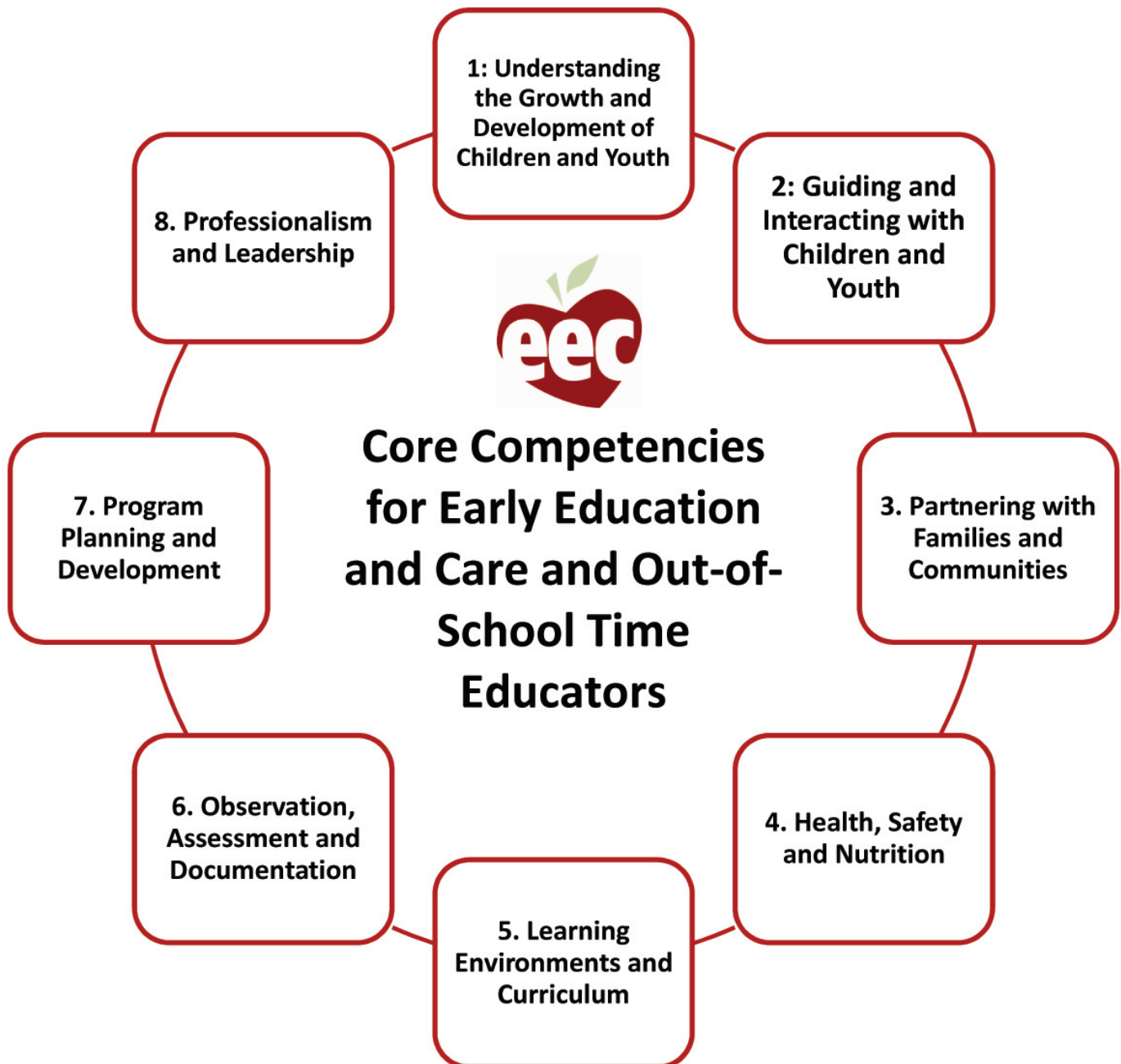




MASSACHUSETTS
**Department of
Early Education and Care**



*Core Competencies for Early Education and Care and Out-of-School
Time Educators*

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Introduction

Why core competencies are important:

An important first step for any workforce development system is defining *core competencies*, or the knowledge and skills that are necessary to be effective in working with children and youth.

The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) defines core competencies as, “The range of knowledge and observable skills that adults working with young children need to facilitate child learning and development, linked to early learning guidelines¹.”

The development of a core set of indicators is a critical step in building the foundation of a strong workforce. Bellm (2005) states,

“Competencies can help the field as a whole to clarify its goals across all age groups (from infants through elementary school students), job categories (including program administration) and career stages (entry-level, mid-career and advanced). Competencies can help individuals identify what they are trying to accomplish, articulating the body of knowledge and skill that can be developed through training and education. And for parents and the general public, a system of teacher competencies can help build wider awareness of and respect for early care and education as skilled professional work.”

Core competencies provide educators with a framework for professional development -- a road map -- leading them to new credentials, or guiding ongoing professional development at various career stages. Educators must be able to “recognize themselves” as professionals based on the knowledge and competencies they have gained through education and practical applications rather than being defined solely by the setting in which they work or by their degree attainment. A competency-based system must be designed to be flexible, with a variety of pathways for educators to achieve the required competencies.

Core competencies not only include what is essential to work directly with children and youth but also the leadership skills that are required to ensure program quality and accountability as well as advancement of our field. The Massachusetts Core Competencies are being integrated into professional development educational opportunities across the field and will eventually become the basis for approved training, coursework development, ongoing evaluation of staff, and for awarding credentials.

In addition, the Core Competencies align with the five categories of indicators EEC has identified for the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that EEC began developing in the spring of 2008 to “assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early education and care and after-school

¹ <http://nccic.org/pubs/goodstart/pdsystem.html>

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settings”². As educators gain skills and knowledge that increase their level of competency, the programs they work in are better positioned to attain higher levels of quality on the QRIS scale (see Appendix C).

How the Massachusetts Core Competencies were developed:

Massachusetts is among several states developing and implementing core competencies for early education and care. Massachusetts is, however, unique in creating a single set of core competencies for all types of care and for educators working with children and youth from birth to 14 years old, 16 with special needs. The following goals were established to guide the development of the 8 core competency areas and accompanying indicators:

- To create a set of shared expectations that is reflective of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for all educators, youth workers, and administrators working in the early education and care and out-of-school time field.
- To capture the breadth and depth of what educators, youth workers, and administrators in the field should know and be able to demonstrate.
- To guide the development of an infrastructure of coursework and other professional development opportunities.
- To provide early education and care and out-of-school time educators, youth workers, and administrators with a framework for professional development.
- To recognize professionalism and leadership in the early education and care and out-of-school time field.
- To create a system for recognizing achievements in educational attainment and awarding credentials in the early education and care and out-of-school time field.
- To serve as a foundation to educate parents and guardians on the elements (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) of a quality educator, youth worker, and administrator.

Development of the Massachusetts Core Competencies began almost as soon as EEC was established in July 2005 with research into current knowledge and related standards. Accreditation standards from NAEYC, NAFCC, MSAC, EEC’s regulations, Head Start standards, preschool standards and guidelines, and the competencies identified by other states were researched. Foundational research for the core competencies is evident in EEC’s annual Workforce Reports³

EEC is particularly indebted to two groups of early education and out-of-school time stakeholders who volunteered countless hours to this task, the Massachusetts Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force (Workforce Task Force) and the Professional Development Workgroup of the EEC Advisory. In July 2007, EEC, in collaboration with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley and the Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education (now

² Mitchell, A., *Alliance for Early Childhood Finance, July 2005*; Stair Steps to Quality, United Way Success by Six.

³ The Department of Early Education and Care issues an annual report on the development and status of workforce initiatives at EEC. These reports are available at http://www.eec.state.ma.us/kr_research.aspx.

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the CAYL Institute⁴) convened the Workforce Task Force. The Workforce Task Force was comprised of more than 50 members representing early education and out-of-school time, colleges and universities, state agencies, professional organizations, training organizations, workforce development agencies, private business partners, and private funders. The Core Competency Subcommittee of the Workforce Task Force developed robust competency areas, subcategories, and indicators, all in 12 months' time. At the recommendation of the Workforce Task Force, EEC established the Professional Development Workgroup of the EEC Advisory to further the accomplishments of the Workforce Task Force. The Professional Development Workgroup reviewed, refined, and polished the core competencies into this document.

From the beginning, those committed to this task understood that their work must also be informed by the actual use of the competencies and that competencies would continue to evolve. EEC will establish formal mechanisms to gather feedback from the early education and out of school field over the next year. After which, a workgroup will be convened to review and revise the core competencies to reflect this input.

Organization of the Core Competencies:

The Massachusetts Core Competencies are intended to apply to child care centers, out-of-school time programs, family child care homes, public preschool programs, private schools, preschool and kindergarten programs, and Head Start programs. Each of the 8 Core Competency Areas has its own section describing the knowledge and skills early care and education and out-of-school time educators must be able to demonstrate in their work with children, families, and colleagues.

Because inclusion of all children and youth and cultural competency are such essential components of competency, the decision was made to integrate related indicators throughout the 8 core competency areas rather than creating separate core competency areas for these important topics.

