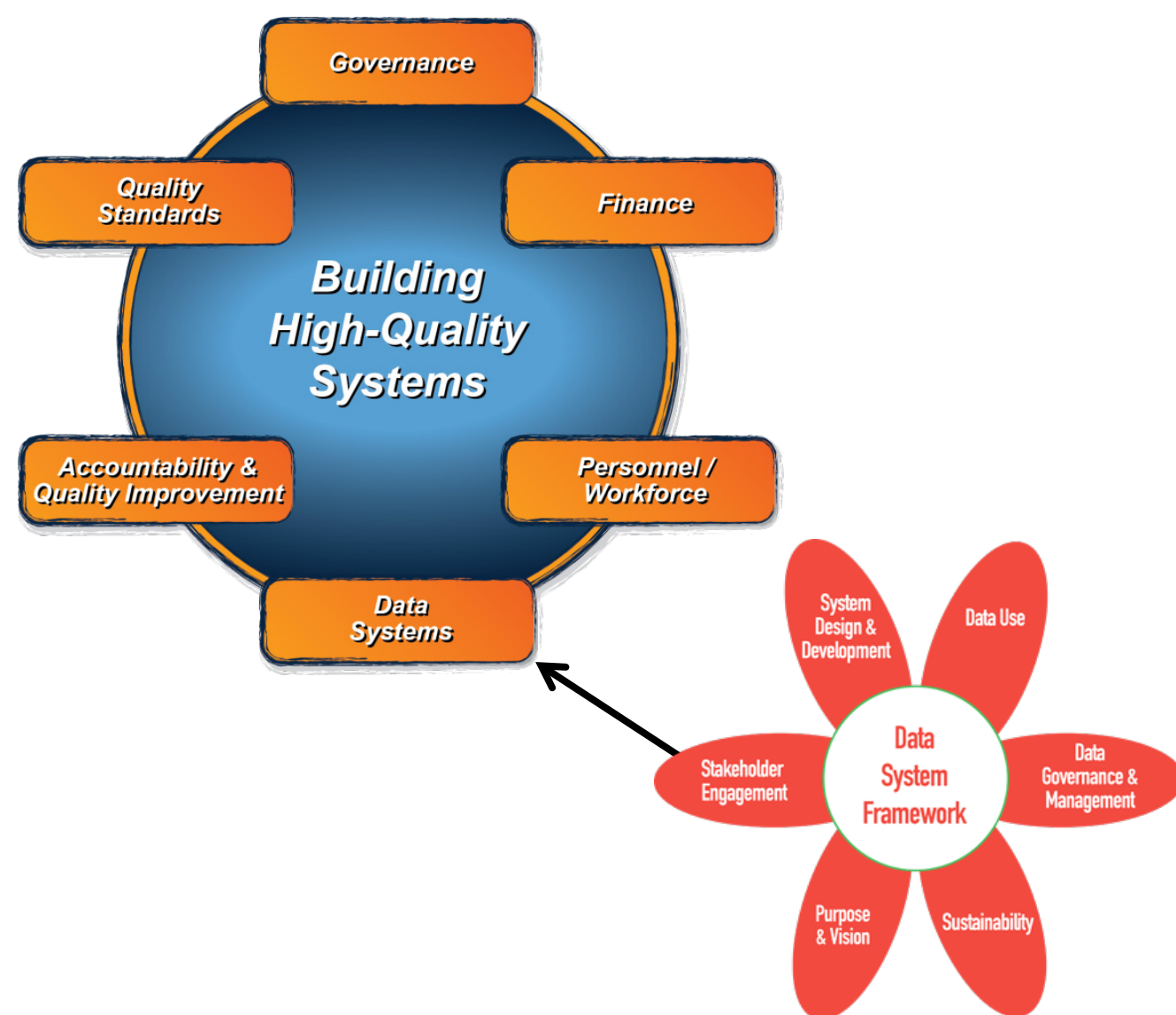**Abby Schachner, Katy McCullough, Debbie Cate, Grace Kelley, and Sharon Walsh**

Background

✳ The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) and the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy) were funded by the Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to develop System Frameworks (see Posters #1 and #2) and an accompanying Self-Assessment tool (see Poster #3) for IDEA-funded state early intervention (EI; Part C) and early childhood special education (ECSE, Section 619) programs.

✳ State EI and ECSE programs are using these tools to look at their EI and ECSE systems and data systems to address this question: what does a state need to put in place to encourage, support, and/or require local implementation of evidence-based practices that result in positive outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families?

✳ In the poster, we describe how five states are using these tools: Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, New Jersey, and Virginia.

System Framework

✳ The System Framework was developed to guide state EI and ECSE staff in evaluating their current systems, identifying potential areas for improvement, and developing more effective, efficient systems.