Core Competency Areas:

There are 8 areas of competence that are addressed in the Massachusetts Core Competencies for early education and care and out-of-school time educators. Each competency area is a broad topic area that is essential caring for and educating young children and youth.

Area1: Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth

- Understanding how children and youth learn, the adult's role in positively supporting individual growth and development, the implications of early brain development, and applying research and human development theories regarding children and youth.
- Creating a safe, nurturing, and challenging learning environment that encompasses developmentally appropriate practices, establishes foundations for future growth, and engages young people in building social skills and knowledge.

⁴ The Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education is now the Community Advocates for Young Learners (CAYL) Institute.

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Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth

- Using appropriate guidance techniques for specific ages and developmental stages based on realistic and developmentally appropriate expectations for the behavior of children and youth and appropriate guidance techniques for specific ages and developmental stages.
- Recognizing factors that impact behavior and implementing strategies to help children and youth develop self-regulation, self-concept, coping mechanisms, self-comfort skills, and positive interactions with their peers and adults.

Area 3: Partnering with Families and Communities

- Understanding diverse family structures and influences, and using culturally competent practices to support and communicate with individual children and families.
- Building respectful, reciprocal relationships through a shared understanding with families and cultivating meaningful family and community involvement.
- Connecting families to community resources, and taking advantage of opportunities for appropriate, positive collaborations with other family, school, and community services.
- Collaborating and working with community resources such as public schools.

Area 4: Health, Safety, and Nutrition

- Ensuring children and youth's safety, promoting sound health practices, and recognizing and responding to child abuse and neglect.
- Providing nutritious meals and snacks.
- Implementing appropriate prevention, preparedness, and health and safety practices.

Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum

- Recognizing characteristics of high quality environments and utilizing strategies such as: consistent schedules and routines, transition activities for moving from one activity to another, interesting materials and activities appropriate by age group, and arranging a classroom to enhance children's learning.
- Understanding developmentally appropriate curriculum models that prepare children and youth for success in school.

Area 6: Observation, Assessment, and Documentation

- Understanding the goals, benefits and uses of observation and assessment in early childhood and out-of-school time environments.
- Using observation, assessment, and documentation to adapt curricula to meet the individual learning needs of children.
- Using systematic observations, documentation, and other effective and appropriate assessment strategies in partnership with families and other professionals serving the same children.

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Area 7: Program Planning and Development

- Understanding the importance of relationships and positive communication among colleagues work together to create a nurturing learning environment for children and youth.
- Planning, organizing, and implementing best business practices including a shared understanding with staff and families of regulations, applicable laws, policies, staff supervision, and quality standards.
- Modeling behaviors and supporting staff through professional development plans, building healthy relationships with colleagues and families, providing developmentally appropriate practices, and connecting with community resources.

Area 8: Professionalism and Leadership

- Knowing and adhering to ethical guidelines and professional standards.
- Practicing continuous, collaborative learning that shares knowledge, relies on reflective practice, makes informed decisions, integrates knowledge from a variety of sources and advocates for best practices.
- Mentoring others to develop leadership skills.
- Maintaining confidentiality.

Core Competency Subcategories:

Each of the 8 core competency areas is further divided into subcategories that address the specific aspects of that competency.

Core Competency Indicators:

Each subcategory has multiple indicators which describe what an educator should know and demonstrate related to that specific subcategory and competency area.

Each indicator is divided into three levels defined as follows:

Initial describes what an educator who is working with children and youth in a supervised position or role, without administrative or supervisory responsibility, should know and be able to demonstrate.

Mid describes what an educator who is working directly with children and youth and who may have administrative or supervisory responsibilities should be able to demonstrate.

Advanced describes what an educator, leader, or mentor in an administrative, supervisory, mentoring, or training role should be able to demonstrate.

At each level it is expected that that the educator would have successfully met the competency indicators of the previous level.

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It is unlikely that all of an educator's knowledge and skills could be described by a single indicator level. Depending on individual strengths and expertise, an educator is more likely to be at the initial level for some indicators, at the mid-level for others, and at the advanced level for still others. The flexibility to demonstrate that educators have different levels of competency based on different indicator allows educators, supervisors, and mentors to identify specific areas for professional growth.

Benefits and uses of Core Competencies for our field:

Early Childhood and Out- of- School Time Educators can use core competencies to:

- Recognize their own professionalism
- Assess their level of competency through reflective practice
- Identify the skills and knowledge they still need to acquire
- Create an individualized professional development plan

Program Administrators and Supervisors can use core competencies to:

- Recognize their roles as leaders in the field
- Describe the knowledge and skills required in different staff positions
- Assess staff needs to create a professional development plan for their program
- Evaluate staff members to identify strengths and areas for improvement
- Mentor staff to support their professional growth
- Recognize achievements in professional development and leadership
- Articulate a pay scale based on competency level

Providers of Professional Development can use core competencies to:

- Organize and identify professional development offerings
- Inventory available professional development and training to identify gaps and redundancy
- Connect professional development offerings to regulatory requirements, required qualifications, and higher education

Higher Education can use core competencies to:

- Facilitate articulation and the transfer of credits between institutions
- Create flexible academic options by giving credit for credentials, certificates, and prior learning
- Develop relevant coursework that connects theory to practice
- Prepare early childhood and out-of-school time educators for roles in a variety of settings

State and Local Agencies can use core competencies to:

- Make policy and funding decisions that advance the competency of educators and the quality of programs
- Develop initiatives, qualifications, and regulations that advance the competency of educators and program quality

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- Align the skills and knowledge needed to work across a variety of early education and out-of-school time settings
- Articulate career ladders (lattices) that map professional growth and career options
- Devise a framework for a comprehensive professional development system
- Identify common goals for inter-agency collaboration such as leverage training resources

Advocates can use core competencies to:

- Educate parents, policymakers, and the general public about early education and out-of-school time and the need for competent professionals
- Reinforce the professionalism for the field of early education and out-of-school time

Families can use core competencies to:

- Make informed decisions about their early education and out-of-school time options
- Appreciate knowledge and skill required in early education and out-of-school time
- Support public and private investments, incentives and initiatives that encourage and facilitate professional competency

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A Quick Reference to the Core Competency Areas and Subcategories

<p>Core Competency Area 1: Understanding the Growth and Core Development of Children and Youth</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. General principles of child and youth developmentB. Physical developmentC. Sensory developmentD. Language developmentE. Cognitive developmentF. Social-emotional developmentG. Individual differences in development	<p>Core Competency Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Acceptance of all children and youthB. Relationships/interactions with children and youthC. Supporting children's and youth's interactionsD. Child guidanceE. Groups and environments	<p>Core Competency Area 3: Partnering with Families and Communities</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Respect for diverse cultures and communitiesB. Communication/relationships with familyC. Family involvementD. Resources to support familiesE. Improving partnerships with schools and communities
<p>Core Competency Area 4: Health, Safety, and Nutrition</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Hygiene and health promotionB. Preventing and responding to infectious disease and managing chronic illnessC. Mental healthD. Basic safety and emergency preparednessE. Safeguarding children and youthF. NutritionG. Food handling/environmentH. Physical fitness and activity	<p>Core Competency Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Creating the learning environmentB. Curriculum	<p>Core Competency Area 6: Observation, Assessment, and Documentation</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Observing and recordingB. Communicating with families and staff in observation and assessment processC. Using appropriate assessment methodsD. Planning for individualized learningE. Facilitating referrals based on observation and assessment
<p>Core Competency Area 7: Program Planning and Development</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Regulations, requirements, and policiesB. Program planning, evaluation, and continuous improvementC. Personnel issuesD. Managing resources	<p>Core Competency Area 8: Professionalism and Leadership</p> <p>Subcategories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Professional attitudes, behaviors, and ethical standards/professional guidelinesB. Communication skillsC. Relationships and team buildingD. Professional developmentE. Leadership	

Core Competency Areas, Subcategories, and Indicators

Competency Area 1: Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth

Early care and education and out-of-school time educators must understand and be able to articulate the typical stages of growth and development (developmental milestones) and individual and developmental variations. These variations include experience, health, cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and communication strengths and abilities as well as the many factors that can influence the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth of all children and youth.

It is critical for educators to know and be able to apply commonly accepted research and development theories regarding children and youth, the implications of early brain development, the understanding of how children and youth learn; and the adult’s role in positively supporting individual growth and development. Educators must know how to create safe, nurturing, and challenging learning environments that encompass developmentally appropriate practices, establish foundations for future growth, and engage young people in building social skills and knowledge.

Competency Area 1: Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth			
<i>Initial</i>		<i>Mid</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
A. General principles of child and youth development:			
1	Ability to explain and recognize stages and milestones in physical, social, emotional, sensory, linguistic, and cognitive development in each child and youth from birth to age 14, 16 with special needs.	Demonstrates understanding of theories of development, that development can be uneven across domains, that the developmental domains are interconnected, and the role of play and recreation in growth and development.	Works collaboratively with staff to continuously assess and implement activities and learning environments that promote optimal development for each child and youth.

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A. General principles of child and youth development: continued:			
2	Recognizes and explains various factors such as how culture, nutrition, health, socio-economic status, experience, and family styles influence growth and development.	Applies knowledge of factors that influence growth and development to create safe and supportive environments where each child and youth can be engaged in learning experiences that foster individual development.	Creates and assesses plan for the implementation and ongoing modification of curriculum and learning activities and environmental adaptations to support the growth and development of each child and youth, including diverse learners.
B. Physical development:			
3	Recognizes and is able to explain developmental milestones and variations in gross motor and fine motor development.	Applies knowledge of developmental milestones and developmental variations in gross motor and fine motor development to engage each child and youth in learning experiences that encourage each child and youth's development.	Creates and assesses plan for the implementation and ongoing modification of curriculum and learning activities and environmental adaptations that support the physical development of each child and youth, including diverse learners.
4	Recognizes and is able to explain the importance of each child and youth's participation in gross and fine motor activities and physical fitness; encourages each child and youth to participate in gross and fine motor activities according to their individual interests and abilities.	Makes modifications to learning activities, materials, and adaptations to equipment to accommodate the physical growth and development of each child and youth that encourages each child and youth to participate.	Guides staff in the development, evaluation and ongoing modification of learning experiences that encourage gross and fine motor development that meets the physical growth and development of each child and youth.

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C. Sensory development:			
5	Recognizes and is able to explain developmental milestones; awareness of variations in sensory development and perception including sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound.	Applies knowledge of sensory integration and the continuum of development to create learning activities that stimulate the sensory development of each child and youth, identify possible concerns, and coordinate with appropriate staff to make referrals when necessary.	Creates and assesses plan for the implementation and ongoing modification of curriculum and learning activities that support the sensory development of each child and youth; and guides staff in the development of learning activities that stimulate all learning modes including sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell for each child and youth.
6	Recognizes and is able to explain the importance of encouraging participation in activities that support the sensory development of each child and youth according to their individual interests and abilities.	Makes modifications to activities, materials, and adaptations to equipment to address the sensory development needs of each child and youth.	Guides staff in the development, implementation and modification of curriculum and learning activities that encourage each child and youth to participate according to their interests and abilities.

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<i>D. Language development:</i>			
7	Recognizes and is able to explain developmental milestones and variations in receptive and expressive communication development.	Applies understanding of language development to create learning activities that promote the language development of each child and youth.	Analyzes and applies current theory and research on promoting language acquisition and guides staff in the development, implementation, and ongoing modification of learning experiences that promote the language development of each child and youth.
8	Understands their role in communicating with children and youth including active listening, and reading non-verbal cues; recognizes the importance for each child and youth to engage in appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication with others including other children, youth, and adults.	Makes modifications to activities, materials, and adaptations equipment to accommodate the linguistic and language development needs of each child and youth.	Guides staff in the development, assessment and implementation of learning activities and modifications that enhance communications and foster language development among children, youth and adults.
9	Recognizes the influence of culture on language development and is able to identify children and youth who are English language learners.	Creates an inclusive learning environment where linguistic and cultural differences are evident and respected.	Guides staff in developing strategies to support limited English proficient learners to enhance language acquisition of each child, youth, and family.
<i>E. Cognitive development:</i>			
10	Recognizes the importance of brain development and influences of learning; is able to explain developmental milestones and variations in cognitive development in children and youth.	Applies knowledge of cognitive development theories to develop learning activities based on individual experience, interests, pace of development, strengths, and abilities of each child and youth.	Guides staff in development and implementation of learning experiences and activities that promote cognitive development and its impact across developmental domains.

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<i>E. Cognitive development: continued:</i>			
11	Recognizes and explains the value of actively engaging each child and youth in meaningful, project based experiences.	Plans and implements activities and environments that support project-based and age appropriate experiences which foster cognitive development in each child and youth.	Provides guidance to staff about the value project-based experiences and assesses staff ability to implement curriculum, activities, and environments that are conducive to cognitive development.
<i>F. Social-emotional development:</i>			
12	Recognizes and can explain the importance of supporting each child’s and youth’s emotional development including self regulation and self concept.	Provides learning experiences and environments that promote the development of positive social/emotional skills; develops strategies that encourage and promote self regulation and self concept in each child and youth.	Analyzes and applies research on best practices that acknowledge the importance of social-emotional development and the impact on other domains.
13	Identifies realistic expectations for each child and youth’s social-emotional development and models meaningful interactions and relationships among children, youth, and adults.	Develops and implements pro-active strategies to promote cooperative social behavior based on individual as well as group needs.	Provides guidance to staff on appropriate expectations for each child and youth and the effects of environments on social-emotional development.
<i>G. Individual differences in development:</i>			
14	Recognizes and explains that each child has individual characteristics and needs based on level of development, temperament, culture, language, learning style, ability, gender, and experience.	Provides a learning environment that is inclusive and respectful of each child and youth’s individual interests, strengths, and abilities.	Provides guidance and support to staff in implementing an inclusive environment for all children and youth. Assesses effectiveness of medications and accommodations and makes necessary changes with staff input.

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G. Individual differences in development: continued:			
15	Recognizes and identifies typically developing characteristics as well as signs of possible developmental delays, disabilities, or special needs in each child and youth.	Demonstrates an understanding of common developmental delays and disabilities, and their effect on development; plans activities and environments accordingly; able to identify resources and services in community to support children and youth.	Guides families and staff in identifying resources and services in the community to support the development of each child and youth; sustains relationships and partnership with resources and services.

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Competency Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth

Early care and education and out-of-school time educators need to have realistic and developmentally appropriate expectations regarding the behavior of children and youth and understand developmentally appropriate guidance techniques. Educators are responsible for knowledge of factors that may impact behavior and implement strategies to support children and youth develop self-regulation, self-concept, coping mechanisms, self-comfort skills, and positive interactions with their peers and adults.

Competency Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth			
<i>Initial</i>		<i>Mid</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
A. Acceptance of all children and youth:			
1	Recognizes and demonstrates respect for the individuality of each child and youth; supports a program environment that ensures each child and youth feels respected, valued, and accepted.	Plans and implements activities and environments that recognize and respect the individuality of each child and youth; guides staff in developmentally appropriate guidance strategies.	Mentors staff in the development, implementation, and modification of activities and adaptation of environments to ensure each child and youth is respected and accepted; ensures staff respect each child, youth, and family.
2	Encourages each child and youth to develop social relationships that recognize and value similarities and differences.	Develops activities and environments that respect and value the diversity of the group; appreciates and promotes positive interactions among groups.	Establishes culture that is accepting and respectful of individual differences; provides leadership and guidance to staff to ensure that the individual differences of each child, youth, family, and staff is respected and accepted.

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<i>B. Relationships/interactions with children and youth:</i>			
3	Models positive values, such as genuineness, caring, honesty, trust, helpfulness, and respect for differences when resolving conflicts.	Ensures that each child and youth has a positive and supportive relationship with adult(s) in the program who provides individual attention. Recognizes that strong adult-child and adult-youth relationships support optimal growth and development.	Guides staff in balancing individual and group needs. Demonstrates realistic expectations and provides opportunities in regard to the emotional needs, interests, social abilities, and physical needs; ensures that each child and youth have opportunities for individual attention/interactions.
4	Interacts appropriately and establishes positive, supportive, relationships with each child and youth. Builds a trusting relationship with each child and youth, providing physical and emotional security.	Interacts with each child and youth as an individual based on their own strengths, learning styles, and needs. Models active listening and responds to children’s and youth’s needs, ideas, and questions; demonstrating interest and support.	Continuously assess program and encourages staff self reflection; provides guidance to staff to ensure appropriate interactions with children, youth, and families. Practices reflective supervision strategies and assesses need for professional development.
<i>C. Supporting children’s and youth’s interactions:</i>			
5	Understands the importance of and supports social interactions of each child and youth through play, recreational activities, art/dramatic activities and learning experiences.	Develops activities and plans environments that actively support children’s and youth’s developing self-concept.	Monitors, evaluates, and guides staff to ensure that the program climate and environment promote developmentally appropriate positive interactions.

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D. Child guidance:			
6	Establishes and demonstrates clear and consistent rules, routines, and limits and uses positive reinforcement, logical and graduated consequences to guide behavior.	Practices and models developmentally appropriate guidance strategies that promote positive behaviors, problem-solving, and self-regulation; models behavior expectations based on the age and developmental level of each child and youth.	Guides staff in setting clear and consistent rules, routines, and limits that take into consideration individual and cultural differences; and positive reinforcement and redirection. Assesses and applies different techniques to promote positive and supportive relationships with and among children and youth.
7	Assists children and youth in recognizing, labeling, accepting, and expressing their feelings, and needs in appropriate ways. Assists children and youth in listening and responding to others.	Facilitates problem-solving with and among children and youth; uses appropriate strategies to guide each child and youth in identifying additional opportunities for expression and communicating differences with each other.	Builds relationships with children, youth, families, staff, schools, social service agencies, etc. that encourage consistent communications regarding guidance and problem solving. Assesses problem solving and teaching strategies and makes appropriate modifications.
E. Groups and environments:			
8	Engages in interactions that create a sense of belonging and connection among children and youth.	Establishes a social climate that encourages self expression, participation, interdependence, cooperation and responsibility.	Establishes clear policies on social-emotional climate that reflect program and positive family and community values. Provides staff support for interventions that help children and youth practice rules and develop self-control.
9	Provides a supportive environment where children and youth can learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as a group.	Demonstrates understanding of how the environment affects child and youth behavior; facilitates smooth transition of individuals and groups between activities.	Monitors, evaluates, and provides guidance for social-emotional curriculum that involves children and youth; establishes individual and group rules and behavior policies.