State Specific Examples

	Colorado	Delaware	Idaho	New Jersey	Virginia
State Program	ECSE & K-12 Special Ed	ECSE	ECSE & K-12 Special Ed	EI	EI
Framework Components					
Governance		X	X	X	
Finance		X	X	X	X
Personnel/Workforce		X	X	X	
Data Systems	X	X	X	X	X
Assessment & Quality Improvement		X	X	X	
Quality Standards		X	X	X	
Use & Benefits					
Evaluate current system and monitor future progress	X	X	X	X	X
Identify improvement strategies and highest priority needs	X	X	X	X	X
Demonstrate/document benefits of EI/ECSE systems for collaboration		X	X		
Coordinate cross-sector planning efforts	X	X	X	X	
Consider important aspects of governance for system improvements	X				X
Guide fiscal management and oversight					X
Plan enhancements to state personnel development system	X	X		X	
Identify critical questions and data elements for programmatic data system					X
Integrate into state longitudinal data system (SLDS)		X			
Guide improvements to use of data at state and local level	X				X

Colorado was able to establish a joint data governance plan and joint data committee in order to link data as children transition between the EI and ECSE programs.

In Delaware, the framework brought a new focus on the need for well trained professional staff in all of the inclusive environments that enroll children with disabilities.

The work highlighted the importance of each of the System Framework components for ALL early childhood programs - not just ECSE.

Idaho was able to examine the quality of their state special education system from 3 to 21 years of age as a whole.

New Jersey found that the System Framework had the unanticipated benefit of helping them to identify expectations and desired competencies for local providers as part of some restructuring efforts occurring across the state.

The framework helped Virginia focus on the most important areas and identify their highest priority needs for improving fiscal management and to plan for developing a new online data system.
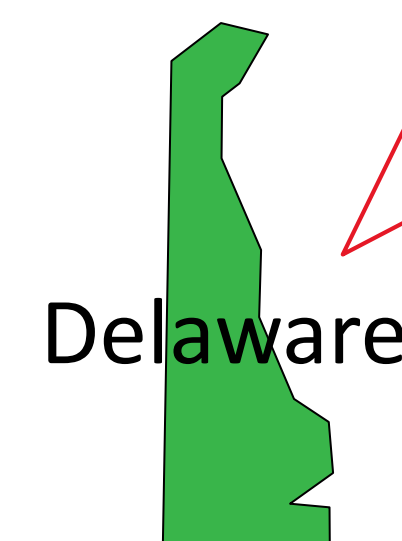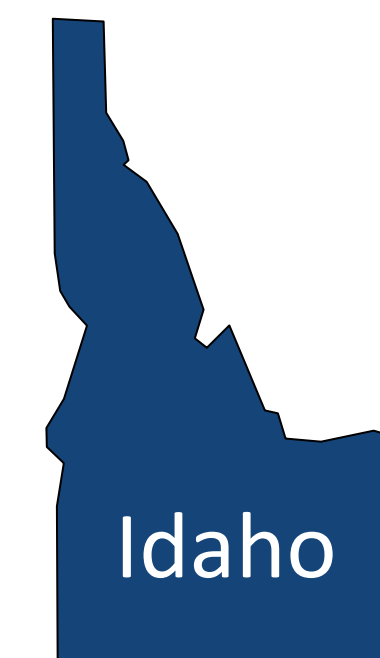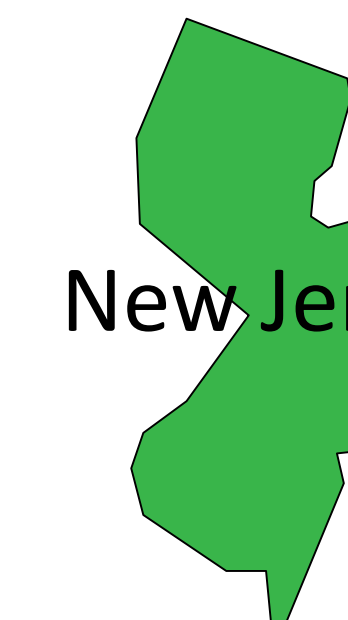
Discussion

✳ State EI and ECSE programs are using these tools to:
– **evaluate** their current systems;
– **identify** potential areas for improvement;
– **demonstrate** and **document** the benefits of these systems to other early childhood, education or health programs to foster collaboration;
– **enhance** the quality of their data and data systems; and
– ultimately **build** more effective, high-quality systems that support implementation of evidence-based practices.

✳ These tools can be used across early childhood programs and initiatives to
– **collaboratively** build coordinated, high-quality systems and infrastructure supports to improve services delivery for all children; and
– help states improve or enhance their **integrated data systems** and the quality of data to use to improve systems and outcomes.

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