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Competency Area 3: Partnering with Families and Communities

Building respectful, reciprocal relationships through a shared understanding with families and cultivating meaningful family and community involvement is critical. Early care and education and out-of-school time educators must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of parents as a child’s first teacher, diverse family structures, and influences that enable educators to positively support and communicate with individual children and families. This includes implementing culturally competent practices, knowing about and connecting families to community resources, and keeping abreast of opportunities for appropriate, positive collaborations with other family, school, and community services.

Competency Area 3: Partnering with Families and Communities			
<i>Initial</i>		<i>Mid</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
A. Respect for diverse cultures and communities:			
1	Recognizes and values that each child and youth develops in the context of family, language, culture, and community; development is impacted by the family and community socioeconomics, values, and traditions.	Creates a climate that is respectful of diversity and sensitive to the characteristics of each family.	Develops and implements policies and practices that are respectful and inclusive of all families.
2	Understands, accepts, and is respectful of family values, practices, and expectations. Recognizes that there are differences in families’ child rearing practices and family composition.	Collaborates with families to accommodate child rearing practices.	Promotes staff growth and development in understanding cultural influences on parenting, problem solving, communicating, and relating with families.

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B. Communication/relationships with families:			
3	Understands and values parents/guardians as the primary teacher of their children and youth.	Uses multiple mediums to regularly communicate with families regarding program activities, policies, and practices; communicates about each child and youth's development, progress, and interests; maintains child, youth, and family confidentiality.	Establishes policies and procedures that ensure ongoing communication with families.
4	Establishes rapport with families through regular communication; builds relationships with families based on mutual respect; and responds appropriately to family questions and/or seeks support as needed.	Communicates regularly and effectively with families about each child and youth's development, progress, and interests; encourages feedback from families and incorporates it into practice; engages families in identifying and working toward a shared vision, goals, and philosophy for the program.	Develops policies and procedures that are collaborative and reflective of meaningful family involvement; promotes policies and practices that reflect a family strengthening philosophy; evaluates the program's responsiveness to family and community needs and makes recommendations for changes.
C. Family involvement:			
5	Welcomes and engages families in daily program activities.	Plans collaboratively with families to identify and implement opportunities for family involvement.	Creates program systems/procedures that assure meaningful family involvement and partnerships; assesses and plans diverse opportunities for family involvement.
6	Maintains a warm, accepting, and responsive environment that fosters family involvement.	Assists children, youth, and families in transitions from home to school and between settings within and among programs. Informs families of changes that influence the daily operation of the classroom.	Creates and implements programmatic plans, in partnership with families, to support children, youth, and families; elicits feedback from families to improve policies and practices.

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<i>D. Resources to support families:</i>			
7	Seeks information on community resources and communicates with families on resource options as needs are identified.	Works collaboratively with families to identify needs of children, youth, and families. Develops resource guides to make appropriate referrals.	Facilitates access to 7 resources that address the needs of families; establishes and maintains relationships with schools, agencies, and institutions to assure services are family-centered.
8	Capable of recognizing when children, youth, and families are experiencing challenges and shows sensitivity to the situation.	Recognizes and addresses current events and social issues that affect the lives of children, youth, and families.	Creates support plans for children, youth, and families experiencing challenges.
<i>E. Improving partnerships with schools and communities:</i>			
9	Engages in daily dialogue about child and youth's life including community and school day with children, youth, and families.	Understands age/grade specific learning and development goals and outcomes; creates out-of-school time curriculum/activities that support school day learning.	Establishes a strong working relationship between families, teachers, school administration, and community to ensure seamless social, emotional and academic development. Provides appropriate resources to families with children and youth transitioning to school.
10	Engages in regular dialogue with school about the program and its role in the community. Participates in school events.	Develops communication mechanisms with school day teachers regarding student behavior and academic performance. In school and out-of-school educators identify activities and materials that will complement each other's lesson plans.	Establishes (with principal and classroom teachers), clear policies and procedures regarding shared space, information sharing with respect to grades, progress reports and financial stability.

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Competency Area 4: Health, Safety, and Nutrition

Young children and youth’s physical and emotional health and safety is vital for fostering competence in all developmental areas. Early care and education and out-of-school time educators must understand and be able to ensure children and youth’s safety, promote sound health practices, recognize and respond to child abuse and neglect, and provide nutritious meals and snacks. This includes knowledge of a broad array of prevention, preparedness, and implementation of health and safety practices. Educators must be able to communicate information regarding children and youth’s health and safety to families while maintaining confidentiality.

Competency Area 4: Health, Safety, and Nutrition					
<i>Initial</i>		<i>Mid</i>		<i>Advanced</i>	
A. Health: hygiene and health promotion:					
1	Awareness of importance and ability to communicate with families regarding the health and well-being of their children and youth.	Provides information to families about group health issues. Encourages families to talk with regular health care provider about children and youth’s health and well-being, including immunizations. For children and youth in care ensures that the program has appropriate information on health care providers and state health insurance subsidies to support access of children, youth, and families to health insurance and medical homes.		Establishes linkages and monitors system for documenting immunization records. Supports families in ensuring that children and youth have access to health insurance and a regular source of medical care. Makes health care related referrals as necessary.	
2	Helps children and youth practice appropriate hand washing techniques and other self care activities.	Develops and implements routines and activities to support children and youth developing appropriate hand washing practices and other self care activities.		Develops plans and policies around appropriate self care activities and ensures the availability of supplies and materials necessary to operate the program in a healthy and safe manner.	

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A. Health: hygiene and health promotion: continued:			
3	Implements age appropriate oral health practices and routines.	Integrates oral health into curriculum and routines.	Establishes linkages with community-based oral health resources to promote oral health screening of all children and youth in care. Integrates oral health into appropriate program policies and procedures.
4	Observes children and youth daily to check for evidence of health concerns and recognizes children and youth with individual health needs. Communicates overall concerns of health issues within the program when appropriate.	Knows and responds to individual health needs of each child and youth and communicates with staff/co-workers to ensure the needs of each child and youth are met.	Collects, analyzes, and applies current information regarding health concerns in the community. Works with all health care consultant and/or other health care professionals in the community to meet the needs of children, youth, and staff.
B. Health: preventing and responding to infectious disease and managing chronic illness:			
5	Practices specified universal precaution procedures.	Supervises other staff in practice of universal precautions.	Establishes and monitors training and supervisory system to ensure universal precautions are followed.
6	Recognizes symptoms of common illness and communicates related concerns to appropriate persons.	Recognizes and responds to signs of infectious disease and implements appropriate program policies.	Develops and implements program policies regarding exclusion and re-admission of sick children and youth, and systems for preventing and responding to infectious disease outbreaks. Works with health consultant and other health care professionals to develop and implement a plan to communicate with families and take other preventative measures.

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<i>B. Health: preventing and responding to infectious disease and managing chronic illness: continued:</i>			
7	Aware of chronic conditions and individual children and youth health plans. Appropriately manages environment for possible triggers and treatment.	Develops and implements Individualized Health Care Plans for children and youth with chronic illness with family, child’s primary care provider, and/or health consultant.	Establishes and monitors program practices and identifies resources for ongoing development and implementation of Individualized Health Care Plan for each child and youth with a chronic illness. Ensures program and staff have appropriate resources, training to ensure continued development of best practices.
8	Follows specified guidelines in administering medications with specific training and with supervisory support.	Implements and ensures appropriate documentation of medication administration; demonstrates knowledge of possible allergies or complications with medications and intervenes appropriately in case of emergency.	Establishes and monitors systems related to the administration of medication and ensures that staff receive appropriate training and support.
9	Manages environment to reduce exposure to health and safety hazards, including allergy and asthma inducing substances for children and youth in care.	Develops and implements plans for maintaining healthy and safe environments for all aspects of the program and monitors for possible hazards.	Establishes and monitors program practices and identifies resources for ongoing development and implementation of healthy and safe environments.
<i>C. Health: mental health:</i>			
10	Understands that the overall well-being of children and youth includes social/emotional health. Recognizes behavioral symptoms of stress in children and youth.	Demonstrates an ability to see the overall mental health including social-emotional health of children, youth, and families. Identifies supports for children, youth, family and staff for addressing concerns about social-emotional health. Understands that stress and trauma have an impact on development and behavior and seeks appropriate consultation. Adapts curriculum to respond to social-emotional events.	Promotes positive mental health in all aspects of program design. Establishes a system for accessing mental health supports and works collaboratively to address concerns at the child, youth, and program level. Provides appropriate referral information for children, youth, and families.

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<i>D. Safety: basic safety and emergency preparedness:</i>			
11	Is aware of environment and the potential for hazards, corrects those that are correctable, and alerts appropriate authority to any others.	Maintains and assesses safe environments inside and outside. Anticipates potential safety hazards and acts to prevent them.	Evaluates the appropriateness of all environments and activities, as well as the potential hazards and risks, and assures that actions are taken to ensure children, youth, and staff safety.
12	Actively interacts and oversees children and youth to ensure safety both indoors and outdoors.	Plans and implements program strategies that respond to the safety needs of individual and groups of children and youth.	Maintains appropriate levels and standards for state and federal regulations. Develops and documents contingency plans to maintain appropriate supervision of children at all times.
13	Knows and follows safety regulations and emergency plans. Participates in emergency and disaster drills.	Plans and implements emergency and disaster drills in conjunction with administrators including maintenance of emergency supplies. Maintains a system to account for all children, youth, and staff in the event of an emergency or disaster.	Develops and documents contingency plans for emergency situations and disaster drills. Establishes linkages with community emergency services providers and ensures that all program emergency materials/resources are current and in adequate supply.
<i>E. Safety: safeguarding children and youth:</i>			
14	Releases children and youth to authorized persons only. Follows security system of adult access to program.	Ensures that staff follow proper procedures for releasing children and youth to authorized persons only. Implements plans for assuring children and youth are released to authorized persons only.	Establishes and monitors systems for ensuring children and youth only released to authorized persons, including issues such as additional precautions around restraining orders.

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<i>E. Safety: safeguarding children and youth: continued:</i>			
15	Recognizes possible signs of child abuse and neglect and follows procedures as a Mandated Reporter of child abuse and neglect with training and supervisory support.	Identifies, documents, and reports suspected abuse and neglect of children and youth in an immediate and appropriate way.	Develops policies and protocols for reporting child abuse and neglect, including supporting staff and communicating with families. Works with community agencies and professionals to protect children and youth.
<i>F. Nutrition and physical activity: nutrition:</i>			
16	Recognizes that the nutritional needs of young children and youth change as they grow and develop.	Develops and implements policies on family education and program guidance on nutrition. Explains to families and other caregivers the importance of good nutrition in optimizing healthy development.	Designs programs and ensures resources to respond to young children and youth's nutritional needs.
17	Recognizes, supports, and models meals and snacks that reflect a developmentally appropriate, safe, and nutritionally balanced diet. Follows instructions for providing appropriate meals for children and youth with special dietary needs.	Implements program guidelines on food brought to program and prepared at programs. Plans and prepares meals and snacks that reflect a nutritionally balanced diet based on the USDA guidelines, including meeting the special dietary needs of individual children and youth. Discusses individual children and youth's food preferences with families and accommodates when possible.	Evaluates program to determine how well the nutritional or special dietary needs of young children and youth are being met.
18	Teaches children and youth about nutrition and healthy food choices.	Bases educational activities on nutritional information and ensures that activities are responsive to multiple cultures.	Coordinates food activities with cultural calendar and relevant community events.

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G. Nutrition and physical activity: food handling/environment:			
19	Practices safe food handling and observes general sanitation practices. Identifies and disposes of spoiled and contaminated foods.	Implements and instructs food handling practices to prevent food borne illness and food spoilage.	Develops and communicates program policy to staff and families. Ensures availability of training and resources for staff to promote safe food handling.
20	Recognizes the need to serve food and participate in a positive, relaxed meal time.	Plans, implements, and participates in meals in such a way that supports a positive, relaxed and social atmosphere.	Designs program and strategies to support providers in serving food in a positive, relaxed, social atmosphere.
H. Nutrition and physical activity: physical fitness and activity:			
21	Recognizes and models the importance of and provides time and space for active play both indoors and outdoors and appropriate periods of rest for all children and youth.	Plans and models/participates in age appropriate opportunities for children and youth to be active and have adequate rest, including adapting active play activities based on the needs of all children and youth. Provides information for families about children and youth's need for physical activity.	Designs program and ensures resources to provide age appropriate opportunities for all children and youth to be active and have adequate rest, including inclusion of all children and youth.

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Competency Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum

Early care and education and out-of-school time educators need to understand and utilize strategies that are characteristic of high quality environments such as consistent schedules and routines, transition activities for moving from one activity or place to another, offering interesting materials and activities appropriate by age group, and how to arrange a classroom to enhance children’s learning. They must know, understand and be familiar with a variety of developmentally appropriate curriculum models, as well as state expectations to prepare children and youth for school.

Competency Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum			
<i>Initial</i>		<i>Mid</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
A. Creating the learning environment:			
1	Understands the importance of and maintains a learning environment that meets the needs of the wide range of abilities and interests of individual children and youth.	Designs, creates, and adapts a learning environment that is accessible and inclusive of individual needs and interests.	Guides others to ensure the creation, implementation, maintenance, and evaluation of accessible and inclusive program environments.
2	Recognizes and supports individual exploration, discovery, abilities, and stimulation in the learning environment.	Designs and implements a learning environment that supports individual exploration, discovery, abilities, and stimulation.	Guides others to ensure the creation, implementation, and evaluation of learning that supports individual exploration, discovery, abilities, and stimulation.
3	Utilizes a broad array of rich materials in the learning environment that are responsive to individual children and youth interests and needs, beyond materials related to culture and diversity.	Identifies and provides a broad array of materials that are developmentally appropriate and represent children, youth, and families in the program and community.	Guides and assures that the program immerses children and youth in a rich learning environment.

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B. Curriculum:			
5	Understands that schedules, indoor and outdoor activities, routines, and transitions need to be appropriate for children and youths ages, abilities, individual and families needs.	Develops, implements, and evaluates curriculum and instruction appropriate for the age and developmental level of the children and youth in the program.	Guides staff in providing curriculum and instruction that address developmental domains across all content areas.
6	Carries out planned learning experiences to support curriculum that is individualized and developmentally appropriate for all children and youth, including indoor and outdoor activities, and transitions.	Creates balanced and comprehensive curriculum approaches that are developmentally appropriate and promote the inclusion of all children and youth.	Guides staff, using research based knowledge to differentiate instruction to address and accommodate individual children's strengths and abilities across developmental domains.
7	Knows which children and youth have Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) or Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and is aware of the contents and implements components with appropriate guidance.	Identifies and addresses needs of children and youth with disabilities including implementation of IEP's or IFSP's; integrates activities and strategies from IEP's or IFSP's into program curriculum; promotes inclusion of all children and youth with special learning needs.	Ensures appropriate resources and guidance are available to staff to implement components of IEP's and IFSP's. Ensures that appropriate staff have access to children and youth's IEP's and IFSP's as necessary.
8	Implements developmentally appropriate engaging, hands-on curriculum that covers all developmental domains.	Applies knowledge to plan activities that are developmentally appropriate, engaging, and hands on for the ages of children and youth, in all areas of math, science and social studies, and the arts.	Guides staff on how to design and implement developmentally appropriate, engaging, and hands on activities for the ages of children and youth served in all curriculum areas including math, science and social studies, and the arts.

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B. Curriculum: continued:			
9	Promotes children’s and youth’s language and literacy development by using a variety of developmentally appropriate materials that reflect the diversity of individuals and groups of children and youth.	Uses knowledge of children’s and youth’s language and literacy development to design learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate.	Guides staff and assures that the program immerses children and youth in a language and literacy learning environment.
10	Implements program practices that promote optimal physical, mental, nutritional, and oral health for all children and youth.	Plans and implements learning experiences that promotes optimal physical, mental, nutritional, and oral health.	Guides and assures staff in creating learning experiences which promote optimal physical, mental, nutritional, and oral health.

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Competency Area 6: Observation, Assessment, and Documentation

Well prepared educators understand the goals, benefits, and uses of observation and assessment in early childhood and out-of-school time environments and how to use this information to adapt the program to meet the needs of each child in care. Systematic observations, documentation, and other effective and appropriate assessment strategies in partnership with families and other professionals serving the same children positively impacts the development and learning of those children and youth

Competency Area 6: Observation, Assessment, and Documentation			
<i>Initial</i>		<i>Mid</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
A. Observing and recording:			
1	Recognizes the importance of daily observation of children and youth.	Observes and documents children and youth's development in terms of skills, abilities, strengths, needs, interests, learning styles, participation in the program, and progress without personal bias or judgment.	Distinguishes the characteristics and appropriate uses of various formal and informal observation and assessment tools. Ensures that all documentation is appropriate, objective, used properly, and individualized.
2	Shares observation and experiences working with children and youth.	Combines observations with information from staff and families in form of progress reports to document the growth and development of individual children and youth.	Ensuring all documentation is used appropriately and a system is in place to ensure documentation such as progress reports are completed in an appropriate and timely manner.
B. Communicating with and involving families and staff in observation and assessment process			
3	Awareness of the importance of collaborating with families and staff to gather information on children and youth while maintaining confidentiality.	Communicates effectively and positively with staff and families, both verbally and in writing, about child and youth observation and assessment information.	Provides guidance and support to staff on effective and culturally responsive communication regarding involvement of families in the observation and assessment process.

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C. Using appropriate assessment methods:			
4	Identifies various techniques for gathering information on children and youth's progress.	Effectively uses assessment tools and adapts screening and assessment procedures to meet the needs of all children and youth, the culture of their family, and the program.	Selects valid, reliable and appropriate tools and guides and trains staff in using assessment results to modify environment, curriculum and to improve child and youth outcomes.
D. Planning for individualized learning:			
5	Awareness of how observation informs decisions about curriculum and environment.	Analyzes observation results and to modifies curriculum and the environment to meet the needs of all children and youth.	Develops, implements, and evaluates curriculum and environment based on the sum of observation and assessment results to accommodate the developmental needs, interests, and diversity of children and youth.
E. Facilitating referrals based on observation and assessment:			
6	Identifies the importance of referring children and youth for screening or assessment to identify potential developmental delays or disabilities. Recognizes and lists procedures and resources for making referrals for potential issues that arise from observation.	Supports the family in accessing and making effective referrals for diagnostic screening and/or assessment. Assists staff and families in accessing extra services, and/or other supports as needed.	Develops ongoing relationships with agencies and community resources to facilitate screening, assessment, and provision of additional services and supports.

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Competency Area 7: Programming Planning and Development

Early education and care and out-of-school time educators need to understand the importance of relationships and positive communication among colleagues, especially those working together to create a nurturing learning environment for children and youth. Additionally, program managers must understand planning, organizing, and implementing best business practices. Developing a shared understanding with staff and families of regulations, applicable laws, policies, staff supervision and quality standards and how to meet regulations and standards is essential to quality environments for children. Management should support staff and serve as role models in regard to professional development plans, building healthy relationships with colleagues and families, providing developmentally appropriate practices, and connecting with and utilizing resources.

Competency Area 7: Program Planning and Development			
<i>Initial</i>		<i>Mid</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
A. Regulations, requirements, and policies:			
1	Recognizes need for compliance with applicable requirements and the need for program policies and procedures as addressed in EEC orientation.	Explains requirements in promoting quality programs. Supports others in identifying and rectifying areas of non-compliance. Identifies practices needing to be implemented in order to meet requirements.	Oversees and supports staff in maintaining compliance with all applicable requirements.
2	Understands the importance of maintaining accurate and up-to-date documentation and record keeping. Maintains appropriate confidentiality.	Maintains and reviews children and youth's records and ensures that relevant information is recorded and shared with appropriate program staff.	Identifies the records the program needs to maintain. Reviews and oversees staff, child, youth, and program records to ensure that they are up to date and accurate. Ensures confidentiality of staff. Ensures forms meet program needs and adapts accordingly to meet program needs.

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A. Regulations, requirements, and policies: continued:			
3	Knows and understand importance of implementation and adheres to program policies and procedures on culturally responsive environment and supports inclusion of all children, youth, and families	Establishes and implements culturally responsive environment in accordance with program policies and procedures.	Designs and implements program policies and procedures that establish a culturally responsive environment. Ensures that policies and procedures align with cultural and beliefs of children, youth, families, and staff in program. Ensures staff have appropriate resources to maintain cultural competent.
B. Program planning, evaluation, and continuous improvement:			
4	Knows and adheres to program’s mission statement, philosophy, policies, and procedures. Provides appropriate input and feedback.	Models and ensures awareness of others of program mission, philosophy, policies, and procedures. Shares information with staff and families.	Develops and communicates a sound program mission, philosophy, policies, and procedures according to national standards and current research on best practices. Solicits input from staff, families, and/or Board members in policy development and revision.
5	Recognizes the need for planning and evaluating the program and actively participates in ongoing evaluation of the classroom and /or the program.	Articulates processes and uses the results of ongoing evaluation to inform program/classroom development. Reflects on practice and continually self-assesses.	Oversees comprehensive program evaluation and uses results to promote continuous program improvement including ability to develop an action plan to address program needs and compliance issues.
6	Describes role in planning the use of and the evaluation of the program environment and provides suggestions for improvement. Knows how to report concerns.	Participates in daily management of the program environment and identifies needs for improvement.	Assesses and manages program environment needs to assure a safe, accessible, and supportive environment for children and families and staff.

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C. Personnel Issues:			
7	Knows role, responsibilities, and function and follows established lines of communication. Knows programs personnel policies and procedures. Read staff handbook.	Assists other staff in understanding roles, responsibilities and program procedures. Implements established lines of communication.	Designs and implements program's organizational structure, job descriptions and responsibilities, personnel policies and procedures, and hiring practices. Ensures staff know and understand program expectations and connection to program organizational structure.
8	Work respectfully and effectively with other colleagues. Communicates to supervisor potential changes in personal schedule and any need for additional planning time. Understands how to support substitute teachers and other new staff in carrying out roles and responsibilities.	Provides guidance to staff to work as a team and provides guidance to staff under direct supervision to assess performance, improve practice and promote individual growth. Informs staff and anticipates changes that influence the daily operation of the program/classroom.	Orients and supports staff on best practices. Acts as an interface between staff and family and assures that supervision, evaluation, and feedback are objective, constructive, and free of prejudice.
D. Managing Resources:			
9	Uses time and materials efficiently; shows care in use and maintenance of materials.	Assists in planning and implementing program budget. Tracks income and expenses including inventory of supplies, materials, and equipment. Identifies and discusses various resources and/or fundraising strategies that can enhance the program.	Applies skills such as budgeting, cash flow, grant writing, and fundraising to develop, implement and evaluate policies related to financial matters. Analyzes and selects resources for employee benefits to improve recruitment and retention. Seeks additional funding opportunities and collaborates with community partners to ensure unduplicated costs.

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D. Managing Resources: continued:			
10	Promotes a positive public image for program through appropriate behavior and attire.	Implements marketing and promotional strategies that enhance community awareness of the benefits of the program. Contributes to and participates in activities designed to enhance community awareness of benefits of program.	Develops, implements, and evaluates marketing plan and promotional strategies to secure positive outlook in community.

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Competency Area 8: Professionalism and Leadership

Early education and care and out-of-school time educators know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to their practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate and share knowledge, who reflect on and have a critical perspective of their work, make informed decisions, and integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are role models and advocates for best educational practices and policies.

Competency Area 8: Professionalism and Leadership			
Initial		Mid	Advanced
A. Professional attitudes, behaviors, and ethical standards/professional guidelines:			
1	Employs professional behaviors and work habits such as dependability, time management, good hygiene, appropriate attire, and follows direction.	Models and promotes professional work habits, behavior and attitudes such as welcoming, engaging, courteous, and respectful behavior.	Promotes a professional working environment that supports educators working with children and families.
2	Recognizes symptoms of work related stress and seeks assistance when appropriate.	Applies strategies to prevent and address work related stress.	Assesses the effectiveness of stress prevention and intervention strategies and makes changes and referrals as needed.
3	Abides by professional code of ethics related to their practice.	Models and promotes the ethical behaviors in the code of ethics related to their profession. Teaches educators and staff how to use the code of ethics to articulate professional values.	Integrates and ensures compliance with the code of ethics into practice, policies and instruction. Advocates for the ethical treatment of children, their families and educators and staff.

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A. Professional attitudes, behaviors, and ethical standards/professional guidelines: continued:			
4	Identifies one’s own personal, social, and cultural contexts, and reflects on how these contexts influence teaching practice and relationships with children, youth, staff, and families.	Demonstrates understanding of one’s own personal, social, and cultural contexts, and reflects on how these contexts affect teaching practice. Regularly analyzes, evaluates, and synthesizes teaching practice to make appropriate changes that more fully serve children, youth, colleagues, and families. Aware of program policies on cultural competence and culture of program and provides feedback on issues.	Aware of cultural strengths and challenges of program. Creates a culturally competent environment; develops and implements policies that are culturally competent. Assess and address issues of program and individual staff cultural competence on ongoing basis. Seeks feedback from staff families, children, and youth.
5	Respects children, families, and colleagues of diverse backgrounds and abilities	Models and promotes increasing competence in understanding and responding to diversity such as culture, language, ethnicity, and abilities.	Integrates and ensures inclusive and non-discriminatory practices.
6	Respects the privacy and confidentiality of information about children, youth, and families.	Models and promotes respect for the privacy and confidentiality of child and family information.	Ensures that staff maintain confidentiality of information about children, youth, and families.
B. Communication skills:			
7	Uses effective oral and written communication, and non-verbal and listening skills.	Models and promotes communication in multiple formats that is responsive to the needs of children, youth, families, and staff in multiple formats.	Establishes and integrates an effective communication system with families, staff, and other professionals. Demonstrates advanced communication skills such as public speaking and advocacy.
8	Recognizes a conflict and takes appropriate action.	Models and promotes appropriate conflict resolution strategies. Negotiates and resolves conflicts and addresses concerns through appropriate conflict resolution strategies.	Establishes procedures and ensures professional development opportunities for staff for resolving conflicts and promoting positive group interactions.

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C. Relationships and team building:			
9	Takes responsibility and works independently.	Models and promotes consistent performance of job duties and responsibilities in a professional manner.	Guides others in professional performance of responsibilities as a mentor and resource.
10	Staff confidentiality		
11	Works collaboratively as part of a team and recognizes the role of teamwork in effective staff relationships.	Facilitates a cooperative work environment by promoting positive communication and facilitating relationships among team members. Contributes as a responsible team member.	Articulates and applies principles of group dynamics and positive communication supports. Develops and implements policies designed to facilitate collaborative relationships and positive environments. Provides professional development opportunities that promote relationship and team building.
D. Professional development:			
12	Identifies professional resources and organizations. Understands the importance of having current knowledge and research to enhance professional development and skills on an ongoing basis.	Models and promotes the use of professional resources and organizations, and current research to enhance professional development and improve skills on an ongoing basis. Seeks out and utilizes supports (both monetary and professional) to allow progress to improved practice to continue.	Participates in and promotes collaborative learning using effective, reliable, and current research, knowledge, and practice.

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D. Professional development: continued:			
13	Understands and meets minimum requirements for ongoing training and professional development such as regulatory and contractual requirements, and program standards.	Creates, maintains, and implements an individual professional development plan. Provides guidance to staff under direct supervision to assess performance, improve practice and promote individual growth. Assists staff under direct supervision to follow own professional development plan. Seeks out and utilizes supports (both monetary and professional) to promote progress to improved practice.	Develops and implements a professional development plan for self and establishes overall program professional development goals for staff. Ensures that staff have access to ongoing opportunities that enhance their professional skills.
14	Engages in and values supportive working relationships that include mentoring opportunities.	Develops and serves as a mentor and resource for others, including guiding educators in identifying individual needs, strengths and interests, and seeks advice from supervisor and others as a mentee.	Serves as a mentor to others in the field by providing guidance, resources, support, and encouragement of continued professional education. Promotes mentorship in staff and program.
15	Uses information from supervision and self-reflection as a learning tool to grow, enhance skills, and improve practice.	Examines own practices, seeks feedback from supervisors and colleagues and reflects on own performance to advance professional growth and improve practice.	Reflects on own practice and continually evaluates staff performance as a basis for program planning, modification, and professional development. Demonstrates reflection on own supervisory skills, and professional and educational practices. Evaluates current trends in early childhood education and out-of-school

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			time and revises practices as appropriate from a local, national, and global perspective.
E. Leadership:			
16	Recognizes early education and care and out-of-school time as a profession.	Develops and assumes a leadership role in the program and/or early education and care and out-of school-time community.	Promotes leadership and helps staff and others to develop leadership skills. Serves in a leadership capacity in professional organizations through direct service, membership, advocacy and other activities.
17	Recognizes families' role as advocates for their child and community.	Partner with and empower families to make decisions about their child's care and education in the program and community.	Exhibits knowledge of child and family advocacy issues. Engages families as partners to advocate for children, youth, families, and community.
18	Develops own ability to advocate for self and program.	Advocates on behalf of self, children, families, and program. Has a working knowledge of national, state, and local legislation and public policy that affects children, families, programs and the profession.	Serves as an advocate and Empowers staff to advocate for self, children, families, and the program.

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Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Accommodate (Accommodation):	Appropriate changes to curricular, materials, and environments to meet the unique needs of children and youth and enable all children and youth to participate in daily routines and activities. <i>Source: Nebraska, Ohio, SpecialQuest</i>
Action Plan:	A document that includes a list of tasks and specific steps required to achieve a goal. An action plan includes detailed information about what will be done, who will be responsible, when the task will be completed, and how the task will be measured for achievement of goal. Action plans are flexible and can be changed to respond to situations not anticipated at time of development. <i>Source: Nevada, SpecialQuest</i>
Adaptation(s):	Adaptations are changes to individualize activities or environments to meet the unique needs of children and youth; enables children and youth to participate in daily routines and activities. <i>Source: SpecialQuest</i>
Advanced Indicator level:	An individual at the advanced level is an educator, leader, or mentor with an advanced level of knowledge/skill that is working with children and/or in an administrative, supervisory, mentoring, or training role.
Assessment:	The process of gathering information through the use of multiple tools to evaluate a child's abilities and skills at a given point and measure progress over time with respect to developmental domains. Assessment happens on a continual basis, is embedded in regular curriculum and schedule, and results in instructional changes that improve outcomes for children and youth. <i>Source: Massachusetts, Ohio</i>
Child:	Any person under fourteen years of age, or sixteen years of age with special needs. <i>Source: Massachusetts (EEC Regulations)</i>
Cognitive Development:	The development of the learning structures and systems in the brain that begins at birth and continues through adulthood, which includes the construction of thought processes such as memory, problem solving, means-end behavior, concept attainment, exploration of objects, preverbal and verbal communication (both vocalizations and gestures), and decision making. <i>Source: US DOE http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/glossary/c.asp</i>

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Confidentiality:	Ensuring that information on children, youth, families, and staff working in the program is only available to those who need the information to do their work. <i>Source: Nebraska</i>
Continuous Improvement:	The process of examining where a program stands, tracking progress on long- and short-term goals, evaluating strengths and weaknesses, identifying obstacles to goals, reflecting on current successes and failures, and identifying needed resources and information. <i>Source: SpecialQuest</i>
Credential:	A document or record certifying that an individual has met a defined set of requirements set forth by the grantor of the credential usually related to skills and knowledge and may include demonstrations of competence. <i>Source: NCCIC</i>
Culturally Sensitive:	The ability to work sensitively and respectfully with children, youth, families, and other staff honoring the diversity of their cultures, spoken languages, religion, sexual orientation, and racial and ethnic groups. <i>Source: Ohio</i>
Culture:	All of the socially transmitted behavior patterns, values, beliefs and knowledge that are typical of a population or community of people at a given time. <i>Source: Ohio</i>
Curriculum:	Planned, sequenced program of study and daily structured activity based on what is age appropriate, skill levels of children, and Massachusetts standards. The topics within the areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and technology/engineering, history and social science, comprehensive health, and the arts that will be addressed through planned and unplanned program activities. <i>Source: EEC Regulations, Ohio</i>
Developmental Delay:	A significant delay in the function of one or more of the following areas: cognitive development, physical development, communicative development, social emotional development, or adaptive behavior or skills development or a diagnosed physical or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in a substantial delay in function in one or more of such areas. <i>Source: Nebraska</i>
Developmental Domains:	Key areas of development in children and youth. Domains typically include the following areas of development: social, emotional, cognitive, language and literacy, physical (large motor, fine motor, perceptual/sensory), and creative. <i>Source: Nevada, Ohio</i>

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Developmentally Appropriate:	Teaching children and youth in ways that are responsive to each child’s individual strengths, interests, and abilities which are based on knowledge of children development, learning, knowledge of child and youth and cultural context in which they live. Practices that meet children and youth where they are, as individuals and as a group; help each child and youth reach challenging and achievable goals that contribute to their ongoing development and learning. <i>Source: Nevada, Vermont</i>
Disabilities, children with	Children or youth who need special education and related services. Types of disabilities include the following: specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, or developmental disability. <i>Source: US DOE http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/glossary/d.asp</i>
Diverse Learners:	Children who have special physical, emotional, behavioral, cognitive or linguistic needs or whose primary learning modality is visual, auditory, tactile or kinesthetic, who may require an adaptation in the environment, interaction or curriculum in order to succeed in their program. <i>Source: EEC Regulations</i>
Diversity:	Recognizing and valuing differences in races, gender, ability, age, language, family composition, culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and/or religion. Weaving anti-bias awareness throughout all program activities and learning environments for children and youth. <i>Source: Nebraska and Oregon</i>
Documentation:	Gathering samples of children’s work or your own written observations of children while they work. Documentation might include gathering photos of children working, written recordings of children’s comments, stories and conversations. All of the gathered samples are then reflected upon to determine what interests, learning opportunities, and next steps can be taken to advance children’s learning. <i>Source: Nebraska</i>
Educator:	Any person approved by the Department for the regular care and education of children unrelated to the educator in a location outside the children’s own home for all or part of the day, regardless of his/her level of certification. <i>Source: EEC Regulations</i>
Environment:	All of the physical surroundings and social and cultural conditions that physically and/or emotionally affect children and their ability to learn, grow, develop and survive. <i>Source: EEC Regulations</i>
Family:	A social unit of two or more people who share goals and values, have long-term commitments, and often but not always live in the same household. A

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	<p>family may include children and adults living in the home, adults who are responsible for the long-term care and well-being of the child, a child’s legal guardian, and/or parents who may not live in the same household as the child.</p> <p><i>Source: Ohio</i></p>
Fine Motor:	<p>Skills that use small muscle groups such as hands and fingers and frequently involve hand-eye coordination.</p> <p><i>Source: Nebraska</i></p>
Formal observation and/or assessment	<p>Following accepted rules and standards for use of forms, structure and arrangement of outcomes.</p> <p><i>Source: Ohio</i></p>
Gross Motor:	<p>The movement and action of large and/or major muscle groups.</p> <p><i>Source: Nebraska</i></p>
Head Start:	<p>Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded, comprehensive child development programs that serve children from birth to age five, pregnant women, and their families. These child-focused programs have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families.</p> <p><i>Source: Illinois</i></p>
Inclusion:	<p>The practice in which all children, with a range of abilities and disabilities, participate together and are regarded as equal members of the learning community.</p> <p><i>Source: NCCIC</i></p>
Indicator:	<p>An identified marker/benchmark or value used to indicate the level of an outcome. Indicators in MA Core Competencies indicate an educator’s competency in a given area. There are three indicator levels in the MA Core Competencies, initial, mid, and advanced. <i>See also Advanced Indicator Level, Initial Indicator Level, and Mid Indicator Level.</i></p> <p><i>Source: Illinois</i></p>
Individualized Education Program (IEP):	<p>A written plan and legal document that states a child or youth’s present level of functioning, specifies the goals and objectives for the child or youth, and describes delivery of services including frequency and intensity. The plan includes delivery services for specific areas that need special services; for children 3 to 21 years of age who have been determined eligible for special education.</p>
Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP):	<p>Plan describing the delivery of services to a child with a developmental delay or at risk for a developmental delay (birth through age 2) and the child's family. Components of the plan include: descriptive statement of child's level of functioning in the developmental areas; major outcomes, including criteria, procedures, and timelines, to determine degree of</p>

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	<p>progress and revision of the plan; specific services needed to achieve outcomes; other sources needed by child and family; name of service coordinator; transition plan; and an optional statement of family concerns, priorities, and resources</p> <p><i>Source: New Mexico</i></p>
Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCP):	<p>Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCPs) are required by EEC regulations for any child with a chronic medical condition in an early education and care or out-of-school time program. An IHCP must describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. IHCP's should also include, when, where and how the health services will be provided; who will provide the health services; information regarding the child's transportation needs, including any special needs when taking field trips; and an emergency response plan.</p> <p><i>Source: EEC regulations and Massachusetts Department of Public Health</i></p>
Informal observation and/or assessment	<p>Assessment that does not use standardized or required forms or procedures or not officially recognized or approved as regular means of gathering information.</p> <p><i>Source: Ohio</i></p>
Initial Indicator Level:	<p>An educator working with children in a supervised position/role, without administrative or supervisory responsibility.</p>
Language Acquisition:	<p>The process of learning or acquiring language.</p>
Literacy:	<p>Includes phonological awareness, book knowledge, print awareness, early writing, and alphabet knowledge.</p> <p><i>Source: NCCIC</i></p>
Mandated Reporter:	<p>A professional who has "reasonable cause to believe" that a child under the age of 18 is suffering physical or emotional injury as a result of abuse or neglect. Mandated reporters include doctors, child care providers, teachers, and others who are required by law to make reports. A mandated reporter MUST file a 51A report with the Department of Children and Families if he or she has reason to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred.</p> <p><i>Source: Massachusetts Department of Children and Families</i></p>
Mentor:	<p>A knowledgeable and experienced individual who provides guidance to beginning and experienced professionals to develop skills and reflection of practice. Various strategies of the mentor may include observation and feedback, demonstration of skills, conferencing, and resource provider.</p> <p><i>Source: Ohio</i></p>
Mid Indicator Level:	<p>An educator working directly with children, who may/may not have administrative/supervisory responsibilities.</p>

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Observation:	Gathering information through one or more of the five senses for the basic purpose of determining a child’s individual needs and learning style. An act of recognizing and noting a fact or occurrence often involving a standardized tool or instrument. <i>See also Formal and Informal Observation/Assessment.</i> <i>Source: Nevada, Ohio</i>
Professional Development:	Opportunities for educators to receive ongoing training to increase preparation and skills to care for and educate children and youth. <i>Source: NCCIC</i>
Receptive Communication:	Receptive communication is the process of receiving and understanding a message. <i>Source:</i> http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/dbReceptiveCommunication.pdf
Regulations:	Rule or orders issued by an executive authority or regulatory agency of a government and having the force of law. In Massachusetts, the Department of Early Education and Care is the regulatory agency for early education and care and out-of-school time programs including group, school age, and family child care programs. <i>Source: Nevada</i>
Requirements:	See Regulations
Screening:	Developmental screening provides a brief look at or a snapshot of a child’s development in order to identify areas that may be barriers to development and need further assessment by a specialist. A screening is ideally completed when a child enters the program. <i>Source: Previous workgroup</i>
Self-regulation:	Child’s ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions and maintain focus and attention. <i>Source: Ohio</i>
Social-emotional Development:	The progression of self-awareness and regulation. This growth also allows children and youth to form and sustain social relationships with adults and peers. <i>Source: NCCIC and Nebraska</i>
Special Needs:	Children under sixteen years of age, who, because of temporary or permanent disabilities arising from intellectual, sensory, emotional, physical or environment factors, or other specific learning disabilities, are or would be unable to progress effectively in a regular school program. This may include, but not be limited to, a school age child with disabilities as determined by an evaluation conducted pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, and as defined by the Department of Education in 603 CMR 28.00 et. Seq, or an

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	<p>infant or toddler with an individual family service plan (IFSP) receiving early intervention services. Children who have special educational requirements due to diagnosed learning difficulties, emotional or behavioral problems, or physical disabilities.</p> <p><i>Source: Massachusetts and Wyoming</i></p>
Universal Precautions:	<p>Infection control guidelines designed to protect adults and children from the spread of disease through body fluids.</p> <p><i>Source: Nebraska</i></p>
Youth:	<p>A child between the ages of 6 – 14, 16 with special needs</p>

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Appendix B: Core Competency Alignment with Course Categories

		Categories of Study 7.09 18(b) Educator Qualifications and Professional Development															
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
		Child Growth and Development Birth-eight years	Planning Programs and Environments for Young Children	Curriculum for Early Childhood Settings	Child and Classroom Management	Advanced or Specialized Early Childhood Education or Development	Children with Special Needs, Birth-sixteen years	Infant and Toddler Development, Care and Program Planning	Health and Safety in Early Childhood	Families and Community	Child Care Policy	Supervision or Staff Development in Early Childhood Education	Child Observation, Documentation and Assessment	Child Care Administration			
Core Competency Areas	Area 1: Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth	X				Imbedded throughout the Core Competencies	Imbedded throughout the Core Competencies	Imbedded throughout the Core Competencies									
	Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth				X												
	Area 3: Partnering with Families and Communities												X				
	Area 4: Health, Safety, and Nutrition										X						
	Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum		X	X													
	Area 6: Observation, assessment, and documentation															X	
	Area 7: Program planning and development														X		X
	Area 8: Professionalism and leadership													X	X		X

EEC regulations establish qualifications that individuals working with children from birth up to age 6 (up to 16 with special needs) in group child care programs must meet to be a Teacher, Lead Teacher, Director I, and/or Director II. The regulations establish Categories of Study that define required coursework only for these positions. Although required courses in EEC's regulations are identified by category, EEC's On-Line Professional Development Calendar sorts opportunities by core competency. Educators seeking EEC certification need to know which Core Competency Area relates to which Category of Study for professional development. This table indicates the most direct alignment between the course categories from EEC's regulations and the 8 core competency areas. There is overlap to a lesser degree among other categories and competency areas.

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Appendix C: Core Competency Alignment with Quality Rating and Improvement System

		QRIS Standards Categories					
		1	2	3	4	5	
		Curriculum and Learning	Environment	Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development	Family Involvement	Leadership, Management and Administration	
Core Competency Areas	Area 1: Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth	X		Imbedded throughout the Core Competencies			
	Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth	X					
	Area 3: Partnering with Families and Communities					X	X
	Area 4: Health, Safety, and Nutrition		X				
	Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum	X	X				
	Area 6: Observation, assessment, and documentation	X					
	Area 7: Program planning and development	X	X			X	X
	Area 8: Professionalism and leadership						X

EEC began developing a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) in the spring of 2008. QRIS is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care & education and after-school settings (Stair Steps to Quality, United Way Success by Six, p. 4). A key piece of this system is building on existing resources to put an infrastructure in place that supports programs and educators in meeting and maintaining quality standards (Mitchell, 2005). There are 5 components to the QRIS including standards, monitoring and accountability, program and practitioner supports, fiscal incentives, and family and consumer engagement.

EEC continues to knit together current resources into a professional development system that will facilitate the identification of existing gaps and necessary resources. The relationship between the core competencies and QRIS is an example of interweaving initiatives and ensuring that the systems are in alignment as EEC moves forward in building a comprehensive system of workforce development. This table identifies the most direct alignment between the 5 QRIS standards and the 8 core competency areas.

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Appendix D: Core Competency Contributors

**MA Early Education and Care and Out of School Time Workforce Development Task Force:
Core Competency Committee**

- Phil Baimas, EEC
- Gary Calhoun, Children's Trust Fund
- Maryellen Coffey, BOSTnet
- Evelyn Dalembert, Family Child Care Provider
- Gail DeRiggi, EEC
- Katie DeVita, EEC
- Ellen Gannet, National Institute on Out-of-School Time
- Joanne Gravel, Child Care Connection
- Valerie Krajec, National Child Care Information Center
- Charlene Mara, Quinsigamond Community College
- Joan Matsalia, Harvard Achievement Support Initiative
- Bryce McClamroch, Department of Public Health
- Carol Nolan, CAYL (Schott) Fellow
- Susan O'Connor, West MOST
- Kate Roper, Department of Public Health

EEC Advisory: Professional Development Workgroup:

- Maryellen Coffey, BOSTnet
- Carol Craig-O'Brien, Westwood Public Schools, EEC Board Member
- Titus DosRemedios, Early Education for All
- Marcia Farris, Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children
- Jody Figuerido, Institute for Education and Professional Development
- Barbara Finlayson, Hampshire Education Collaborative
- Kate Finnegan, Greenfield Community College
- Gwynn Hughes, Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
- Hanna Gebretensae, Urban College
- Joanne Gravell, Child Care Connection
- Katie Magrane, Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
- Margaret O'Hare, Federation for Children with Special Needs
- Amy O'Leary, Early Education for All
- Maureen Pasek, Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
- Debbie Rawson, South Shore Day Care Services
- Peg Sprague, United Way of Massachusetts Bay and the Merrimack Valley
- Nancy Topping-Tailby, Massachusetts Head Start Association

EEC Staff: Phil Baimas, Katie DeVita, and Pam Roux